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Editorial

Globally, there is a realisation that the economic success of nations is directly determined by the quality of their education system. The most effective factor of production is the human capital expressed in the knowledge, skills, creative abilities and moral standards of citizens. Ensuring meaningful and quality teaching and learning in higher education institutions is therefore of great importance to all nations.

Volume 7 of the *Ghana Journal of Higher Education* presents our readers with five articles which focus on improving teaching and learning in higher education institutions.

In the first article, MaameAfua Nkrumah examines the similarities and differences in the quality of teaching and learning as a classroom/department process using three common courses offered to undergraduate students — African Studies, Communication Skills and Computer Literacy as cases. The purpose of the study was to identify feasible ways of improving classroom teaching and the overall institutional effectiveness from the perspective of classroom/department processes.The author argues that a critical look at curriculum assessment, efficient leadership, discipline and order, among others will improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning in classrooms.

In the second paper "Harvesting Culturally Conscious Knowledge in a Post-Truth Era: Ghanaian and American Higher Education Collaborations", Candace M. Moore *et al.,* discuss how collaboration among institutions of higher education around the world can enhance both students' experience and global education practice. The authors use an international study programme, collaboration between Ghanaian and American higher education institutions to discuss the various cultural practices among the two countries and how to incorporate these into the method and practice of teaching to promote higher education on a global level. The study shows that the development of higher education is riddled with the effects of neo-colonialism and colonialism, thus many countries, including Ghana, are reframing educational policies which centre on indigenous knowledge. The authors argue that decolonisation and global partnerships are necessary for education in a Ghanaian (and American) context to successfully meet the needs of students.

Higher education institutions around the world are using several quality assurance mechanisms to obtain information to improve their programmes. One frequently used method, is students' satisfaction surveys. Students as major stakeholders provide valuable information, which when analysed and used effectively, provide feedback for improvement of programmes offered in the institutions. In their paper, "A Graduate Exit Survey in a Ghanaian University: Implications for Graduate Education" using a Ghanaian university as a case study, Paul Kwadwo Addo *et al.*, assess the perception of graduate students on learning gains, educational experience, academic and non-academic support issues, facilities and resources available to support learning. The study advocates the need for higher education institutions to appreciate the changing trends which are attracting students from diverse backgrounds; especially, the working class and to device adequate support systems that facilitate their studies.

It is noteworthy that the professional context and status of teachers have changed in recent times and this has led to a major investment in the continuing professional development (CPD) policies of teachers in Ghana. Hope Pius Nudzor is of the view that Ghanaian teachers are not taking advantage of the opportunity the CPD policies offer. He goes on to discuss the complexities surrounding the CPD policies in Ghana. Adopting the work of Richard Rose, he argues that "Lesson-drawing" can be used as a strategy to help get Ghanaian teachers take advantage of the CPD policies to enhance their teaching. He, however, noted that until the principles and practice of lesson-drawing are better understood, it will not be sufficient in dealing with the problems facing teacher education in Ghana.

Peter Haruna *et al.*, discuss how stakeholders of teacher education institutions use modern trends in playing their roles to ensure the production of high-quality teachers for the nation. The authors use one College of Education in Ghana as a case study to discuss the various roles that stakeholders like Education Officers, Parents Teacher Associations (PTAs), Traditional Rulers and Local Government Agencies can play in ensuring the production of high-quality teachers.

Classroom/Department Effectiveness: A Way of Improving Student Performance at MET University*

MAAME AFUA NKRUMAH

Abstract

The centrality of classroom processes in determining the overall academic effectiveness of institutions has been emphasised by many (Sammons, 2007; Yu and Thomas 2008). Accordingly, this study examined the similarities and differences in the quality of teaching/learning by way of classroom/department processes using three generic courses — African Studies, Communication Skills and Computer Literacy as cases. In all, about 1556 students and 40 teachers took part in the study.The input-process-output-context framework presented in the Global Monitoring Report (2004) was used in selecting appropriate issues and variables for the study. Data on classroom/department processes collected via student/ teacher survey were analysed using descriptive statistics and ANOVA with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Key process factors identified as potentially determining the effectiveness of the institution include: order and discipline, curriculum assessment, cooperation among teachers, the leadership of the service heads of departments. One major recommendation was the need for improvement in order and discipline particularly, in the area of clear rules for acceptable behaviour.

Keywords: Quality of teaching, order and discipline, curriculum assessment, classroom culture, and feedback.

Introduction

Institutional processes have long been identified as one group of factors affecting student performance and providing a better and more appropriate basis for comparing students' performance. Although process data is difficult to collect objectively, many researchers consider it as the most important measure of quality given that it is designed to isolate the effect of practices within the control of schools that make them instructionally effective (see O'Sullivan, 2006; Raudenbush, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2000). In fact,

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* Coined by the researcher to hid the real identify of the university because of ethical requirements

some researchers argue that classroom processes hold the most promise for understanding student performance. This is because although institutions may have little control over student characteristics and resource inputs, they can have a fair amount of control over how they organise and manage the teaching provision (Rumberger & Palardy, 2004).

The purpose ofthis studytherefore, was to examine similarities and differences in the quality of teaching/learning by way of classroom/department processes using the following three generic courses — African Studies (AFS), Communication Skills (CS) and Computer Literacy (CL) as cases. By so doing,feasible ways of improving classroom teaching/learning and overall institutional effectiveness may be identified. Overall, evidences such as these are relevant for monitoring and promoting quality assurance at the institutional level (Schildkamp, 2007). The three courses were appropriately chosen because they have a wider population as they are pursued by all first year students. They are also fundamental to most tertiary specific disciplinary courses. Hence, their assessment represents a fair way of assessing what actually happens inthe average classrooms in the university.

To do this, the process component of the input-process-output-context framework presented in the Global Monitoring Report (2004) was employed. Areas covered by the process component and addressed by this study include: general teacher satisfaction and opportunities for teacher professional development, quality of teaching, order and discipline, feedback to teachers, cooperation among teachers teaching the same course, consistency in approach and the leadership of the service Head of Department/HoD (addressed by the teacher survey), high expectation of student achievement, quality of teaching, curriculum assessment, classroom culture, and order and discipline (student survey). The focus of the analysis was on similarities and differences in teaching and learning processesas reported by: (1) teachers from the servicing departments — Languages and Liberal Studies (for AFS and CS) and Computer Science (for CL only) and (2) students from the academic departments. Theteachers are assigned to teach these courses to studentslocated within the various academic departments. The study had the following two objectives:

1. To identify similarities and differences between the three courses in terms of classroom/department processes.
2. To test whether the differences in classroom/department processes were statistically significant.

The research questions for the study were:

1. What are the similarities and differences between the three courses in terms of classroom/department processes?
2. Are there statistically significant differences between the courses in terms of classroom/department processes?

The *first* objective and research question seeks to summarize the overall pattern of teacher and student survey responses in terms of similarities and differences in classroom/department processes. Accordingly, descriptive statistics are used to present key findings from the student and teacher survey in terms of: (a) typical classroom and service department activities that occurred most/less often across all three courses (using the means) and (b) the extent of agreement/disagreement among students/teachers (using Standard Deviations, SD). These findings indicated strengths and weaknesses at the institutional level. The *second* objective sought to use Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to identify areas of statistically significant differences. The unit of analysis for the ANOVA is the course. Hence, the ANOVA findings are used to summarise key findings from the students/ teacher survey in terms of students/teachers views that were significantly different across the three courses. Evidence from the ANOVA is more robust and more defensible in terms of proposed explanations.

Literature Review

There is a greater level of agreement across studies (both large-scale quantitative and case studies) that certain school features including; school management and ethos, effective monitoring, classroom management and pedagogical quality, potentially influence students' performance and overall institutional effectiveness (Mortimore, 1998; Thrupp, 1999). School management features, that have stood out in this respect include good leadership, staff participation and appropriate rewards for collegial collaborative working. The importance of school ethos, including an orderly atmosphere, high expectations, positive reward/feedback, clear and fair discipline, positive models of good teacher behavior and good teacher-student relationships have also been identified and associated with good student progress. In the area of regular monitoring, the measurement of students' performance across a range of domains has been emphasized.

Relevant pedagogic features identified by previous studies include good engagement of student interest, effective classroom teaching, maximisation of learning time, good subject knowledge by the teacher and the promotion of students' independence (Thrupp, 2010; Schereens, Glas & Thomas, 2003).

Even though there are different conceptual models for measuring effectiveness (e.g. the dynamic model by Kyriakides & Creemers, 2008; the comprehensive model of educational effectiveness by Creemers 1994), the input-process-output-context framework was chosen for this study. According to Schereens (1992), ***input*** consists of all kinds of variables connected with financial or personal resources. ***Process*** refers to factors within the school that make a difference between effective and less effective schools. Process can also be interpreted as the forms of interaction between teachers, students, administrators, materials and technology in educational activities (Cheng & Tam, 1997). ***Context*** on the other hand refers to the socio-economic and educational context of schools (e.g. guidelines and regulations for schools and the characteristics/structure of the formal educational systems). ***Outputs*** typically refer to changes in student achievement, completion rates, certification, skills and certain attitudes and values. The reason for choosing this model is that it has been used by different researchers in the African context for reasons similar to the purpose of this study. These include using the model:

1. as an evaluation tool to analyse individual schools in order to formulate more general pictures of school quality in a given education system and as a tool to monitor and evaluate the implementation of activities aimed at improving the effectiveness of African primary schools (Yu & Thomas, 2008);

2. as the starting point for educational reform programme designs particularly through guiding the diagnosing of school needs (Heneveld & Craig, 1996);

3. in making summaries for educational planners and policy makers on how schools work (Heneveld & Craig, 1996);

4. to provide a structure for school supervision in terms of monitoring educational research programmes and designing teacher and school head training programmes (Heneveld, 1994).

Methodology

The study employed a case study design. The focus was on understanding the dynamics present within the single setting of the technical university (Yin, 2009). Thus, the design facilitated a much richer understanding of the dynamics present within this single setting. However, the results of the study may be idiosyncratic considering the fact that a bottom up approach was employed.

Research Participants and Sample

The survey involved 40 servicing teachers from the Centre for Liberal Studies (24 teachers) and the Computer Studies departments (16 teachers). Also, 1556 students who studied the above compulsory first year courses during the 2016/2017 academic year took part in the survey. A four-point (1–4) likely scaled instrument ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (4) or never (1) to very often (4) was utilised during the survey. The details of the teacher and student surveys are presented below:

Teacher Survey
The teacher questionnaire was administered to *all* servicing teachers who taught AFS, CS and CL during the 2016/2017 academic year after piloting. The servicing teachers were important because to some extent, they directly/ indirectly determined how muchthestudents learnt in the classroom. The teacher survey focused on the following: high expectation of student attainment, general teacher satisfaction and opportunities for teacher professional development, order and discipline, quality of teaching, feedback to teachers, cooperation among teachers, curriculum assessment, classroom culture and consistency in approach.

Students Survey
The survey involved all students belonging to the 2016/2017 cohorts who were willing to participate in the study. The students were in the best position to tell which classroom processes influenced their performance because they were the ones who actually experienced classroom teaching/learning.

The Piloting and administration of the Student/Teacher Survey
The student questionnaire was piloted using 86 continuing students (2015/ 2016 cohort). The piloting proved very helpful in developing effective

strategies for the main study. For example, it became obvious that it would be more effective to administer the student questionnaire before, rather than after a lesson so that almost all students would be present andteacher can help controlthe students. The need to check every questionnaire to see if it was properly completed when handed in became obvious as some students filled only some parts (e.g. front and back), marked one answer for all questions etc. during the piloting. The teacher questionnaire was piloted using three teachers, one for each course — AFS, CS and CL (these teachers did not teach the students in the selected academic year). The piloting informed the decision to administer different questionnaires for each course, although they all contain the same set of questions. The student questionnaires were administered before a lesson by arrangement (date, time, venue, group of students, etc. determined in advance). For teacher questionnaire, thecontact details (e.g. telephone/mobile numbers and e-mail addresses) of individual teachers were collected from their departments and used to arrange meetings to explain the purpose of the study, ethical issues, and administer the questionnaire.

Ethical Considerations

The data collection process started only after, verbal permission was sought from individual Deans and HoDs. Other ethical considerations observed included informed consent and voluntary participation. For example, the meeting with the students involved informing them about the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, confidentiality of any information provided and how to fill the questionnaire (e.g., how to mark choices, fill written portions etc.). The students were then given some time to read through the instructions and the questionnaire items, freely ask questions and sign the informed consent form.

Validity and Reliability

There is no doubt that the piloting improved the quality of the research instruments. For instance, the use of participants similar to those used in the main study — teachers/students of different ages and gender increased the validity of the instruments. Further, by keeping a written record of all incidents, challenges and experiences that occurred during the piloting, the reliability of research instruments was improved. Also, on completion, each questionnaire was checked to ensure that it was completely filled. This helped to reduce the number of incomplete questionnaires and to improve the general quality of the information collected.

Results

Overview of University Activities

The findings of the study are grouped and discussed under the sub-themes from the process component of the EFA model, e.g. high student expectation, order and discipline etc. The presentation under each sub-theme proceeds as follows: the presentation of the descriptive findings, followed by the ANOVA findings and graphical representations. The teacher survey results are presented first followed by the student survey results.

Teacher Perspectives

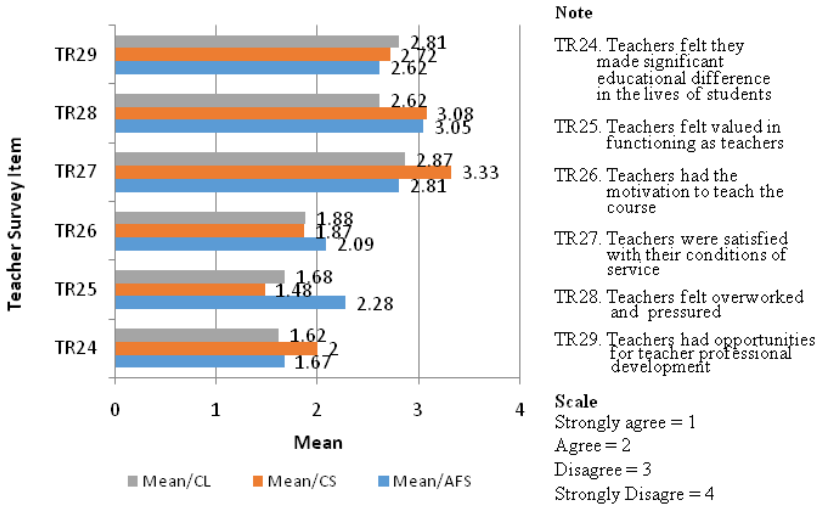
The sub-themes discussed from the teachers' perspective were: general teacher satisfaction and opportunities for professional development, quality of teaching, order and discipline, feedback to teachers, cooperation among teachers teaching the same course, consistency in approach and the leadership of the service HoD.

General Teacher Satisfaction and Opportunities for Teacher Professional Development

From the descriptive findings, all three teacher groups (AFS, CS and CL) were on average dissatisfied with their conditions of service, work load and opportunities for teacher professional development (all mean scores > 2). Comparatively however, the CS teachers were somewhat more dissatisfied with their conditions of service and work load [TR27 and TR28]; while the CL teachers appeared more dissatisfied with opportunities for teacher professional development [TR29]. The AFS teachers on the other hand felt relatively less valued in functioning as teachers [TR25] (mean > 2, also see Figure 1).

However, within specific teacher groups, some noticeable differences were evident. For example, there was a moderate lack of consensus among the AFS teachers with respect to opportunities for teacher professional development (SD = 1) indicting that some teachers had opportunities for teacher professional development whereas others did not. The differences between the three teacher groups in terms of the issues discussed were all statistically significant at .05 significance level.

Figure 1: A Chart showig the Teachers' Views on General Teacher Satisfaction and Opportunities for Professional Development



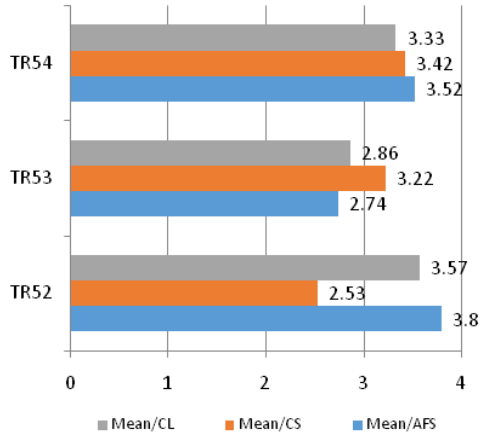
The bar chart above represents the views of the African Studies (AFS) Communication Skills (CS) and Computer Literacy (CL) teachers on general teacher satisfaction and opportunities for professional development during the 2016/2017 academic year at MET University. The vertical axis shows various items eliciting information on teacher satisfaction and opportunities for professional development as presented by Schereens (1992) in his input-process-output-context framework. The horizontal axis on the other hand shows the mean responses of the teachers according to teacher groups on a scale of 4 ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Quality of Teaching

According to the teacher survey results, quality of teaching in terms of lesson preparation, monitoring of student performance and student assessment was of a fair degree of quality across all three courses. On average, all three teacher groups (AFS, CS and CL) indicated that lesson preparation quite often involved building upon a work plan [TR52] that included information on monitoring of students' performance [TR53] and the number of times students were to be assessed [TR54] (all mean scores > 2). Comparatively, however, the AFS teachers appeared more effective in providing information on the number of times students were to be tested [TR54].

The CS teachers on the other hand were to an extent more effective in incorporating the monitoring of students' performance in their work plans [TR53] (see Figure 2a). Nonetheless, there was a moderate lack of consensus within specific course teacher groups especially within the AFS

Figure 2a: A chart showing the Teachers' Views on Quality of Teaching in Terms of Lesson Preparation, Assessment and Monitoring



Note

TR52. Lesson preparation usually involved building upona work plan

TR53. Monitoring of student achievement was mentioned in the work plan

TR54. The number of written assignment/tests were mentioned in the work plan

Scale
Never = 1
Seldom = 2
Quite often = 3
Very often = 4

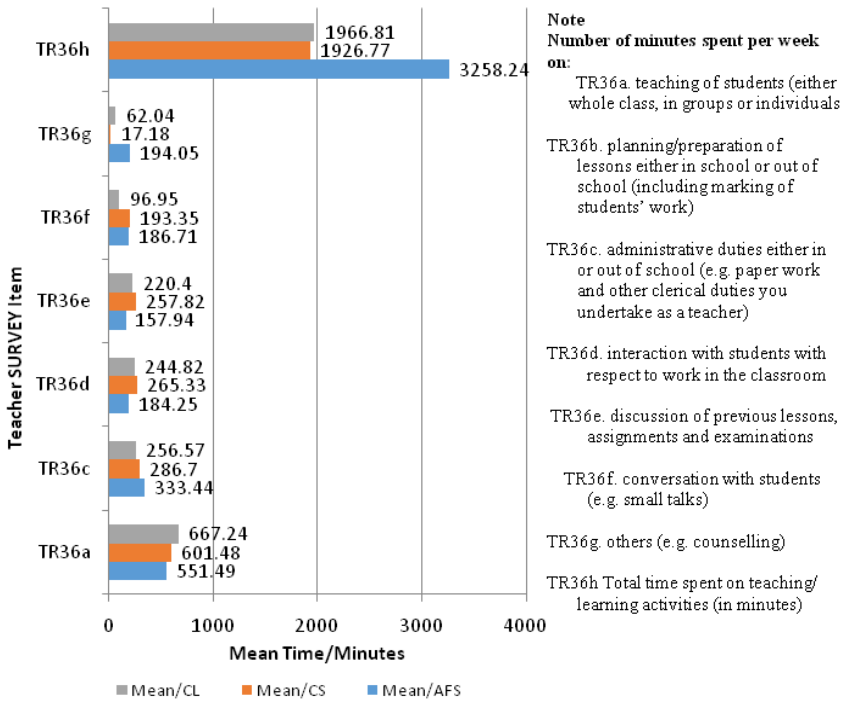
The chart above shows the views of the AFS, CS and CL teachers respectively on teaching quality in the areas of lesson preparation, assessment, and monitoring of student performance. The vertical axis shows three items taken from Schereens' (1992) model. The horizontal axis also shows the mean responses of the three teacher groups on a scale of 4 ranging from never to very often.

and CS teacher groups with respect to the monitoring of students' performance (all SD were >.5), implying that perhaps, the monitoring of student performance was challenging for very few teachers. The ANOVA further showed the means of all three teacher groupsto be significantly different with regard to the issues discussed above.

Figure 2b is a graphical representation of implemented time/effective learning time/opportunities for students to learn in the classroom. Implemented time or opportunity to learn onaverage appeared somewhat problematic with all three teacher groups indicating different amount of time spent on: actual classroom teaching, lesson preparation, revision of previous lessons and assignments/exams, interaction with students in the classroom and other teaching/learning related activities such as counseling. Overall, the AFS teachers appeared to have spent more time on teaching related tasks than the CS and CL teachers (mean = 54 hours per week).

The AFS teachers on average, spent more time on lesson preparation [TR36b] (mean hours each week > 8 hours) in contrast to the CS teachers who spent less time preparing for lessons (mean < 8 hours per week) but relatively more time revising previous lessons [TR36e] (mean > 4 hours per

Figure 2b: A Chart Showing the Teachers' Views on Teaching Quality - Effective Learning Time/Implemented Time



The bar chart above represents the teachers' views on teaching quality in the area of effective/ implemented time in the classroom. Individual activities on which time was spent in the classroom are presented on the vertical axis whilst the amount of time spent on each activity is presented on the horizontal axis according to the average response of each teacher group.

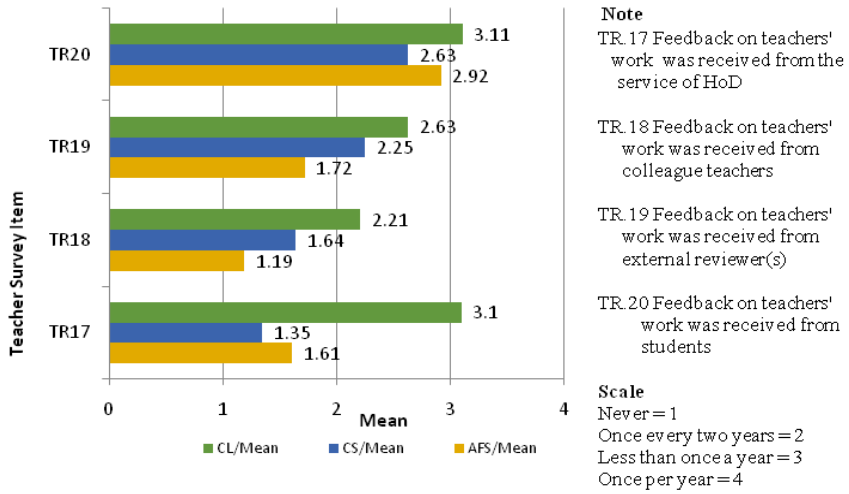
week), interacting with students in the classroom [TR36d] (mean > 4 hours a week) and conversing with students (TR36f) (mean > 3 per week). The CL teachers on the other hand spent more time on actual classroom teaching [TR36a] (mean hours each week > 11 hours). See Figure 2b for the graphical representation of the issues discussed. Nevertheless, there were differences *within* specific subject teacher groups. For instance, the very high standard deviations associated with the mean total hours spent on teaching/learning activities within the AFS teacher group (SD= 50 hours per week) suggest that some teachers were over worked compared with others. Results from the ANOVA further indicated statistically significant differences between the African Studies, CS and CL teachers in terms of the mean hours spent

on the various teaching related activities and the total time per week spent on teaching/learning.

Feedback on Teachers' Work

The teacher survey further presented evidence that typically, feedback on teachers' work from both external (e.g. external reviewers) and internal (e.g. the service HoD, colleague teachers and students) stakeholders was to an extent problematic. In fact, all the teacher groups indicated that feedback from both sources was received less than once a year (all mean scores < 4). However, there was a lack of consensus within specific teacher groups especially with respect to feedback from internal stakeholders to the CS and CL teachers (all SD were > 1.0). Relatively, the CL teachers most likely received feedback from both internal and external stakeholders [TR17 to TR20]. The AFSteachers on the other hand less likely received feedback from external reviewers [TR19] and colleagues [TR18]. TheCS teachers however, received some feedback from the service HoD [TR17] and the students [TR20] (see Figure 3). The ANOVA findings further

Figure 3: A Chart Showing the Views of the Teachers on the Sources of Feedback to Them



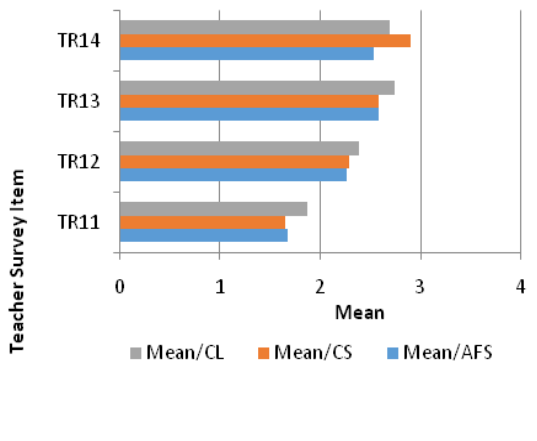
The graph above represents the sources of feedback on the teachers' work according to the teacher groups. The vertical axis shows the four main sources of feedback selected from Schereens' (1992) framework. The average frequency at which feedback was received is shown on the horizontal axis on a scale of 4 ranging from never to once a year.

indicated statistically significant differences between the three teacher group means in terms of feedback from the four stakeholders examined by the study.

Order and Discipline

Order and discipline were typically problematic for all teachers across the three courses. The course teachers generally disagreed with the three items relating to the existence, understanding and application of rules (most means scores > 2). The AFS teachers to an extent disagreed most, with the view that rules were honestly applied. The CL teachers on the other hand mostly doubted the existence of clear written rules that were clearly understood by both students and teachers (see Figure 4a). Nevertheless, there was a moderate lack of consensus among teachers within specific teacher groups, especially with respect to the existence of clear rules (SDs were mostly higher than 0.5). Results from the ANOVA further indicated statistically significant differences between the three teacher group means in all three aspects of department rules examined by the study. Moreover, regarding the time teachers spent on order and disciplinary matters in the classroom such as: disturbances due to bad student behaviour [TRb36], frequent

Figure 4a: A chart showing the Teachers' Views on Order and Discipline



Note

TR11. Inconsistent approach to student misbehaviour/discipline impedes department effectiveness.

TR12. There were clear written rules regarding student lateness, disturbances and student absenteeism.

TR13. Rules were well understood by both students and staff.

TR14. Behaviour rules were honestly applied and maintained.

Scale

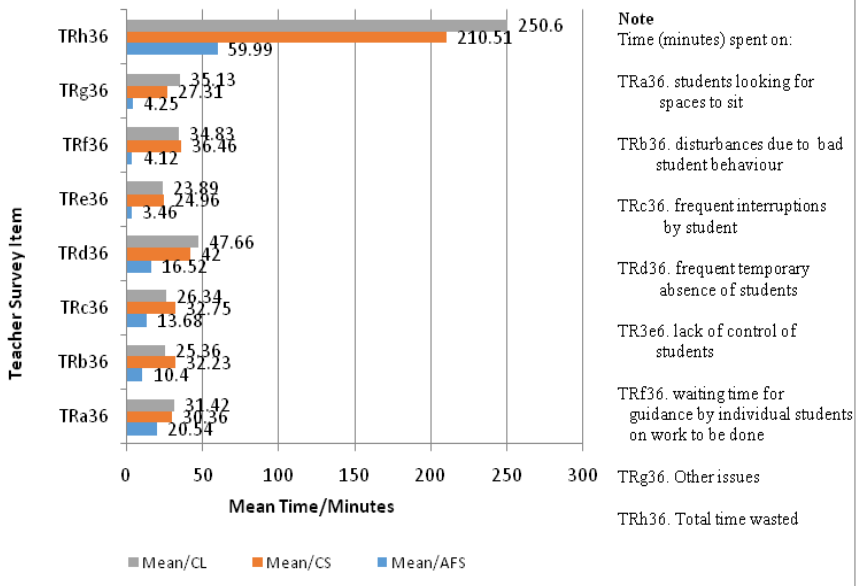
1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Disagree
4 = Strongly Disagree

The teachers' views on order and discipline in the areas of clear rules, consistency and fairness are represented by the chart above. The vertical axis shows the individual items eliciting information on the issue whilst the horizontal axis shows the average responses per teacher group.

interruptions by students [TRc36], frequent temporary absence of students [TRd36] and lack of control of students [TRe36], teachers across all three courses reported the same key problem of wasted class time to a greater or lesser extent.

For example, the teachers reported a total of 1 hour (AFS), 3.5 hours (CS) and over 4 hours (CL) of class time per week wasted. The differences between all three teacher group means were also statistically significant (see Figure 4b). Overall, it appears that the AFS teachers appeared more effective in managing student misbehavior on many occasions than the other teacher groups. For the two courses, CS and CL, there was a notable lack of consensus *within* specific course teacher groups (with SD of three hours or more per week wasted on disciplinary matters). These strongly suggest that some teachers on specific courses found student behaviour issues especially challenging in the classroom, especially the CS and CL teachers.

Figure 4b: Teachers' Views on Order and Discipline in Terms of Wasted Time



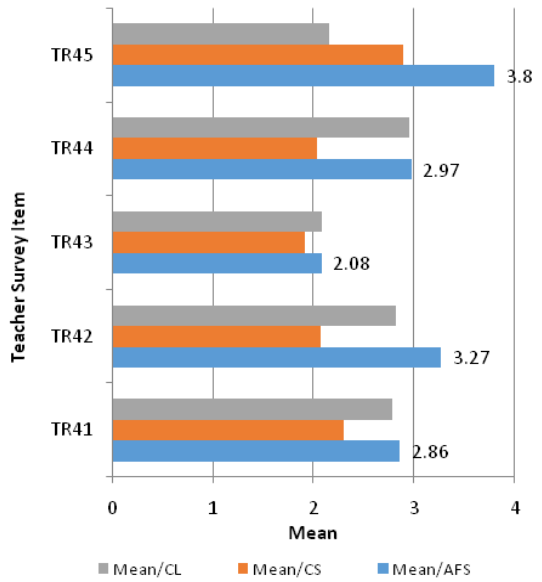
The bar chart above shows the teachers' views on order and discipline in terms of wasted time. The chart also shows the activities on which time was wasted as can be seen on the vertical axis. The amount of time spent on each activity is indicated on the horizontal axis.

Cooperation Among Teachers Teaching the Same Course

Teachers teaching the same course cooperated with colleagues in the following areas: dealing with students with academic challenges [TR43], setting common standards in curriculum assessment (TR44) and bringing about needed changes/innovations in the courses [TR45]. However, doing these appeared problematic for all three teacher groups. In fact, all three teachers groups indicated that they seldom cooperated with colleagues in these areas (all mean scores were less than three). The AFS teachers however, were relatively more effective in cooperating with colleagues in the areas of changes in the course and lesson planning and implementation (see Figure 5).

As expected, views within specific teacher groups were also quite varied. For instance, notable differences in the views of the CS teachers

Figure 5: A chart Showing the Teachers' Views on the Level of Cooperation Among Teachers Teaching the Same Course



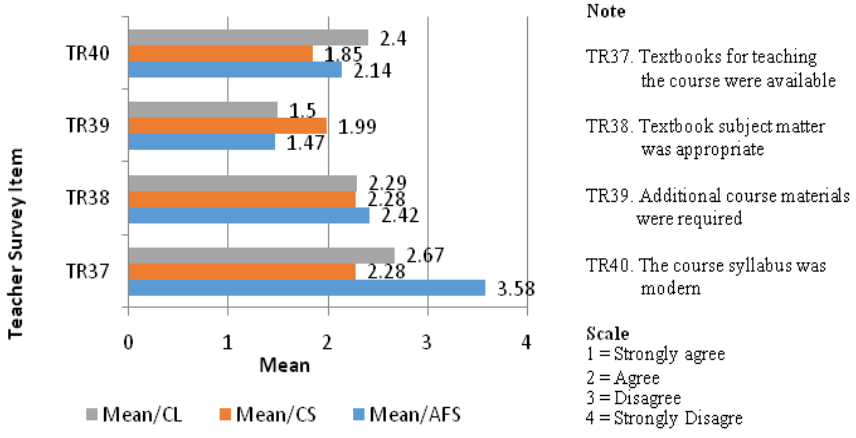
The chart above shows the extent to which teachers teaching the same course cooperated. Items on areas of cooperation can be found on the vertical axis. The frequency of cooperation on a scale of 4 ranging from never to very often, on the other hand, can be found on horizontal axis.

with respect to lesson planning and implementing, dealing with students with academic difficulties and bringing about innovations in the course were evident (all SD were > 1.0). The ANOVA Findings additionally showed that all group means were significantly different.

Consistency in Approach

In the area of consistency in approach, the survey results showed that all three teacher groups were concerned about the availability of course textbooks (TR37) and the appropriateness of textbook subject matter [TR38] (all means scores > 2). As indicated on Figure 6, the AFS teachers generally disagreed that course textbooks with appropriate subject matter were available. Interestingly, there was a fair degree of agreement within the AFSteacher group with respect to this issue (SD< .5). The ANOVA findings further indicated statistically significant differences between the teacher groups in terms of the availability and appropriateness of course textbooks, the modernity of course syllabi and the need for additional course materials (see Figure 6). This implies that generally, the courses were challenged in these respects.

Figure 6: A Chart Showing the Teachers' Views on Consistency in Approach

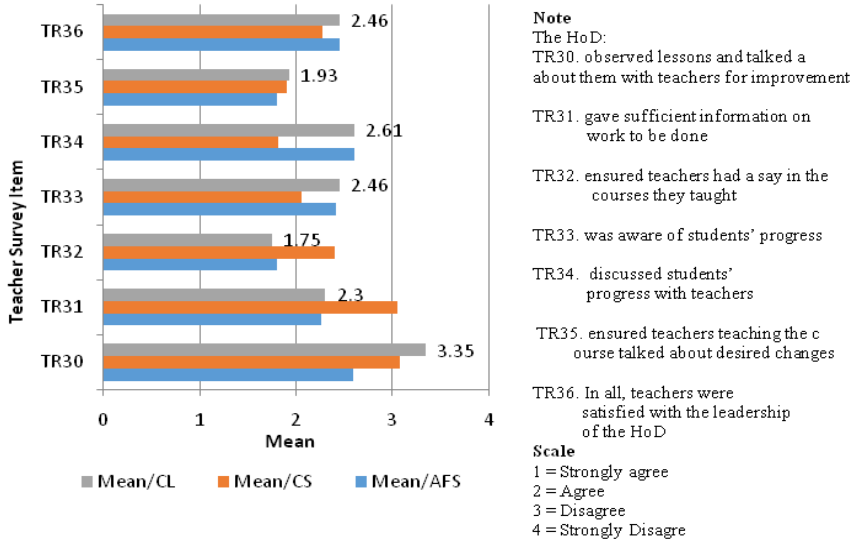


The teachers' views on consistency in teaching the same course in different classrooms can be seen on the figure above. Areas of consistency examined include use of same or similar textbooks, subject matter, additional course materials and the modernity of the syllabus used. These can be found on the vertical axis. The average view of each teacher group can be seen on the horizontal axis on a scale of 4 ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The Leadership of the Service HoD

Focusing on the leadership of the service HoDs, the tentative finding was that to some extent all course teacher groups were dissatisfied with the overall leadership of the service HoDs [TR36]. Specifically, all the teacher groups disagreed that the HoDs provided feedback on classroom teaching [TR30] and sufficient information on work to be done (all means scores > 2). Comparatively, the CS teachers disagreed most with the view that their HoD was effective in managing information and in involving teachers in decision making (see Figure 7). The CL teachers on the other hand were more dissatisfied with the overall leadership of their HoD. However, within teacher groups, differences regarding specific items were evident. For example, the CS teachers were quite divided over whether the HoD provided information on work to be done or got teachers involved in decision making

Figure 7: A Chart Showing the Views of the Teachers on the Leadership of the Academic Head of Department



The chart above shows how the head of department as an academic leader facilitated the teaching process to ensure the academic success of students. Individual items soliciting the views of the teachers on this issue can be found on the vertical axis while the mean responses of the teacher groups on a scale of 4 ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree can be found on the horizontal axis.

(all SDs > 1.0). This suggests that information management and decision making was problematic in some service departments. The ANOVA results further showed that the differences between the three teacher groups in the following areas were statistically significant: the effectiveness of theHoDs in managing information and decision making, discussion of student progress and feedback to teachers on classroom teaching.

Student Perspectives

Five major themes including: high expectation of student achievement, quality of teaching, curriculum assessment, classroom culture, and order and discipline are presented in subsequent paragraphs.

High Expectation of Student Achievement

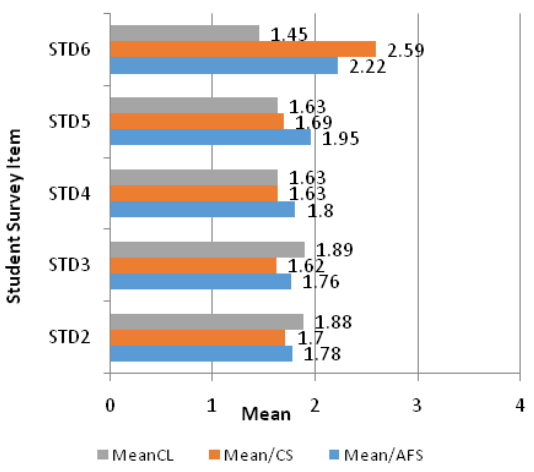
The results of the student survey presented evidence that all three course teacher groups had high expectations on student achievement [STD2] and stimulated students to work hard [STD3] (all mean scores < 2). Nonetheless, to the students, their friends and parents, a good grade in some of the courses was considered more important than others. For example, a good grade in CL was more important to the students [STD6] and their friends [STD5] than the other courses (see figure 8). The associated SD however, indicated that this view was not shared by all the students (all SD> .5).

The ANOVA findings further showed the course teacher groups were significantly different with regards to: high expectations on student achievement, stimulating students to work hard and rewarding students for good academic performance.

Curriculum Assessment

Generally, curriculum assessment in terms of method [STD7], coverage [STD8 and STD10], fairness [STD13] and the discussion of previous assessments [STD12] across all three courses was somewhat problematic as some teacher groups appeared more effective in some specific areas than others (see Figure 9). Comparatively, the CS teachers were perceived by the students as apparently more effective in: assessing the students using different ways, providing different approaches to solving the same problem,

Figure 8: A Chart Showing the Students' Views on High Expectation of Student Achievement



Note

STD2. Teachers required high achievement from individual students

STD3. Teachers stimulated students to work hard

STD4. Getting a good grade in this course was important to my parents

STD5. Getting a good grade in this course was important to my friends

STD6. Getting a good grade in this course was important to me

Scale

Strongly agree = 1
Agree = 2
Disagree = 3
Strongly Disagree = 4

The above chart represents the students' views on high expectation on student achievement. Individual items eliciting the students' views on this matter can be found on the vertical axis while the average responses of the student per course are indicated on the horizontal axis.

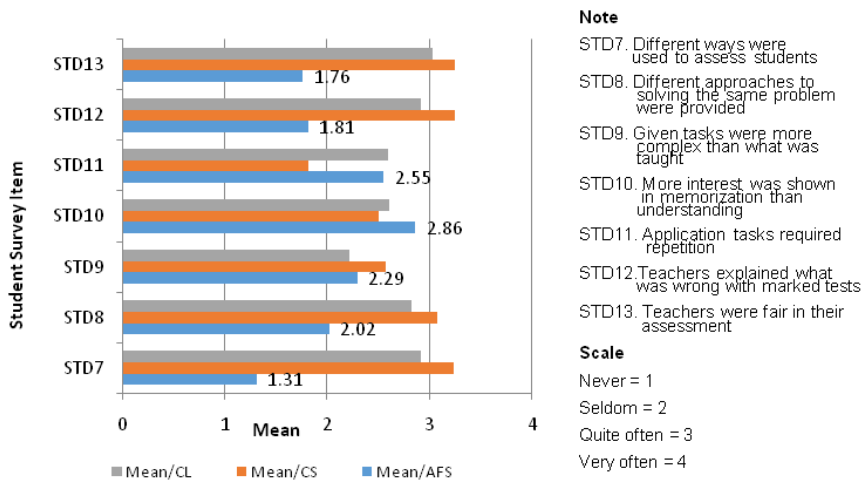
explaining what was wrong with marked work and being fair in curriculum assessment (all mean scores > 2). The AFS teachers on the other hand quite often showed more interest in memorisation than understanding (mean > 2).

Nonetheless, there was a moderate lack of consensus within specific teacher groups from the perspective of the students. For example, the students were considerably divided over assessment issues such as: the complexity of given tasks and teachers' interest in memorization or recall (all SD were > 1.0). Statistically significant differences in the views of the students regarding these issues were further indicated by the ANOVA.

Classroom Culture

In the area of classroom culture, adaptive instruction [STD14] and the promotion of students' independence [STD15] were seen as challenging for some specific course teacher groups. For example, the AFS teachers were seen as less effective in adapting instruction to the needs of students

Figure 9 : A Chart Showing the Students' Views on Curriculum Assessment and Feedback

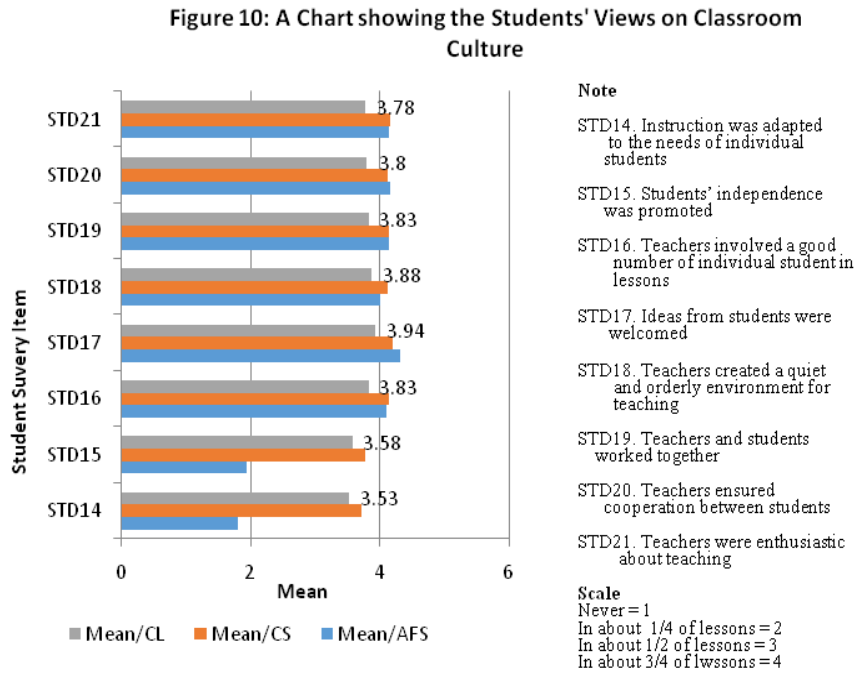


The figure above indicates the nature of student assessment and feedback at MET University during the 2016/2017 academic year. The selection of individual items presented on the vertical axis were guided by Schereens (1992) framework. The average responses of the students per course are indicated on the horizontal axis.

and promoting their independence (all means < 2). Nevertheless, the students were highly divided over other issues such as the flowing across all three courses: the involvement of students in lessons [STD16], the working together of teachers and students [STD19], students working together [STD20], teachers welcoming ideas from students [STD17] and teachers ensuring a quiet and orderly environment for teaching [STD18] (all SD were > 1.0). Generally, speaking, classroom culture appeared problematic. However, for two of the items — teacher enthusiasm and the involvement of individual students in lessons, the differences in the views of the students were particularly, noteworthy especially for CL (SDs were 1.7 and 1.4 respectively). The likely conclusion is that, the views of the students were very diverse regarding these two issues. The observed differences were statistically significant.

Order and Discipline

Although from the perspective of the student (via the student survey) all three course teacher groups were relatively effective in ensuring order and

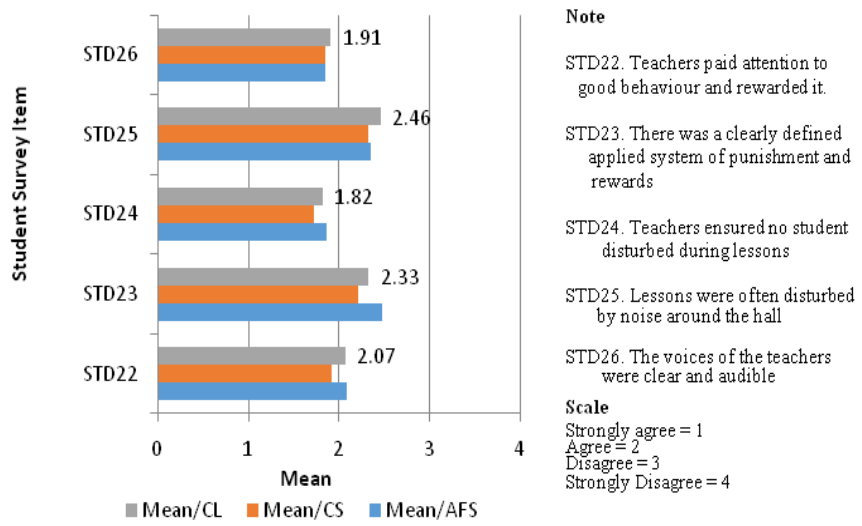


The students' views on classroom culture selected from Schereens' model are graphically presented using the chart above. The eight selected items can be found on the vertical axis while the average responses of the students to each of the items per course is presented on the horizontal axis

discipline in the classroom (mean < 2), comparatively, the CS teachers appeared more effective in rewarding good student behaviour [STD22], applying a clearer system of rewards and punishments [STD23] and ensuring that no student caused a disturbance during lessons [STD24] (see Figure 11). Variations in the views of the students regarding specific courses were also evident. For example, there was a moderate lack of consensus regarding the items: "lessons were often disturbed by noise around the hall" [STD25] and "teachers ensured no student disturbed during lessons" [24] (all SDs > .5) implying that order and disciplinary issues in the classroom were challenging for some course teachers.

The statistically significant differences were observed with respect to the items discussed above (STD22–25) except for the item "teacher paid attention to good behaviour and rewarded it" [STD26].

Figure 11 : A Chart Showing the Students' Views on Order and Discipline



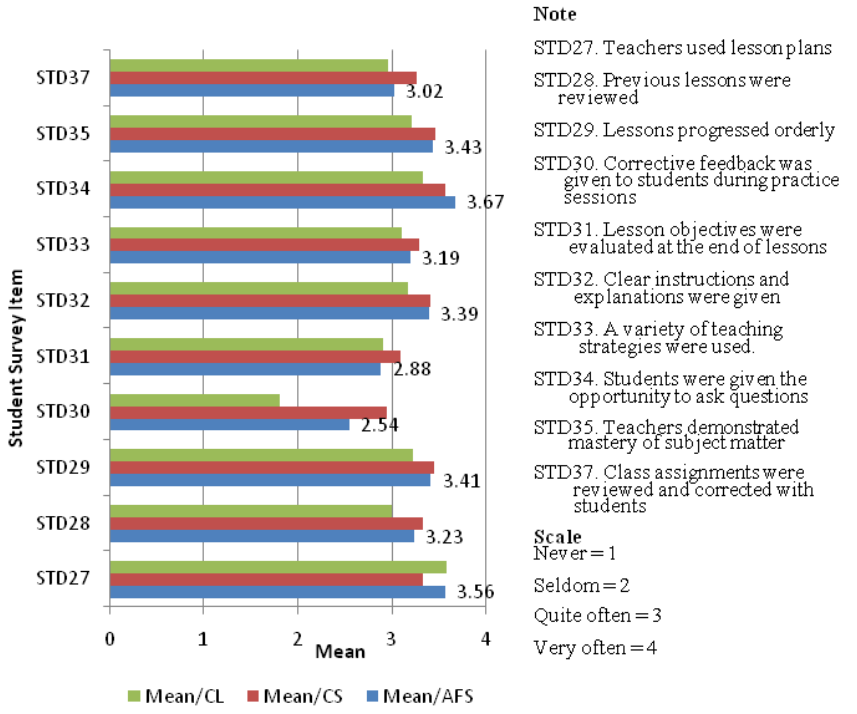
The figure above is a chart showing students' views on order and discipline. The items were taken from Schereens' (1992) framework. Items eliciting information on classroom culture are presented on the vertical axis. The average responses of the students per course on a scale of five ranging from, never to in almost every lesson, are presented on the horizontal axis.

Quality of Teaching

Structure dinstruction (STD27–STD29) and direct instruction (STD32–37) across all three courses was quite adequate, with the majority of the students indicating that these activities quite often happened in the classroom (means > 3).

The CS teachers however, appeared more effective in reviewing and correcting class assignments with students [STD37] and using different teaching strategies [STD33] (Figure 12). Moderate differences in the views of the students regarding specific courses were also evident (all SDs> .5). For example, there was a moderate lack of consensus among the students regarding corrective feedback during practice sessions [STD30] and the orderly progression of lessons [STD28] for all three courses. This was so especially in the case of Computer Literacy. This suggests that some teachers

Figure 12 : A Chart Showing the Students' Views on Quality of Teaching



The figure above graphically represents the views of the students on classroom teaching quality. Different items eliciting detailed information on classroom teaching quality are presented on the vertical axis while the average responses of the students per course are presented on the horizontal axis.

found correcting students during practice sessions quite challenging. According to the ANOVA results, the different views of the students regarding these issues were statistically significant across all three courses.

Discussion

For discussion purposes, the following classroom/department issues emerging from the study are discussed: (1) order and discipline (2), lack of cooperation among teachers teaching the same course and (3), emphasis on memorisation.

Classroom discipline encompasses complex interactions among teacher, student, school and societal variables. No wonder, the issue has been discussed under different designations such as "classroom order", "classroom misbehavior", "classroom disruption", "classroom indiscipline", or "classroom disorder", just to name a few (Lopes and Oliveira, 2017). Basically however, classroom discipline refers to a set of teacher actions that constitute organisational and management processes aimed at establishing classroom order (routines, norms, procedures, etc.).

Although students are by far the most frequent source of indiscipline (Kulinna, Cothran, & Regualos, 2006), teachers or school staff may also be a source of disruption (Good & Brophy, 2000) as shown by this study. Granted, most teachers occasionally spend some amount of time on other issues apart from instruction nevertheless; the amount of time wasted by the AFS, CS and CL teachers on the following activities was overwhelming: students looking for spaces to sit, addressing disturbances due to bad student behaviour, frequent interruptions by student, frequent temporary absence of students, and lack of control of students etc. For example, the total time wasted on the above activities averaged almost three hours (2.90) a week across the three courses — AFS, CS, CL. This is a clear evidence of teacher ineffectiveness. Of course, effective teachers maximise instructional time while ineffective teachers lose their focus and address interruptions and off-task behaviours, thereby losing instructional time (Lopes and Oliveira, 2017). High levels of classroom indiscipline often leads to low student academic achievement because teachers may feel emotionally exhausted after addressing classroom disruption and opportunities to learn may likely be decreased (Sun, 2015). High levels of indiscipline may further indicate the absence of clear written rules on accepted behaviour given that there is a specific link between where power lies (teacher-centered or student centered perspectives).

Another key factor identified by the study as demonstrating institutional ineffectiveness was the level of cooperation among teachers teaching the same course. Indeed, a critical way of ensuring that all students on average receive equal quality instructions is to regulate or control what happens in the different classroom for the same course. This to an extent requires teachers teaching the same worse to work together. Evidence from the ANOVA however, pointed to significant amounts of conflicts within course groups. This finding resonates with previous studies that have indicated that, collaborative teaching has historically not been the norm in tertiary

education (e.g. few professors teach collaboratively or receive substantial support from colleagues). Hence, tertiary teachers are often forced to rely on try and error or their own experiences (Goddard, 2007; Broad *et al.*, 2007).

In the area of curriculum assessment, the students indicated that the AFS teachers quite often showed more interest in memorisation than understanding. In other words, rote learning (memorisation) instead of deep learning was encouraged. This means that, possibly the students just concentrated on certain topics or specific responses that were more likely to appear in the exams and recalled/reproduced them when called upon to do so. Put simply, the students shifted between recall of knowledge and deep understanding depending on the interest of a particular group of course teachers. This is indicative of poor teaching because according to Gibbs and Simpson (2004) when a totally new course material is taught poorly such that students are unable to apply them in different settings; the students may be tempted to rely on recall or cheating.

Recommendation

The existence of classroom indiscipline as evidenced by the amount of time wasted on non-instructional activities suggests the need for the standardisation of classroom/departmentrules regarding acceptable student behaviour. This is necessary given that without satisfactory levels of it, the best planned and potentially most engaging lessons may fail to have the desired impact (Romi *et al.,* 2009)

In the area of curriculum assessment, the students indicated that the AFSteachers often encouraged rote learning. Thus, regular staff training on test construction especially for new teachers on standardised measurement principles such as how to: calculate reliability estimates, standard error measurements, validity coefficients, item discrimination, standard scores and how to reduce guessing and diagnose procedural error is recommended for the Personnel Section of the university to carry out. The training on curriculum assessment is important because teachers make assessment decisions that enhance/discourage students.

Regarding cooperation among teachers teaching the same course, knowledgeable conversations initiated by the course coordinator around the following is recommended: teaching methods, unique content, processes of teaching, academic standards, how to meet the needs of students, helping academically poor and disabled students etc.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to identify feasible ways of improving classroom teaching and overall institutional effectiveness from the perspective of classroom/department processes. The descriptive and ANOVA findings have indeed provided an overall picture of what was happening in the various classrooms as well as the two servicing departments. The use of the EFA model (used in developing the research instruments) has further led to the identification of the following factors as potentially influencing the quality of teaching and learning in the university. Key factors identified by the study include: high expectation of student attainment, order and discipline, curriculum assessment, cooperation among teachers, quality of teaching, whether or not students/teachers felt valued and the leadership of the service HoD. Tentatively, evidence is provided that the EFA model could be a useful tool in examining institutional effectiveness in the Ghanaian context. Interestingly, these factors have previously been identified and associated with good student academic progress and institutional effectiveness (Yu and Thomas, 2008).

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Harvesting Culturally Conscious Knowledge in a Post-Truth Era: Ghanaian and American Higher Education Collaborations

CANDACE M. MOORE, JILLIAN A. MARTIN, MICHAEL BOAKYE-YIADOM, JOAKINA E. STONE & MORGAN M. LANAHAN

Abstract

Engaging in culturally conscious practices allows higher education institutions to decentre Western perspectives, collaborate with other institutions on a global level, and employ decolonising practices which can greatly enhance the student experience, and success in college. This paper highlights the authors' lessons learned through an immersive experience, Higher Education in the Ghanaian Context (HEGC) Study Abroad programme. Using a Ghanaian and American Higher Education collaboration, the paper examines multiple ways of knowing and incorporating culturally conscious practices into higher education pedagogy and assessment, that aid in employing thoughtful global education practices. The authors highlight the need for higher education institutions to centre culturally conscious practices in new policies while considering how to phase these policies into the organisational culture of higher education institutions broadly. They incorporated elements of action research, chieftaincy, culturally relevant pedagogy, and empowerment evaluation to frame the premise for their conceptual framework of culturally conscious pedagogy. It is recommended that institutional leaders utilise contextualised assessment and evaluation practices to better understand their students and integrate local knowledge to support students on their campuses.

"We are capable of carrying a great burden, once we discover that the burden is reality and arrive where reality is"—James Baldwin (1963).

Decolonising curricular and co-curricular educational practices is no longer an observation, it is truly a movement. We acknowledge and regard the work of W. E. B. DuBois, James Baldwin, Gloria Anzaldúa, Kwesi Yankah, bell hooks, Eve Tuck, K. Wayne Yang, Leigh Patel, and others who position themselves and their scholarship as action in the movement of decolonising practices throughout our global society. As noted by Patel (2016), scholarship that deconstructs and critiques coloniality can include non-Indigenous scholars; however, scholars have a responsibility to represent decolonising practices and scholarship without erasing Indigenous

knowledge and repositioning white settler norms, expectations, and privileges (Tuck & Wang, 2012). We all have a responsibility to analyse our individual roles in upholding coloniality in our pedagogy and assessment practices, while actively engaging in deconstructing this singular approach, and collaborating in culturally conscious approaches with global partners to employ decolonizing practices—informed by local knowledges.

There is a Guinean proverb that says, "Knowledge is like a garden: If it is not cultivated, it cannot be harvested" (Sammis, 2002, p. 65). Knowledge and wisdom come in various forms. However, there is a bias in westernised epistemologies which value a specific, singular way of knowing. While data gives us information, there are other ways of gaining knowledge and wisdom. In a higher education context, scholars, administrators, students, and policy makers must move beyond traditional forms of data collection and a singular way of knowing in order to expand knowledge and practices. For instance, in January 2018, faculty, graduate students and staff of various higher education/student affairs programmes in the U.S., embarked on an experience to learn about higher education in a Ghanaian context. The Higher Education in the Ghanaian Context Study Abroad (HEGC) programme at the University of Maryland in College Park, Maryland focuses on the role of student affairs practices in the context of Ghanaian higher education. As social justice educators, student affairs and higher education professionals and faculty should understand the implications of higher education and the role of student affairs in an international context (Moore, Martin & Boakye-Yiadom, 2018). In this *post-truth* era, scholars should routinely explore multiple ways of knowing and avoid engaging in monolithic approaches to higher education pedagogy and practices.

We explored multiple ways of knowing through an immersive experience where faculty, students, and staff alike sought to understand actualised student affairs and higher education practices in a non-Western environment, specifically within the continent of Africa. While a combination of colonial history and Indigenous cultures shape the curriculum and purpose of education in Ghana, cultural traditions continue to influence the means by which the goals of higher education are achieved (Adjei, 2007; Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013).

Although there is research exploring higher education in an African context (Boakye-Yiadom, 2015; Morley, Leach, Lugg, 2009; Teferra & Altbach, 2004), as participants of the trip, we decentred Western approaches to higher education assessment practices and promote knowledge

acquisition through culturally conscious practices — blending elements of chieftaincy (Yankah, 1995; Boakye-Yiadom, 2012), culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1992;1995; Gay, 2010), empowerment evaluation (Donaldson, 2017) and action research (Lewin, 1946) as a conceptual frame for collaborating with Ghanaian higher education scholars and practitioners to advance current programmes that support student success. This paper explores how the tenets of the aforementioned theoretical frames can aid higher education faculty and practitioners in being more intentional about incorporating culturally conscious pedagogy and inclusive programme assessment and evaluation practices to support student success.

Context of Higher Education in Ghana

Ghanaian higher education continues to be one of the best in Africa ("Best global universities in Africa", n.d.). Higher education in Ghana means any formal education and training beyond secondary education level. Higher education sites include colleges and universities, and specialized post-secondary educational institutions. These include teacher training colleges, nurses training colleges, agricultural training colleges, polytechnics and technical education training centers, labor colleges, police and army staff training colleges, and vocational training colleges.

Generally, higher education institutions in Ghana perform the following functions: teaching, research, and community service. Often the aforementioned functions happen through the lens and theories of education based on Western culture and scholarship. The beneficiaries of higher education are the citizenry and the larger human society. Higher education is necessary for the economic, political and social development of every nation-state. In the modern world, no nation or economy can ignore the contributions of higher education to the human capital development of its workforce. It is an educational policy which reflects the economic visions of Ghana. For example, in the Global North, college education and professional education is a necessary tool for gaining access to the best job opportunities and wealth. In addition, college and professional education opens doors to skilled employment, better pay and a higher standard of living and thus help reduce the poverty gap. Higher education creates a middle class that serves as a bridge for social mobility.

This is, however, not the case with countries in the Global South. For many countries, colonialism and neocolonialism created inequities in how

leaders developed and enacted educational policy. For many countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, funding sources explicitly focused on primary and secondary education rather than higher education (Brock-Utne, 2003). As a result, countries focused on primary and secondary education and, until funding sources such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisations (UNESCO) and World Bank reversed their policies in the 1990s, higher education was reserved for those who could pay for it directly. In addition, individuals seeking higher education also left countries in search of opportunities globally, but particularly in Westernised countries (Jowi, 2009; Mohammadbhai, 2008). Since higher education is now linked with social mobility and the neoliberal competition in a global marketplace, many countries in the Global South are now focusing their resources on higher education policy.

Higher education policy of any nation-state often mirrors its values, aspirations, and vision for the future. Therefore, higher education provision should mirror this clarion call for the national state of human capital development because primary education does not prepare citizens for the world of work. Higher education policies should thus begin with a clear assessment of what the economic, social, and educational needs of the nation-state should be and how the higher education mission and policies would be carried out to harness the potential human capacities of its population.

Focus on Decolonisation of Higher Education

The very nature of higher education in Ghana and Africa at large is colonialist; it comes from an Eurocentric ideology of knowledge and understanding of education. Decolonisation involves fundamental rethinking and reframing of the curriculum and bringing Ghanaian and African culture to the centre of teaching, learning, and research. It is about changing our understanding of education and the subjects we are taught.

Decolonisation is often evoked as an event of interruption of a specific process or characteristic deemed colonial and therefore undesirable. However, this conceptualisation is grounded on a very selective analysis of coloniality and colonisation. An alternative mobilisation of decolonisation in education, taking account of the force, pervasiveness, and complexity of colonial perceptions and relations, would frame decolonisation as a lifelong, life-wide process, fraught with difficulties, competing demands, and uncertain

outcomes. As part of this process, higher education may be one of the many spaces in which to denaturalise the modern/colonial world, reach the limits of what is possible within it, and experiment with the apparently impossible, without assuming that such work can ever be free from complicity in colonial harm.

In the current conjuncture, many questions have arisen around the possibilities for institutional transformation, as well as around the desired horizon of change. In this, there is significant tension around the purportedly universal nature of institutions like colleges and universities and the demand for inclusion within them by those that are consistently deemed categorically particular, such that their inclusion remains conditional and premised on degrees of difference in reference to a universal standard. In response, some have advocated for the need to reimagine a decolonising approach to higher education (Boidin, Cohen & Grosfoguel, 2012).

The universities in Ghana have not done much since the late 1940s in developing more innovative Indigenous methods of generating new knowledge that are Ghanaian and yet, globally accepted as reference material for exploring other new ways of knowledge-making (Baker, 2013). While all universities have adopted new policies and frameworks that speak about equality, equity, transformation and change, institutional cultures and epistemological traditions have not changed considerably. Policies might be there, but the willingness to implement them is lacking (Department of Education, as cited in Heleta, 2016). The Ghanaian higher education system still demonstrates characteristics of the British colonial legacy where bureaucracy, hegemony, power and control are prominent features of governance and management systems (Baker, 2013; McKaiser, 2016). According to Mbembe (2016), there is something profoundly wrong when syllabi designed to meet the needs of colonialism continue well into the liberation era. This is why it is of paramount importance to bring about fundamental epistemological change at institutions of higher learning.

Higher education in post-apartheid South Africa has experienced significant transformations. The noticeable changes include intellectual discourse on how the effects, memories and legacies of apartheid have shaped higher education policy and practices (Du Toit, 2000). Du Toit opined that the reality of the apartheid legacies often make it difficult for some academics to engage in unbiased discussions about South Africa's past. This culture has implications for academic freedom in many higher education institutions in South Africa. Transformation in higher education

have regional and socio-cultural contexts due to differences in priorities and higher education agenda. This explains differences in research agenda, research methods, curriculum, scholarship and pedagogy.

It presents the challenge of creating institutional cultures that genuinely respect and appreciate difference and diversity — whether class, gender, national, linguistic, religious, sexual orientation, epistemological or methodological in nature — and creating spaces for the flowering of epistemologies, ontologies, theories, methodologies, objects and questions other than those that have long been hegemonic in intellectual and scholarly thought and writing. Thus, Mamdani (2011) argued that one of the significant contemporary challenges for African higher education is identifying the most appropriate and applicable method of teaching the humanities within the political, historical and socio-cultural contexts of post-colonial African. Moreover, Mamdani reiterated the implications of teaching African students with concepts, theories and models developed by and for the Global North.

Challenges in the U.S.-Ghana Collaborative Work

The importance of a critical analysis of challenges that confront Ghanaian higher educational institutions cannot be overemphasised. Such analyses provide critical guidelines for institutional transformation as the need for continuous re-adjustment of visions, missions, objectives and strategies remains obvious (Arnonoo-Neizer, 1998) in collaboration with the United States. These critical analyses provide opportunities for stakeholders including students, governments development partners and investors in the sector to enable them to understand the issues involved and to appreciate the outcomes of whatever strategies and actions that are being considered. Most universities in Ghana have fostered educational collaborations with their counterparts in the United States in order to improve the quality of education, training, professional development, outreach, and services. Primarily, U.S. and Ghanaian education collaborations were initiated when Ghana became independent in 1957.

Lack of knowledge of the context of Ghanaian higher education hinders U.S.-Ghana collaborations. The West continues to dominate in the production, organisation, and dissemination of the world's knowledge and information. The Global South, and Ghana in particular, relies heavily on this privileged knowledge and information to inform its approach to higher education. Ghanaian higher education encompasses many values and ideals that should be upheld by all educational stakeholders. According to the

International Centre for Academic Integrity (2012), these values include honesty, trust, respect, fairness and responsibility. Knowledge of higher education context involves ensuring that research, teaching and learning are conducted honestly and fairly by faculty, staff and students alike which reflects economic visions of Ghana. This includes acknowledging the intellectual contributions of others, being open and accountable for one's actions, and exhibiting fairness and honesty in all aspects of scholarly endeavor as well as the services provided in higher education. It impacts on students and staff as well as the nation at large are in its core activities, and is fundamental to the reputation and standing of an educational provider and its members.

Financing higher education has always been a thorny issue for parents, policymakers, and other stakeholders in the arena of higher education. There are many models for financing higher education. However, whatever pertains in Ghana now with respect to financing higher education cannot serve as a modern nation-state. According to Penrose (1998), financial barriers account for some of the reasons why governments and administrations cannot provide the best education to its people. However, the financial management of education systems is frequently neither efficient nor effective. Again, the central government does not adequately fund these institutions leading to a lack of basic services such as professors, laboratories, equipment, housing, and other facilities so needed. Often the financial barriers and lack of incentivising collaborations can hinder U.S. and Ghanaian partners from maintaining sustainable scholarly and teaching activities.

The inadequate development of information and communication technology (ICT) and its tendency to promote the globalisation of knowledge poses several challenges to higher educational institutions in Ghana in collaboration with the U.S. For academia, in particular, the challenge will be how to sort out relevant information in their attempts to take advantage of the explosion of knowledge through the internet whilst remaining unique (Braimah, 2004). However, the cost of this technology is such that many institutions are likely to be isolated due to financial constraints. Institutional leaders who are unable to devise means of providing the appropriate environments for their constituents to take advantage of this globalisation or knowledge through the use of the internet should be prepared to face the threat of isolation and the pressure of demand for ICT. Others may be forced to provide such infrastructure at high cost unless they can secure some assistance from a donor.

Using Collaborations to Push Through Challenges

Ghana has an opportunity to begin the process of finding an equitable, but pragmatic formula for higher education finance. Moreover, there are additional opportunities to explore higher education formulas involving favorable collaborations between U.S. and Ghanaian higher education institutions. The next section examines the need for adult learning in Ghana. Decolonising knowledge or curriculum would help bridge the gap in skills and theories thereby fostering effective collaboration with the US. Subverting knowledge generation paradigms in Europe and Africa by de-centering the Global North and re-centering the Global South have the potential to promote research and develop research funds in many African higher education institutions. Furthermore, a systematic critique of dominant knowledge and reviewing reading material so as to avoid the tendency to remove and replace (shift from one fundamentalism to another — Eurocentrism to Afrocentrism). Decolonising the normative foundations of critical theory (progress, social evolution, emancipation, and development) and changing the dominant philosophies and ideas of human history requires the rethinking and retelling of concepts like truth and knowledge so as to break out of the current epistemic and systemic crisis. Learning to unlearn in order to re-learn: deliberate forgetting of what was intended for colonisation and privileging what is meant for liberation and freedom — a process of removal of the hard disk of coloniality and its software.

Changing the consciousness of teachers so as to appreciate the value of what students from diverse backgrounds bring to the academy. Reviewing philosophy of education to that which recognizes Indigenous knowledges which underscore students' rights to participate in the teaching and learning process as co-creators of knowledge not empty vessels to be filled. Again, reviewing assessment beyond fault-finding traditions that dehumanises new forms that affirm and empower. De-hierarchisation and democratisation of supervisor-student relationship to enhance throughout through building communities of practice such as cohort supervision and formal mentorship.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks provide a premise for a researcher's discourse. Denzin & Lincoln (2008) addressed how the concepts of truth, knowledge, subject, rationality, structure, power, and language can be explored through

a variety of theoretical frameworks that yield varying outcomes for a researcher's study. Our work intends to denote the importance of employing culturally conscious pedagogy and practice in higher education spaces through the application of chieftaincy, culturally relevant pedagogy, empowerment evaluation framework, and action research to conceptually inform our definition of culturally conscious pedagogy and practice.

Chieftaincy

The ancient governing practice of chieftaincy is richly rooted in Ghanaian culture, ontology, and epistemology. Often informed by Indigenous knowledges, Ghanaian culture serves as the foundation for our conceptual framework — a lens for which to employ decolonising practices and approaches to research.

Inherent in chieftaincy is service within the community as "custodians of communal lands and natural resources" (Boakye-Yiadom, 2012, p.30). Societal expectations require chiefs to use these resources for the upbuilding of their towns and villages. The institution of chieftaincy faces major challenges with national government interference, lack of accountability in some palaces, corruption, and exploitation of communal resources, and conflicts (Obeng, 1986; Boakye-Yiadom, 2012)—some would argue the challenges serve as implications of widely adopted post-colonial ideologies that contradict decolonisation.

Another important element of chieftaincy is the role of nobility, inclusive of characteristics like selflessness, integrity, rank, and virtue. Essentially, one's leadership is inextricably connected to their love for and responsibility to the people they are leading — "...work is love made visible" (Aidoo, 1977, pp. 40–41). Chiefs are accountable to their people and the socio-economic development of their localities (Boakye-Yiadom, 2012).

Finally, chieftaincy draws on an ethos of advisement and consultation with valued members in the community. It is quite common and expected that chiefs engage in participatory decision-making processes (Obeng, 1986; Boakye-Yiadom, 2012). Traditionally, their advisors include an okyeame or linguistic for the chief and the council of elders in the community (Yankah, 1995). The essence of such council as an okyeame is their functionality as oratory persuasionists, protectors of local languages, and gatekeepers of the spiritual exchange of languages between the chief and the community. This practice of both seeking advisement and mediating and preserving

languages connects chieftaincy to the very root of employing the decolonising practice.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) embodies valuing multiple ways of knowing. While this framework initially derived as a means for incorporating culturally inclusive teaching approaches in K-12 classrooms (Ladson-Billings, 1992;1995), the theoretical frame has expanded to incorporate higher education curricular and co-curricular spaces (Slee, 2010). Primarily, CRP requires educators to challenge the educational outcomes of normative culture by using culturally relevant approaches throughout the curriculum, allowing for a more critically conscious and inclusive educational environment (Gay, 2010). For the purposes of this paper, CRP helps to shape the discourse, language, knowledge, truth, perceptions of power, understanding of freedom, identifying the subject, ability to affect objectivity, determination of reality, method, and the type of science used (Lather, 1991; Maddox, 2011)—we use this frame to uncover the multiple ways of knowing we can employ in this post-truth era.

Empowerment Evaluation

Colleges are educating a more diverse and global population, and with it, is a need for more diverse practices of evaluation — recognising the importance of local knowledge and understanding from student's home countries. Self-evaluation is the most common form of assessment utilised today, even though many professionals are not adequately trained in academic evaluation. However, empowerment evaluation offers a more directive approach to self-evaluation (Donaldson, 2017). Empowerment evaluation has shown itself to be a valuable tool to use for evaluators who wish to have a better understanding of central issues that affect students from a diverse background (Fetterman, 2007; Miller & Campbell, 2006). The empowerment evaluation approach provides specific communities with the knowledge, as well as the tools, needed to establish, develop, monitor and evaluate their performance (Fetterman, 2007).

One of the most notable outcomes of empowerment evaluation is since the benefiting community has created their approach to the evaluation process it allows them to conduct the evaluation, read the results, understand

it, and trust the results (Fetterman, 2005). Therefore, the community accepts the results, and there is a higher chance that the community will use the results to make changes within their sector. Prominent scholars have shown that the principles of empowerment evaluation, of which there are ten, actively help community members and staff find ways to understand results better and establish ways to apply their results in order to make a difference (Fetterman, 2005; Miller & Campbell, 2006). Through our practice of culturally responsive pedagogy and inclusive programme assessment/ evaluation practices with our Ghanaian colleagues, the principles of empowerment evaluation were quite applicable to our real-world setting.

Action Research

Initially coined by Lewin (1946), action research employs a similar process of reflection like empowerment evaluation, but with a different approach, which allows for discussion of research and results among community members and their collaborators (Lewin 1946; Sagor, 2000). While Lewin (1946) originally focused on the impact action research would have on social action; today, educational practitioners use the approach to engage in research that is more task-oriented instead of relying on theoretical research (Watts, 1985). Particularly, Sagor (2000) indicates that action research employs research tools and real-world practical examples allowing educators to focus on problems they have identified as target areas for themselves (Sagor 2000; Watts 1985). Action research also promotes the use of already existing data to enhance the professional standing and efficacy of educators (Sagor, 2000). Similar to empowerment evaluation, action research encourages collaborative measures between colleagues which increases professional development and helps professionals to engage in meaningful research and evaluation (Watts, 1985). Our HEGC collaboration with Ghanaian higher education faculty and practitioners directly incorporated the tenets of action research.

Culturally Conscious Pedagogy and Practice in Higher Education

By employing the aforementioned theoretical frames to our approach, we enacted culturally conscious pedagogy and practice in our collaboration with our Ghanaian colleagues. Culturally conscious pedagogy and practice allow faculty and practitioners to challenge discriminatory and oppressive

constructs found in areas of race, sexuality and gender, and disability (Burr, 1995; 2003; Maddox, 2011). Moreover, culturally conscious pedagogy enhances the knowledgeable skill set educators have through specific evaluation measures which focus on real-world problems in a diverse setting (Donaldson, 2017; Sagor 2000). To further this body of literature, we partnered with Ghanaian education professionals to center Ghanaian and Indigenous ways of knowing. Our commitment to using culturally conscious pedagogy as a liberatory practice are outlined through our development and implementation of our high-impact study abroad programme.

HEGC Programme and Decentring Whiteness

Higher education has existed for hundreds of years, with the oldest universities dating back as early as 331 AD in Cairo, Egypt (Ajayi, Goma & Johnson, 1996; Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013). Despite the rich history of education starting and existing on the continent of Africa, western history suggests that higher education is a western concept. Tuck and Yang (2012) asserted that an effect of colonialism is the erasure of Indigenous histories and education. We expand this statement and posit that colonialism is the adoption of whiteness as it relates to dominant history, culture, and education.

As defined by McLaren (1997) "whiteness is a sociohistorical form of consciousness, given birth at the nexus of capitalism, colonial rule, and the emergent relationships among dominant and subordinate groups" (p.8). Whiteness can be defined as the adoption of feelings, cultural formations and social practices that value white and colonial ways of knowing and being. Although white people benefit from pervasive whiteness, white people do not need to be present for whiteness to exist. Institutions of higher education, by not attending to the full histories of society, associate themselves and are linked to colonial ideologies which center whiteness. With this in mind, instructors of the HEGC Programme were intentional about decentring whiteness and utilising decolonisation practices.

Decolonising practices can be defined as decentring Western ways of knowing and moving towards a critical consciousness. Tuck and Yang (2012) asserted that decolonisation is tied to settlers (and/or colonisers) giving up privilege and power, specifically as it relates to land. While we agree with this statement, for the scope of the HEGC programme, decolonisation was conceptualised by decentering western practices as the primary way of

knowing whilst introducing accepting different ways of knowing that center the experiences and voices of practitioners and students in Ghana. As noted by Afonja (2005), researchers are "challenged not just to produce knowledge that reflects African realities but also to alter the epistemological basis of knowledge production" (p.2). This is one of the primary goals of the HEGC Programme.

To accomplish the goals of the HEGC curriculum, HEGC! instructors incorporated reflection activities and readings that introduced students to new epistemological reframes informed by Ghanaian scholars. Prior to the in-country experience in Ghana, students were assigned readings [including *African Experience with Higher Education* by Ajayi, *et al*. (1996)] and reflections activities focusing on considering different forms of knowledge and knowledge acquisition. The readings focused on understanding neocolonialism, the educational context in Ghana and use of responsible assessment practices. Students engaged in self-reflection where they examined their multiple identities, reviewed concepts related to power and privilege, explored education in a West African environment and learned about Ghanaian culture. Students also learned about the various institutions in Ghana that were a part of the HEGC! Programme. Specifically, visiting with faculty, administrators, and students at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Ghana-Legon, University of Cape Coast, and Ashesi University. The in-country component of HEGC! programme further encouraged this exploration (Moore, Martin, & Boakye-Yiadom, 2018).

Participants immersed themselves in Ghanaian culture through various visits to socio-historical sites, including the Cape Coast Castle, the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum, the Ntso Craft Village, Kente Weaving Centre in Bonwire, and Assin Manso. These activities helped participants gain a deeper understanding of the history and context of Ghanaian culture. Each day, instructors and students engaged in a daily debriefing to make sense of their learning and continue decentering whiteness. Participants of HEGC! also engaged in participatory action assessment/programme improvement research by meeting with student affairs professionals from various institutions to learn about the varied needs of Ghanaian students. Particularly, partnering with professionals in specific units at the University of Cape Coast to address a unit identified concern. We served as collaborators working over the course of four months to collect information, collectively problem

solve, and develop a solution-focused approach in the Ghanaian context (Moore, Martin & Boakye-Yiadom, 2018). During this process, participants of the programme were intentional about using the knowledge and wisdom of Ghana to collaborate with Ghanaian higher education professions for programme enhancements. Moreover, while in-country, we engaged in a colloquium on the University of Cape Coast campus with student affairs professionals, faculty, and graduate students to exchange knowledges regarding higher education scholarship and practice in the Ghanaian context. After returning from the in-country component of the programme, participants continued to work collaboratively with Ghanaian higher education professionals. The culminating event for the HEGC! Programme was its international symposium, hosted in-person and virtually. Participants were able to reflect on their experiences while also sharing the final proposals that were developed in collaboration with Ghanaian student affairs and higher education professionals. The symposium also highlighted Dr. Michael Boakye-Yiadom as the opening plenary speaker, addressing the status of and opportunities for advancement in Ghanaian higher education. Our engagement in the symposium was essential to expanding the narrative of decentering whiteness in global collaborations, specifically with partners in the global South. The overall HEGC Programme continues to promote sustainable, culturally conscious collaborations in Ghana — while reflexively including multiple ways of knowing into our partnerships.

Implications and Recommendations for Practice in Higher Education

In this paper, we presented how we framed and implemented the Higher Education in the Ghanaian Context! (HEGC!) Programme as a culturally conscious practice that decentres whiteness and Western culture in higher education. We designed this programme to reframe higher education practice for participants and for them to understand other cultural perspectives that inform higher education. While Ghana is our context specifically, broadly, there is a need for contextualisation of higher education using culturally conscious practices. In this section, we offer implications for higher education policy, higher education institutions, and student affairs and services in higher education for the United States, Ghana, and countries all around the world who have so much to offer to how higher education is imagined and implemented.

Implication for Higher Education Policy

Whiteness, coloniality, and Western practice is embedded globally in higher education. In order to decenter this monolith government leaders, policy makers, and higher education leaders must create policies that serve a dual role of centering cultural context and phasing culturally conscious practices within higher education. Enacting these policies should centre on developing compelling culturally appropriate incentives that create buy-in for higher education institutional leaders. The focus of these policies should be on culturally conscious structures that reflect the culture in which the institutions reside. For example, Boakye-Yiadom (2015) acknowledges the chieftaincy culture in Ghana as an example of how leadership operates in the country. Higher education policy in the country should reflect chieftaincy in how institutions are structured and implemented curriculum.

Recommendations for Higher Education Policy

One of the benefits of Western higher education policy can be that it provides one perspective, so any enacted policy can consider Western higher education as an example that then is contextualised to the culture. As a result, many of the policies regarding higher education outside of higher education understandably draws from Western contexts given the successful massification of higher education (Trow, 2006) and the role that higher education completion has in the development of countries (Ludeman *et al.*, 2009). Higher education policy, in addition to centring culturally conscious practices, should consider how these newly created policies will be *phased in* and contextualised for the context (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013). In doing so, it acknowledges the gap that would result when there is just a removal of a practice without a phased in contextualisation of new practice. While policy is critical to provide the infrastructure and scaffolding, culturally conscious practice also has implications for higher education institutions to implement.

Implications for Higher Education Institutions

While policy provides a scaffolding, higher education institutions implementing culturally conscious practice should also consider how they contextualise policies, practices, and structures that primarily serve the subpopulations of students the institutions serve. As discussed earlier, there are several types

of higher education institution in Ghana that serve specific students and their needs. In order to understand how to contextualise higher education practice for their subpopulations, institutional leaders should outline the use of local knowledge of their institutions. Here, assessment and evaluation practices become critical in helping institutions to both harness knowledge about their students and use that local knowledge to contextualise higher education policy for their campuses. For the HEGC Programme, we incorporated action research and empowerment evaluation as both of these frames center the context and the individuals within the context.

Implications and Recommendations for Student Affairs and Services

Central to the HEGC Programme approach was a focus on partnering with the University of Cape Coast faculty and staff to identify collaborative research projects for the programme participants. Under the direction of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) partners, participants engaged in literature reviews, interviews, document reviews, and other information gathering mechanisms to support their project aims. Programme participants were able to learn about Ghanaian culture and higher education as well as apply their learning through their research and consultation projects using the frameworks described above. This technique centers the Ghanaian context and practitioners in identifying needs and priorities for the projects and working directly with students in accomplishing the project goals. As a result, Ghanaian practitioners share their knowledge and expertise with participants experientially rather than through the static banking approach in Western educational systems (Friere, 1972).

For higher education broadly, this technique illustrates how we can decenter knowledge as something that can be owned and commodified and collected as evidence of ownership, and rather move into what Patel (2016) calls *answerability*. According to Patel, "answerability means that we have responsibilities as speakers, listeners, and those responsibilities include stewardship of ideas and learning, not ownership" (p. 372). Within higher education, this is indicative of a privileging of knowledge, not for capitalistic gain or ownership, but in reverence and respect. This is a significant shift in how we think about both the gathering and dissemination of knowledge within Western higher education that affects how we think about the process of research, teaching and learning. In order to make

room for this relational knowledge, we also had to focus on our pedagogical approaches and techniques for the HEGC Programme.

In facilitating the HEGC programme, we were intentional about how we, as the programme directors, facilitated a learning environment for students. In our pedagogy, we stressed the need to decolonise our frames and contextualise these frames in terms of Ghanaian higher education. In every course session and in the reflections students submitted, we asked them to consider what we called a big question for the course: What can this experience teach me about my practice as a global leader in my field? This question had a two-fold purpose. Primarily, we wanted to give students a tool through which they could frame what they were learning, not just in terms of problems, but in terms of possibility. In this way, we follow de Sousa Santos' (2015) in his assertion that "our problems are practical, our questions productive" (p.16). Rather than having students wrestle with the tension of learning new information within a new context alone, we thought that this question, as well as all others students provided, were done in relation with each other and were productive. Secondly, the big question called programme participants to the critical need to connect their practice to the global. In this second reasoning, we were not seeking to make the students global leaders, rather we called attention to the need to contextualise practice to the localities rather than think about a global *best practice* that disregarded cultural elements to privilege the Western context as universal.

This intentional preparation sought to prepare participants for the Ghanaian context and to have them investigate how they have internalised coloniality as the mechanism through which programme participants learned about different cultural contexts. Further, the learning process for students was intentionally designed to question the structure of whiteness, revisionist histories of the ties between the United States and Ghana, and the realities of post-liberation contexts. The implications of this pedagogy are for higher education faculty to use decolonisation and anti-colonisation as a frame for creating course content and learning objectives. Further, as the American educational model is being rapidly replicated globally, this intentional pedagogical approach prepares students for a contextual rather than colonised approach to learning and application.

Conclusion

This paper has explored the experiences of student affairs practitioner and educators who engaged in decolonising practices through the HEGC

Programme. With decolonisation scholarship in mind, the authors engaged in this work without erasing the knowledge and experiences of the Ghanaian educators and students — rather those experiences were centred. Participants and instructors of the HEGC Programme were immersed in an educational and cultural experience where one of the key objectives was to understand student affairs and higher education practices in a non-Western context. They did this by engaging in relevant literature and meeting with educators, practitioners and even students who attended various universities in Ghana and engaging in empowerment evaluation.

In addition to empowerment evaluation, scholars of this work used several theoretical concepts to guide their work, including chieftaincy, culturally relevant pedagogy and action research. These concepts allowed the authors to decentre Western approaches to higher education assessment practices and promote knowledge acquisition in a culturally relevant manner.

The development of higher education is riddled with the effects of neocolonialism and colonialism. Many countries, including Ghana, are reframing educational policies which centre indigenous knowledge. This work does not come without its challenges, such as resistance to change and comfortability with the status quo. Additionally, global collaboration between Ghana and the U.S. was challenging because some Ghanaian leaders view the U.S. as experts in higher education, the U.S. does not have a full understanding of the barriers to higher education in a Ghanaian context, financing higher education and adequate development of information and communication technology. Despite the challenges, the authors argue decolonisation work and global partnerships are necessary for education in a Ghanaian (and American) context to successfully meet the needs of students.

We implore American higher education faculty to employ culturally conscious pedagogy and practices and engage in inclusive programme assessment/evaluation practices that support student success. We invite scholars and practitioners to explore research designs that incorporate our conceptual framework. By doing so, culturally conscious practices become a tool for decentering Western perspectives in higher education and begs the need to understand the context of the country — culture, history, and perspectives — rather than privileging American-Western operations. In addition, culturally conscious pedagogies and practices uplift, harvest, and cultivate other ways of knowing, being, and doing within higher education from which American practitioners can learn. Higher education has an

opportunity to transform global education in this *post-truth* era by employing multiple ways of knowing in the knowledge acquisition process.

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A Graduate Exit Survey in A Ghanaian University: Implications for Graduate Education

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Abstract

This paper assesses the perception on learning gains, educational experience, academic and non-academic support issues, facilities and resources available to support learning using the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) as a case. It examines its implications for graduate education in Ghana. The study adapted a set of questionnaires developed by Mohamed, Suja, & Ismail (2012). Three hundred questionnaires were administered with a return rate of 55.7%. Descriptive statistics were used to present the perception of participants. Relative Importance Index (RII) was used to analyse the relative importance of each variable of assessment facilities according to each responses weight. The graduate students' overall quality of learning was 92.3% (Good and above). The assessment of lecturer/supervisor in assisting students was rated 87.4% (Good and above), student/lecturer relationship was rated 89.8% (Good and above), student/administrative staff relationship was rated 83.2% (Good and above), and student/library staff relationship was rated 76.6% (Good and above). The result shows that three variables (security and safety, library resources and programme specific needs) were perceived positively by graduate students. Three variables (ICT and Internet Service, Administrative Support, Health and Counselling) were not positively perceived by graduate students. The study recommends for adequate systems, structures and resources to support graduate students. Capacity training is recommended for all staff; especially, administrative staff.

Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) around the world are using several quality assurance mechanisms to obtain information for improvement of their programmes. One such method, which has been used over the years, is students' satisfaction surveys. Students as major stakeholders in the teaching and learning process provide valuable information, which when analysed and used effectively, can provide positive feedback for improvement of any educational process (Simmons, 2002).

A report by Oklahoma State University on a Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey indicates that the perception of students on their

educational experiences can yield important information on the strengths of academic programmes as well as parts of the academic programmes that need some modification. The report further claimed "*data from student opinion surveys can be useful for demonstrating the best traits in a programme to prospective students, alumni, benefactors and, most importantly, the data can be useful for making informed decisions about programme improvements*". Mohamed, Suja and Ismail (2012) also indicated that a graduate exit survey is *a method of collecting information on the quality of graduate education from the perspectives of graduating students upon the completion of their degree programmes*.

In view of the above, HEIs put in place policies to guide them to enhance their teaching and learning processes as part of their quality assurance management. The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi, a public institution in Ghana has a Quality Assurance Policy, which calls for satisfaction surveys and tracer studies to be conducted to get feedback from students. The feedback is to be used in improving the teaching and learning process. It is currently unknown the extent to which such studies have contributed to the improvement of quality standards; especially, at the School of Graduate Studies (SGS). There was, therefore, the need to conduct an exit survey of student graduating from KNUST's SGS so the results could be used to improve the quality of educational programmes at the SGS in Kumasi, Ghana and similar institutions around the world.

Review of Related Literature

There is the need for HEIs graduates to be equipped with the relevant education to enable them function effectively in society. In recent times, the question of HEI equipping students with the needed skills to function in the world of work or create their own employment has arisen. According to Caricati (2016), universities worldwide are expected to play an important role in the process of introducing graduates into the labour market. Caricati holds the view that "educational institutions are called on to equip students with more than just academic skills, thereby helping them to meet the needs of commerce and industry." The learning gains by graduate students is therefore, important for them to become worthwhile citizens and contribute to societal development.

The above notwithstanding, Haworth (1996) observed some perceived mismatches between student expectations and realities of the work environment. There is therefore, the need to provide adequate support for graduate students to get the appropriate educational experience that are closer to the realities of the job environment.

Again, support from academic and non-academic staff is a crucial ingredient in graduate education especially when they need resources to work independently. Ismail (2013) quoting a National Centre for Education Statistics in 2007 report prepared for the United States Department of Labour on the status of adult learners in higher education specifically mentioned the importance of understanding their "unique needs". The report observed that such students face a myriad of challenges such as limited time and family commitments, which young students may not face. The report therefore, suggests among others that adult learners need more support than their younger counterparts.

The issue of quality assurance has become part and parcel of HEIs' buzz words. This is because, in the opinion of Coates (2005), students, academics, administrators and institutions need information about the quality of education for different purposes. For instance, on the part of students, they need information about the quality of the educational enterprise to decide on the choice of a course. In a different dimension, governments and other funding agencies rely on information with respect to the quality of education to influence their decisions on funding, accountability and policy directions. On the part of administrators and academic staff, such information assists them to assess and enhance programme content and delivery methods. For the above and many other reasons, issues about quality assurance has become part of higher education priorities (Coates, 2005).

In an exploratory study by Hill (1995) which observed a group of students' expectations and perceptions of service quality over time, he concludes among others that there was the need to gather information on "*students' expectations, not only during their time at university, but at the point of arrival and before, to manage students' expectations from enrolment through to graduation, in order to align them as closely as possible with what can be delivered by way of service quality, for the student evaluation process, or upward appraisal, to be dealt with in a much more detailed, comprehensive and multi-focused way"*. This presupposes that, higher education institutions need to measure the perception of students at each stage of the education ladder in order to

provide useful information to inform the way forward. This should be done not only during students' exit but even during their student days.

In another study conducted by Boateng (2014) on *Quality Assurance and Internationalisation in a Private University College*, the study concluded among others that *full engagement of students through the amount of time and effort put into teaching, learning and assessment as well as the commitment of more institutional resources, curricula and other learning opportunities are important to promote experiences that lead to more learning, satisfaction and successful graduation"*. The study which examined among others, quality assurance practice in a private university college in Ghana with the intention of improving teaching and learning especially for international students. This study further confirms that the views of students in ensuring quality in the provision of higher education is always paramount and is very consistent with the conclusions of other studies by Haworth (1996) and Hill (1995).

In the opinion of Okae-Adjei (2012), Ghana employs a multiplicity of quality assurance models. These are the command and control model, the professional self-regulatory model and the market model. However, the National Accreditation Board (NAB), the Ministry of Education (Tertiary) (MoE) and the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) also play significant roles in ensuring quality at the tertiary education level in Ghana.

A study on Eurograduate Feasibility which was undertaken by the German Centre for Research on Higher Education and Science Studies; the Institute for Advanced Studies, Austria; the Education Policy Centre, Charles University in Prague; and the European Students' Union, Belgium in 2016 focused on how a sustainable study on Europe's higher education graduates could be achieved. It came out among others that, there was high demand for graduate study among stakeholders. Again, "transition" and "employment" are central research questions and that graduate studies are common but the approaches to studying such phenomena are very heterogeneous. This lays credence to the fact that even though the studies are very important feedback mechanisms, the approach or methodology differ among stakeholders in HEIs.

A study by Mohamed, Suja and Ismail (2012) for graduate students from June 2010 to May 2011, produced information on learning gains, educational experience, academic and academic support issues as well as facilities and resources. The study found out that lifelong learning ability, comprehension and in depth understanding of field study, educational

experience, exposure to common and professional tools, commitment of the lecturers/supervisors in assisting students, assessment of academic and non-academic support issues and security and safety were among the top issues of concern to students. The study then concluded that there was indeed, considerable learning gains by students for all the programme outcomes created by faculty.

In another study Brookes (2003), concluded that student experience surveys have the potential benefits of aiding in quality management and enhancement in Schools. The paper informs on a number of advantages to be derived from the use of the views of students and concludes that the views of students are very important mechanisms to improve upon quality. In view of the foregoing, this study focused on assessing the learning gains, educational experience, academic and non-academic support issues, facilities and resources available to support learning at KNUST and examined their implications for post-graduate education at KNUST.

Research Questions

1. What were the learning gains that graduate students have obtained?

2. What were the educational experiences that graduate students have obtained?

3. How satisfied are graduate students in respect of academic and non-academic support provided for their studies?

4. How satisfied were graduate students in respect of availability of resources and facilities for learning?

Methodology

This study adapted a set of questionnaires developed by Mohamed, Suja and Ismail (2012). The validity and reliability of the questionnaires were re-tested because they were being used in a different geographical context although the previous study tested the validity and reliability. Two experienced senior faculty members at KNUST were asked to review them to ensure content validity and fitness for purpose.

The questionnaires consisted of the following parts: Respondents' Profile; Assessment of Learning Gains; Assessment of Educational

Experience; Assessment of Academic and Academic Support Issues; and Assessment of Facilities and Resources. The data for this study is primary data obtained by administering questionnaires to graduate students in KNUST. A convenient sampling method was used in the selection of respondents at the 2018 June graduation rehearsal event. In this study, 300 sets of questionnaires were distributed in two days. However, only 167 graduates (Masters – 146 and PhDs 21) responded, giving a return rate of 55.7%.

Data gathered was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 16.0. Descriptive statistics was used to present the perception of participants. Relative Importance Index (RII) was used to analyse the relative importance of each variable of assessment facilities according to each responses weight. The RII is given by

$$RII = \frac{\sum W}{A * N}$$

where; W is the weight given to each factor by the respondents and ranges from 1 to 5 (where Excellent = 5; Very Good = 4; Good = 3; Average = 2; Weak = 1); A is the highest weight (5 in this case) and N is the total number of respondents.

Results

Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic qualities of surveyed respondents of graduate students were their gender, educational financing, employment status and College of affiliation.

The result of Table 1 shows that majority (111) of the respondents were male, constituting 66.5% of the total number of respondents while 33.5% (56) were female respondents. The result also shows that 70.1% were employed, 16.8% were unemployed and 13.2% had a job offer. In terms of financing their education, 73.1% of the respondents were financing their education themselves, 14.4% had their financing from their parents/ guardians, 4.2% had their educational financing from their employers, 7.2% had their funding through scholarship and 1.2% from student loans. The result of Table 1 shows that majority (28.7%) of respondents were in CoS,

whereas the least (7.8%) were from CABE. 10.8% of the respondents were in CANR, 19.2% from CoHSS, 12.6% from CoHS and respondents from IDL constituted 14.4% of the surveyed respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographics Characteristics	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Gender		
Male	111	66.5
Female	56	33.5
Employment Status		
Employed	117	70.1
Unemployed	28	16.8
Job Offer was gathered on the study	22	13.2
Educational Financing		
Self-Financing	122	73.1
Parents/Guardians	24	14.4
Employer	7	4.2
Scholarship	12	7.2
Student Loan	2	1.2
College		
CABE	13	7.8
CANR	18	10.8
CoE	11	6.6
CoHSS	32	19.2
CoHS	21	12.6
CoS	48	28.7
IDL	22	14.4

Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2018.

*Key:
CABE: College of Art and Built Environment
CANR: College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
CoE: College of Engineering
CoHSS: College of Humanities and Social Sciences
CoHS: College of Health Sciences
CoS: College of Science
IDL: Institute of Distance Learning

Assessment of Learning Gains

The assessment of learning gains was divided into two levels; Master's and PhD. In assessing the learning gains, six statements related to Programme Outlines (POs) were provided and for each response, a Likert Scale of 1 to 5 was given with "1" indicating "Weak" and "5" indicating "Excellent".

Response to Master's Degree POs (146)

For the Master's level, the POs were as follows:

PO 1: Ability to acquire and apply fundamental and advanced knowledge in the field of study;
PO 2: Ability to integrate knowledge and manage advanced problems related to the field of study;
PO 3: Ability to execute research plan, analyse and deliver research results through written and oral presentations;
PO 4: Ability to understand the elements related to project planning and management;
PO 5: Ability to evaluate and make decision by considering social and environmental responsibilities that relate to ethics; and
PO 6: Ability to demonstrate lifelong learning skill and acquire additional knowledge

Table 2: Respondents' perception on programme outcomes (Master's degree)

		Responses				
PO		*Weak*	*Average*	*Good*	*Very Good*	*Excellent*
PO 1	No.	1	3	21	79	42
	%	0.7	2.1	14.4	54.1	28.8
PO 2	No.	3	3	20	69	51
	%	2.1	2.1	13.7	47.3	34.9
PO 3	No.	2	1	22	66	53
	%	1.4	0.7	15.1	45.2	36.3
PO 4	No.	4	7	42	59	34
	%	2.7	4.8	28.8	40.4	23.3
PO 5	No.	2	4	20	58	62
	%	1.4	2.7	13.7	39.7	42.5
PO 6	No.	2	4	22	55	63
	%	1.4	2.7	15.1	37.7	43.2

For PO 1, 54.1% of the respondents agreed that they positively gained ("Very Good"). Another 28.8% replied "Excellent" whereas 14.4% stated "Good". 2.1% of them chose "Average" and 0.7% chose "Weak".

On *ability to integrate knowledge and manage advanced problems related to the field of study* (PO 2), 47.3% responded "Very Good", and 34.9% of them stated "Excellent". A score of 2.1% was recorded for those that replied "Average" and "Weak" and the rest of 13.7% remarked "Good".

For PO 3 which was on a*bility to execute research plan, analyse and deliver research results through written and oral presentations*, 45.2% of respondents chose "Very Good", 36.3% chose "Excellent", 15.1% chose "Good", 0.7% said "Average" and the rest of 1.4% of them indicated "Weak" as their response.

On *ability to understand the elements related to project planning and management* (PO 4), 40.4% indicated "Very Good", 28.8% indicated "Good", 23.3% indicated "Excellent" and 4.8% indicated "Average". The rest making up 2.7% indicated a "Weak" response.

On PO 5, 42.5% responded "Excellent"; 39.7% responded "Very Good"; 13.7% indicated "Good"; 2.7% responded "Average"; and 1.4% said "Weak".

For PO 6, 43.2% of the respondents indicated an "Excellent" answer, 37.7% of them indicated "Very Good", 15.1% responded "Good", 2.7% indicated "Average" and 1.4% gave a "Weak" answer.

Response to PhD POs (21)

PhD graduates were also rated using a different set of POs. Table 3 depicts the percentage and number of answers in relation to the following PhD POs:

PO 1: Ability to demonstrate a systematic comprehension and in-depth understanding related to the field of study;
PO 2: Ability to demonstrate mastery of skills to formulate problems, design and implement research with scholarly strength;
PO 3: Ability to make critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;
PO 4: Ability to contribute new knowledge to the area of research and publish results of research through thesis and writings for publication at the international level;

PO 5: Ability to communicate with peers, scholarly communities and society at large concerning the field of expertise; and

PO 6: Ability to undertake lifelong learning skills necessary in fulfilling responsibilities to the society.

Table 3: Respondents' perception on programme outcomes (PhD)

		Responses				
PO		*Weak*	*Average*	*Good*	*Very Good*	*Excellent*
PO 1	No.	0	0	0	4	17
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.1	80.9
PO 2	No.	0	0	0	6	15
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.6	71.4
PO 3	No.	0	0	0	5	16
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.8	76.2
PO 4	No.	0	0	0	3	18
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.3	85.7
PO 5	No.	0	0	0	6	15
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.6	71.4
PO 6	No.	0	0	0	5	16
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.8	76.2

On PO 1, 80.9% of respondents indicated "Excellent" in their answer and the remaining 19.1% of responded "Very Good" as their response. For PO 2 (*ability to demonstrate mastery of skills to formulate problems, design and implement research with scholarly strength)*, 71.4% of them indicated "Excellent" response and the remaining 23.8% indicated a "Very Good" response.

For PO 3, 76.2% of respondents indicated "Excellent" and the rest of 23.8% rather indicated "Very Good" on this attribute. Responses on PO 4 were as follows: 85.7% of them indicated "Excellent" and the rest of 14.3% indicated "Very Good" response.

Responses on PO 5 were also as follows: 71.4% answered "Excellent" and the rest of the respondents making 28.6% posted "Very Good" in their response. On PO 6 which was on *ability to undertake lifelong learning skills necessary in fulfilling responsibilities to the society*, 76.2% respondents indicated "Excellent" and the rest of 23.8% indicated a "Very Good" response.

Assessment of Educational Experience

In addition to the assessment of learning gains, the educational experience of graduates (both Masters and PhDs) was tested with the following attributes:

E 1 The overall quality of the learning experience at the faculty;
E 2 The overall quality of the technical content of the programme;
E 3 Working in teams in order to solve problems;
E 4 Accessibility to information (such as scholarly journals, books, etc.);
E 5 Applying knowledge on environmental and ethical issues; and
E 6 Exposure to common tools (such as MS Word and Excel, etc.) and professional tools (such as AutoCad, Matlab, etc.)

Table 4: Respondents' perception on educational experience

		Responses				
E		*Weak*	*Average*	*Good*	*Very Good*	*Excellent*
E 1	No.	1	12	33	76	45
	%	0.6	7.2	19.8	45.5	27.0
E 2	No.	2	10	37	67	51
	%	1.2	6.0	22.2	60.1	30.5
E 3	No.	4	5	36	76	46
	%	2.4	3.0	21.6	45.5	27.5
E 4	No.	9	26	45	50	37
	%	5.4	15.6	26.9	30.0	22.1
E 5	No.	2	0	28	69	68
	%	1.2	0.0	16.8	41.2	40.8
E 6	No.	8	19	37	73	30
	%	4.8	11.4	22.2	47.3	18.0

For E 1, 45.5% of graduates responded that the *quality of the learning experience at the faculty* was "Very Good". Besides this, 27.0% indicated an "Excellent" learning experience quality, 19.8% believed that it was of "Good" quality, 7.2% thought it was rather on an "Average" quality while 0.6% felt it was of "Weak" quality.

Graduates assessing the *overall quality of the technical content of the programme* (E 2) returned a 60.1% score for "Very Good", 30.5% opined that the content was "Excellent", 22.2% of them posted "Very Good"

answer and 6.0% of them indicated an "Average" quality. A further 1.2% of them thought the quality was rather "Weak".

For E 3, the majority of respondents (45.5%) had faith in *working in teams in order to solve problems* by giving it a "Very Good" response, another 27.5% stated "Excellent" in teamwork while 21.6% gave it a "Good" rating. Graduates with a score of 3.0% expressed it as being on the "Average" and 2.4% indicated "Weak" answer.

E 4 pooled 30.0% of graduates that indicated a "Very Good" answer to *accessibility to information (such as scholarly journals, books, etc.),* 26.9% said it was "Good", 22.1% posted an "Excellent" answer, 15.6% said it was on the "Average" and the remaining 5.4% indicated "Weak" in their response. On the issue of *applying knowledge on environmental and ethical issues* (E 5), 41.2% of them stated "Very Good" with another 40.8% declaring it as "Excellent". Another 16.8% scored it as being "Good" and 1.2% opined that it was rather "Weak".

On E 6, that is *exposure to common tools (such as MS Word and Excel, etc.) and professional tools (such as AutoCad, Matlab, etc.),* 47.3% indicated a "Very Good" response while 22.2% responded as being "Good". A total of 18.0% indicated that it was "Excellent" and 11.4% saw it as being on the "Average" and the remaining 4.8% thought it was "Weak".

Assessment of Academic and Non-academic Support Issues

In the area of *Assessment of Academic and Non-Academic Support Issues*, respondents were asked to offer insights into the faculty delivery process. The two main threads of this is lecturer-student and academic support staff-student relationships. Five attributes were offered and they are given below:

R 1 Commitment of the lecturers/supervisors in assisting students;

R 2 Opportunities to meet the lecturers outside lecture hours in order to seek general advice and matters related to the course (For coursework programmes only);

R 3 The overall quality of student-lecturer relationship;

R 4 The overall quality of student-administrative staff relationship; and

R 5 The overall quality of student-library staff relationship

Table 5: Respondents' perception on student-staff/student-lecturer relationship

		Responses				
R		*Weak*	*Average*	*Good*	*Very Good*	*Excellent*
R 1	No.	9	12	36	66	44
	%	5.4	7.2	21.6	39.5	26.3
R 2	No.	14	18	32	56	47
	%	8.4	10.8	19.2	33.5	28.1
R 3	No.	8	9	41	72	37
	%	4.8	5.4	24.6	43.0	22.2
R 4	No.	11	17	54	63	32
	%	6.6	10.2	32.3	31.7	19.2
R 5	No.	14	25	51	57	20
	%	8.4	15.0	30.5	34.1	12.0

For R 1, 39.5% indicated "Very Good", 26.3% indicated "Excellent", 21.6% indicated "Good", a further 7.2% indicated "Average" and the rest of 5.4% indicated a "Weak" answer.

On R 2, 33.5% of respondents indicated "Very Good" and 28.1% said it was "Excellent". A further 19.2% indicated a "Good" answer while 10.8% reported that it was on the "Average" and 8.4% of them thought it was "Weak" in their opinion.

With respect to answers on R3, 43.0% opined that the quality was "Very Good", 34.6% thought it was "Good", another 22.2% indicated an "Excellent" answer, 5.4% indicated an "Average" response and the remaining 4.8% thought it was rather "Weak". For responses on R 4, 32.3% thought it was "Good", 31.7% ranked it as "Very Good", another 19.2% said it was "Excellent", 10.2% said it was on the "Average" and the remaining 6.6% indicated a "Weak" rating.

On R 5, 34.1% of them rated the *overall quality of student-library staff relationship* as being "Very Good", 30.5% indicated it was "Good", 15.0% opined that the quality was on the "Average", 12.0% indicated it was rather "Excellent" and the rest of 8.4% thought the quality was "Weak".

Assessment of Available Facilities and Resources

This section employed the Relative Importance Index (RII) to examine how the surveyed respondents perceive the six listed items in Table 6 as potential variables of assessment of available facilities and resources. This

is in view of the important catalyst role facilities and resources such as security and safety, library/ICT resources and administrative support systems play in the educational enterprise in enhancing student outcomes. Table 6 therefore, presents the responses of the respondents, the weight, RII values and by extension, their relative ranks.

Table 6: Assessment of Available Facilities and Resources

Stakeholder Management Issues	*Responses*					*RII*		
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*Weight*	*RII*	*Rank*
Security and Safety	7	14	50	61	35	665	0.796	1
Library Resources	14	10	46	59	38	598	0.716	2
Programme Specific Needs	13	16	49	50	39	587	0.703	3
ICT and Internet Services	16	18	58	57	18	544	0.651	4
Administrative Support	15	22	65	51	14	528	0.632	5
Health and Counselling	28	41	49	33	16	469	0.562	6

Rank: (Excellent = 5; Very Good = 4; Good = 3; Average = 2; Weak = 1)

The results of the Relative Importance Index (RII) in Table 6 above indicates that the six most perceived variables of assessment of available facilities and resources include: (1) security and safety (RII = 0.796); (2) library resources (RII = 0.716); (3) programme-specific needs (RII = 0.703); (4) ICT and internet services (RII = 0.651); (5) administrative support (RII = 0.632) as well as (6) health and counselling (RII = 0.562).

The result of this study asserts that the first three variables of end users' perception of assessment of available facilities and resources are the best perceptions of stakeholders since their RII values fell above the minimum importance threshold value of 0.700. However, the result of this study asserts that the last three variables of end users' perception of assessment of available facilities and resources are not perceived to be good since their RII values fell short of the minimum importance threshold value of 0.700.

Discussions and Recommendations

The study observed that:

- Graduate students indicated an acquisition of lifelong learning skills

for societal responsibilities. From the above, it can be inferred that the acquisition of lifelong learning skills by the graduate students sampled is consistent with observation by Caricati (2016) who also indicated that graduate students need such skills to become worthwhile citizens.

- The graduate students' overall quality of learning was good. As indicated by Mohamed, Suja and Ismail (2012), such information is vital in planning for improvement in students' educational experiences.

- The rating of administrative and library staff which was observed to be good was consistent with similar observation by Ismail (2013) who also observed that graduate students who most often are adult learners need greater assistance from academic support centres and people.

- The result of this study asserts that three variables (security and safety, library resources and programme specific needs) are perceived positively by graduate students sampled since their RII values fell above the minimum importance threshold value of 0.700.

- The result of this study further indicates that three variables (ICT and internet service, Administrative Support and Health and Counselling) are not positively perceived by graduate students sampled since their RII values fell below the minimum importance threshold value of 0.700.

Recommendations for Graduate Education and Training

The implication of the study is that HEI must appreciate the changing trends in higher education which is attracting students from diverse backgrounds; especially, the working class and device support systems that facilitate their studies. This implies that institutional support for graduate students should be adequate and supportive.

In view of the foregoing, the study makes the following recommendations:

- HEI must have policies and mechanisms in place to obtain student

feedback as part of the quality assurance systems. The system must have the right human resources with the technical know-how to effectively gather such data for management decisions.

- Adequate resources such as health care and counselling system must be made available to graduate students who are adults and often work independently.
- The cornerstone of every graduate programme is the library and access to it through electronic means. Therefore, internet access must be improved especially in developing countries. This will assist students to conduct their research with ease.
- Support system is very important for graduate education and training. There is the need to build the capacity of all those involved in graduate education; especially in the areas of administrative assistance and human relation training. This will assist such staff to appreciate and anticipate the needs of graduate students so they could provide the needed support for them to complete their programmes in good time.
- The orientation given to graduate students must be evaluated to see if it helps them to succeed in their programmes of study. This will serve as good feedback mechanism for the design and delivery of any orientation programme for graduate students.
- Lastly, mentoring and coaching system could be introduced to further support students.

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The Role of Lesson-drawing in Ensuring the Success of Teachers' Continuing Professional Development in Ghana's Educational System

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Abstract

In recent years, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers has received considerable emphasis in many countries across the world. In Ghana, the changing professional context and status of teachers in recent times has led to unprecedented investments in CPD for teachers. However, critical observations of CPD practices and activities of teachers across the country suggest that the impact of these CPD policy initiatives are minimal, as teachers do not seem to be taking advantage of the CPD opportunities available to them. This paper sought to understand the complexities surrounding teacher professional learning in the Ghanaian educational system. Drawing extensively on the works of Richard Rose, the paper proposes 'lesson-drawing' as a potential strategy that might better help to get Ghanaian teachers to make positive impacts on CPD policy, research and practice. Essentially, the paper shares insights on the lesson-drawing processes to drum home the point forcefully that teachers can undertake a plethora of CPD programmes and professional learning sessions, but that whether or not they are able to derive anything useful from these arrangements depend on how they are helped to draw and apply useful lessons, both from their own reflective practices and contexts, and those of other practitioners.

Introduction

In Ghana, the issue of teachers' continuing professional development[1] (CPD) has assumed increasing importance, just as countries across the world are also making unprecedented investments[2] to ensure that teacher professional learning[3] takes hold in their educational systems. This renewed interest in CPD and teacher professional learning globally manifests itself in a number of interesting ways, including, but not limited to, the number and varieties of research and/or academic articles published in academic journals, particularly those relating to teacher professional development. Citing the journal of *Professional Development in Education*, a UK based international high impact peer-reviewed professional journal for teachers as a case in point, Kennedy (2014), for example, suggests that an appraisal of the articles in

most recent issues of this journal illustrates a number of significant sub-themes indicating the trends in CPD in recent times. She argues that a significant proportion of the literature on teachers' CPD in *Professional Development in Education* reports on examples of initiatives in particular local or national contexts. She cites published articles, namely: 'Development of teacher leadership: A multi-faceted approach to bringing about improvements in rural elementary schools in Pakistan' (Ali, 2014); 'An innovative model of professional development to enhance the teaching and learning of primary science in Irish schools' (Smith, 2014); and 'US urban teachers' perspectives of culturally competent professional development' (Flory *et al.*, 2014) to illustrate this point.

Other equally important sub-themes Kennedy (2014) identifies to buttress her argument about efforts being made to promote teacher professional learning in various contexts include the body of literature relating to: particular 'types' or 'models' of CPD, for example, 'Developing a model for continuous professional development by action research' (Herbert and Rainford, 2014); meta-analysis of existing studies on the conditions for, or characteristics of, effective CPD (Cordingley, 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2007,Timperley *et al.,* 2007); the impacts of teacher engagement in CPD (Guskey, 2002, Chetty, *et al.,* 2012, King, 2014); teacher professional learning and policy studies (Burstow and Winch, 2014); and studies that look at the professional lives of teachers across their career lifespan (Day *et al.*, 2007: Tang and Choi, 2009).

Clearly, these sub-themes put together, mirror, albeit in part, the broad range of attempts being made the world over, particularly by academic and research institutions ultimately to enhance professional capabilities of teachers to benefit their educational systems. Thus, noticeably, Kennedy's (2014) typology of published articles show evidently that in recent decades, the topic of CPD has been researched extensively and many strategies and initiatives have been developed and are being implemented to improve the quality and effectiveness of professional development for teachers. This shows clearly that generally speaking, professional development is considered to be the primary mechanism that schools can use to help teachers continuously improve their professional knowledge, competences, skills and effectiveness over time.

In a working paper commissioned by the OECD, Coolahan (2002), locates these developments in CPD arrangements within the wider policy agenda of lifelong learning and identifies certain desirable characteristics,

pertaining to successful in-service provision as is being practiced by countries across the world. These characteristics include:

- incorporation of CPD initiatives(i.e. both on and off-site school dimensions);
- increasing the role of teachers in setting the agenda and being actively engaged in an experiential process;
- promoting training of teachers to assist teachers to work with their peers as facilitators and team leaders;
- emphasising collaborative, interactional techniques of learning rather than delivering lectures to large groups; and
- promoting teacher development within the context of school environment with more and more schools being encouraged to engage in collaborative development planning (Coolahan, 2002, cited in Fraser *et al.*, 2007).

It is clear from the above that sub-Saharan African countries are not left out of the developments enlisted by Coolahan (2002) relative to attempts to improve teacher professionalism and continuous learning. In Ghana, which is the focus of the current article, the changing professional context and status of teachers in recent times coupled with curriculum reform changes has resulted in unprecedented investments in teacher professional learning generally. Currently, professional development programmes, topics and objectives for educators currently in Ghanaian schools take various forms, including but not restricted to:

- training teachers to conduct action research to gain knowledge and understanding of what is working or not working in the schools' academic programmes, and using the findings (of the action research) to improve educational quality and results;
- pairing of 'new' and beginning teachers with more 'experienced' mentor teachers of instructional coaches who model effective teaching strategies, expose less-experienced teachers to new ideas and skills, and provide constructive feedback and professional guidance;

- working with teacher colleagues in *professional learning communities* to develop teaching skills or create new inter-disciplinary courses that are taught collaboratively in teams;
- assisting teachers to develop specialised skills for teaching and supporting certain populations of students, such as students with additional learning support needs or students who are not proficient in English Language;
- training teachers to improve fundamental teaching techniques, such as how to manage classrooms effectively, or how to frame and use questions in ways that elicit deeper thinking and more substantive answers from students;
- encouraging teachers furthering their education to earn additional formal teaching and/or professional certification from recognised or approved institutions of higher learning; and
- enabling teachers, through professional development programmes, to acquire leadership skills that can be used to develop and coordinate school improvement initiatives to raise students' achievements and performance (Transforming Teacher Education and Learning [T-TEL] Project, 2017).

Admittedly, the design, purposes, and funding for organising these, and the other CPD regimes for Ghanaian teachers vary widely from place to place and from school to school. However, the point remains to be made generally that the issue of Ghanaian teachers' professional development is considered very important and therefore is expected to take the form of comprehensive, sustained and intensive approach(es) to improving teachers (and inadvertently headteachers') effectiveness in raising students achievement (T-TEL Project, 2017). Important as this is, or may sound, critical observations of CPD practices and activities of teachers across the country recently, however, suggest, in rather stark terms, the impact of these CPD policy initiatives to be minimal, as teachers do not seem interested and/or are not making the best out of the CPD opportunities being made available to them.

This paper seeks to offer a perspective on the complexities surrounding teacher professional learning in the Ghanaian educational system to help

unravel this change conundrum. In the process, the article adopts the unfashionable sociological and post-modernist thinking which precludes that in the analysis of complex social issues it is better to 'look elsewhere' (in addition to the discipline in question) for theoretical insights to help unravel the intricacies of the situation or problem (Ball, 1994; Trowler, 1998; Nudzor, 2009). Essentially, and in response to the policy/practice gap illuminated regarding teachers' CPD in the Ghanaian context, the article proposes lesson-drawing, based on an extensive review and synthesis of the works of Richard Rose (1974, 1983, 1988, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c, 1991d, 1993 etc.) as a potential strategy that might better help to get Ghanaian teachers to make positive impacts on CPD policy, research and practice. Thus, this article resounds the thesis forcefully that teachers can undertake a plethora of CPD programmes and sessions, but that whether or not they are able to derive anything useful from these arrangements depend on how they are helped to draw and apply lessons both from their own reflective practices and those of other practitioners. So while the focus of the article is on gaining understanding of the intricacies involved in teacher professional learning in the Ghanaian education system, the approach adopted reverberates the assumption, albeit implicitly, that combining theoretical perspectives offers complimentary analytic 'tools' and a complete picture than any one theory.

The Context of Teacher Professional Training and Reform Activities in Ghana

Teacher education reforms have become a key feature of contemporary education systems globally. In sub-Saharan Africa, and in Ghana in particular, the idea of a reform to address the problem of not providing enough opportunities for pre-service teachers to learn teaching in the context of 'real' classrooms have been on the policy reform 'table' since the 1990s (Akyeampong, 2017, cited in Ansah, Nudzor and Awuku, 2018). In 1995, owing to this and other major concerns regarding pupils learning vis-à-vis the performance of pupils in major examinations, teacher education curriculum in Ghana was reformed to move away from a highly teacher-centred approach to teaching to that of a student-centred one (Akyeampong, 2017). In 2004, yet another major reform occurred, this time, with a focus on teaching practicum to enable pre-service teachers to gain better classroom experience prior to actual professional practice. This reform sought to or

was intended to reduce the time pre-service teachers spend in residential teacher education institutions and to devote more time to teaching practicum (Ansah *et al.*,2018).

Recently in 2012, the Ghanaian teacher education system has experienced yet another major reform in respect of its initial teacher training arrangements at large. By an Act of Parliament (Act 847), all Colleges of Education (CoE) in Ghana were elevated to tertiary education status. By this Act, all the CoE across the country have been enabled to offer tertiary programmes in teacher education. Their new status also required reforms to their operations in order to be effective and efficient as tertiary institutions in producing high quality teachers for the pre-tertiary education sub-sector in Ghana. Their elevation from pre-tertiary to tertiary status has further brought with it the need re-engineer their operations to align with practices of tertiary education institutions and also to improve the quality of training of pre-service teachers, in order to address the issue of poor learning outcomes in pre-tertiary education (T-TEL Project, 2017).

In line with these expectations, the Government of Ghana, with funding assistance from UK's Department for International Development (DFID), introduced a four-year programme christened Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) with an implementation period from 2014 to 2018.[4] Essentially, the T-TEL project aims, among other things, to support pre-service teacher professional development and management in order to strengthen pre-service teacher education to produce professionally effective and efficient teachers for the country's pre-tertiary education (Ansah *et al.*, 2018). To achieve its enormous aims, the T-TEL programme of activities focuses on change agenda in a wide range of core areas of teacher education, including, but not limited to:

(1) Training and coaching for CoE tutors in Mathematics, English Language and Science, and eventually generic materials for all tutors;
(2) Support for the management of CoEs and training of its leaders;
(3) Support to reform the pre-service curriculum;
(4) Support to develop Teacher Standards document;
(5) Support to develop more effective student practicums;
(6) Working with the Ministry of Education (MOE) and regulatory bodies on the implementation of existing policies for teacher education;

(7) Instituting a Challenge Fund to which CoEs and their partner districts, schools and institutions/agencies will be able to apply to carry out innovative change initiatives;
(8) Instituting a set of incentives for CoEs to improve their management and training delivery (T-TEL Project, 2017, cited in Ansah *et al.*, 2018).

In collaboration with the MOE and the Ghana Education Service (GES) together with national-level institutions such as the National Teaching Council (NTC), National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), National Accreditation Board (NAB), National Inspectorate Board (NIB), College of Education Teachers Association of Ghana (CETAG), five public universities in Ghana (namely the Universities of Cape Coast, Ghana, Education-Winneba, Development Studies, and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology) and the CoEs themselves, several policy reform intervention activities have been implemented by T-TEL[5] (Ansah *et al.*, 2018). Majority of these interventions related to pre-service teacher training were, and are still being implemented directly in the CoEs. Others (especially those relating directly to in-service teachers CPD) were, and are being implemented for teachers in service with the GES.

In relation particularly to pre-service teacher training, the MOE, with the assistance from T-TEL, has implemented (and still continues to implement) a host of initiatives aimed at giving the next wave of teachers the right core and technical skills from the start of their careers, by improving the quality of teaching and learning in all 46 CoEs. For example, across Ghanaian CoEs currently, college tutors are being equipped to support the skills development and empowerment of student teachers to deliver improved learning outcomes for Ghana's school population. Typically, in this respect, an embedded support model is being used to reach over 1500 college tutors through weekly coaching sessions. Through these sessions, tutors are strengthening their knowledge of course content and their skills in teaching methodologies — including the use of teaching and learning materials — to ensure that student teachers are receiving the training they need to become competent and knowledgeable teachers. As a result of the weekly professional development (PD) sessions, three out of four English, Mathematics and Science college tutors are now beginning to demonstrate student-focused teaching methods (T-TEL Project, 2017). Aside this, the pre-service curriculum has been reformed quite recently to, among other

things, give more opportunities for student teachers to teach in classrooms right from the start of their training rather than teaching only in their third year of training. Similarly, and as an inherent part of the pre-service teacher curriculum reforms, student teachers are now given the opportunity to specialise as early childhood, primary or junior secondary teachers from the start of the course. In addition, the MOE has recently upgraded the diploma into a four-year Bachelor of Education degree, to raise its standing among those considering careers as teachers.

Regarding in-service reforms, the MOE and T-TEL have embarked on a number of initiatives geared towards enhancing teacher professional learning. Notable among these is the training programmes to enhance the capacity of teachers to undertake action research to gain knowledge and understanding of educational issues, and to be able to use the research findings to improve educational quality and results. Other initiatives undertaken by the MOE and GES through the T-TEL project activities include, but limited to: training teachers to improve fundamental teaching techniques, such as how to manage classrooms effectively, or how to frame and use questions in ways that elicit deeper thinking and more substantive answers from students; and giving teachers opportunities, through professional development programmes, to acquire leadership skills that can be used to develop and coordinate school improvement initiatives to raise students' achievements and performance (T-TEL Project, 2017).

Thus,the intended outcome of the implementation of these programmes of activities is the development of teachers who can demonstrate interactive, student-focused instructional methods which put learners at the centre of teaching and learning activities and processes. Typically, by implementing interventions in these core areas of teacher education, it is expected that the issue of teacher professional learning among Ghanaian basic school teachers would have improved tremendously to bring about desired changes in teachers performance vis-à-vis students learning outcomes. Interestingly, however,critical observations of CPD practices and activities of teachers across the country, as noted earlier, suggest, in rather stark terms, the impact of these CPD policy initiatives to be minimal, as teachers do not seem interested and/or are not making the best out of the CPD opportunities being made available to them.[6] In some instances, teachers are unwilling to attend CPD programmes organised unless they are remunerated. In some other instances, teachers attend the CPD programmes organised for them alright, but for some reason, they find it difficult translating whatever lessons

they have learned and experiences they have gained into practice to help them improve upon their own competencies to be able to bring about desired improvements in students achievement.[7]

So what is responsible for this conundrum whereby teachers are equipped through CPD engagements to transform pupils' learning experiences and outcomes, but find it difficult to deliver in practice? Alternatively, the multi-million-dollar question that begs asking is how can this situation be altered to ensure that desired intensions underlying teachers' CPD and/or teachers' professional learning are attained? Based on an extensive review and synthesis of the works of Richard Rose, it is suggested that lesson-drawing should be adopted as a strategy to encourage Ghanaian teachers to begin to make positive impacts on CPD policy, research and practice.

Lesson-drawing as a Strategy for Enhancing Teacher Professional Learning

Like policymakers, when teachers seek the resolution of pressing problems confronting them, the starting point usually is a question: What to do? In the hope of finding possible answers to the 'what to do' question, a search, instrumentally of their own experience (and possibly what is done elsewhere) is undertaken. Most often, because they (i.e. teachers) have a large chunk of experience on which to draw, methods of lesson-drawing or questions relating to the aptness of prescriptions are rarely raised. They tend to take for granted that they know what questions to ask and what experience is relevant when prescribing actions on the basis of unselfconscious lesson-drawing (Rose, 1993). Although rational, this 'piecemeal' approach to seeking solutions to problems has proven not to work all the time, particularly in relation to complex educational issues. In lesson drawing, the collection of stories about how 'others' deal with their problems has proven to be relevant but insufficient. In order to draw a lesson to effect desired change(s) in practice, it is necessary for teachers to search analytically rather than anecdotally. As Rose (1993, p.19) aptly put it in the context of public policy, "in order to draw a valid lesson, searchers must be more than mere travellers; they should understand the principles and practice of lesson-drawing".

So what is lesson-drawing, and how can it help bring about improvement in teachers' CPD and professional learning for that matter? Naturally, every teacher can draw on two types of experience: his or her

own professional knowledge and dispositions about teaching, and those of others. Defined broadly, lesson-drawing fundamentally is a process involving learning that occurs from observing one's own experiences or the experiences of others, either consciously or unconsciously across space and time. In the context of public policy, Rose (1991c, 1991d, 1993) describes lesson-drawing as concerned with whether or not programmes are fungible. That is, whether or not they are capable of being put into effect in more than one place. Put differently and simply, lesson-drawingis about drawing logical and empirically sound conclusions from observing experience in the past, or in other places.

From the definitions espoused herein, a number of distinctive features of lesson-drawing appeal and must be distilled to illustrate its usefulness to teacher professional learning. First, from the illustrations above, lesson-drawing is portrayed as a practical activity or process concerned with making prescriptions that can be put into effect with the aim of bringing about desired outcomes. Lessons are not learned merely for learning sake. They are tools for actions. Teachers know too well that their main task as teachers is to assist learners to bring about improvement in their learning outcomes. However, knowledge of the whole gamut of teaching approaches and methods is no assurance that teachers will know how to design programmes of activities to achieve this goal. Borrowing programmes that are effective from elsewhere is also not a guarantee of success in this endeavour. Rather, understanding under what circumstances, and to what extent programmes of activities effective elsewhere will work in one's context is an essential element in lesson-drawing. Seen in this light therefore, the practicality of lesson-drawing is seen in its deep consideration of the circumstances under which lessons are drawn, as well as an assessment of the consequences of putting something similar in effect elsewhere (Rose, 1993).

Second, the expositions indicate, albeit implicitly, that lessons drawn from the process of lesson-drawing need not necessarily be positive, but can also be negative. Positive lessons lead to prescriptions regarding what ought to be done. Enthoven (1990, p.55) puts this aptly in the context of public policy analysis. He explains that "the really interesting questions [in lesson-drawing] are how to identify and design politically feasible incremental changes in each country that have a reasonably good chance of making things better" (cited in Rose 1993, p.ix). In this regard, Enthoven (1990, p.58) goes on to argue that each country can get useful ideas from others about how to do this. On the other side of the coin, lessons can also be

negative. Examples of negative lessons identify *what not to emulate*. A good example to illustrate this is the statement of Mikhail Gorbachev, concerning the collapse of Soviet communism. Gorbachev after the fall of the Soviet Union is said to retort that, "That model has failed which was brought about in our country. And I hope that this is a lesson not only for our people but for all peoples" (quoted in Lichfield, 1991). The point here is that a lesson can conclude with a positive endorsement of an initiative taking hold in a context, or be a negative warning of difficulties in imitating what is done elsewhere. This thus serves inherently as a piece of advice to teachers to the effect that in their daily routines in lesson-drawing, they ought to give deep considerations to what ought to emulate and what not to.

Third, the definitions illustrated in this article point covertly to lesson-drawing as a normative activity. Aside from it being practical, in the sense that it is concerned with whether or not the prescription can be put into effect, lesson-drawing is normative in so far as a prescription that a programme in effect elsewhere should be applied 'here' is a statement about what ought to be done. The implication of this simply is that lesson-drawing is not only about how to learn lessons, but even more about what lessons ought to be learned. Brought into the context of the discussion in this article, lesson-drawing is portrayed in the definitions espoused herein as having the propensity to offer guidance to teachers in consideration of what lessons they ought to learn in their professional lines of duty. As Rose (1993, p.xi) summarizes it aptly, the emphasis here is not on explaining how learning occurs and/or the processes involved. Instead, it is on giving and/or offering teacher practitioners guidance in drawing lessons from their everyday actions, and on evaluating critically their prescriptions to problems based on what are claimed to be 'proven lessons' from other 'times' and 'places'.

Fourth, lesson-drawing is portrayed as well in the definitions espoused in this article as having a theoretical element. In lesson-drawing as a process, concepts are required to generalise from experience in two different 'places', and to formulate hypotheses about whether a programme can effectively transfer from one place to another (Rose, 1991a, 1991c, 1991d). The concepts and hypotheses implicit or explicit in lesson-drawing are generic. That is, they are applicable in principle to many places. As such, as the term is used here, a lesson is more than a historian's case study. It refers specifically to problems found in at least two different societies. The point therefore about whether or not teachers are able to put into effect lessons

learned from CPD sessions hinges on their knowledge and ability to conceptualise lessons in such a way that enable them to theorise, either from their own experiences or the experiences of other practitioners, regarding how a programme they deem as successful in one jurisdiction can work out successfully in another context when transferred.

Fifth, and importantly, the definitions in this article indicate quite strongly that lesson-drawing bridges time and space. The time dimension is necessarily a part of lesson-drawing, in that teachers most often search for lessons that will alter what they do in the future. The time dimension is ever present whether teachers search their own past for lessons of what worked before or seek to evaluate whether a lesson drawn from current experience elsewhere will improve their own practice in the future. Searching for lessons across space, on the other hand, is a practice known to America's Founding Fathers (Rose, 1993). They (i.e. Founders of modern day America) studied conscientiously the British constitution to learn how to avoid faults of governance that led to them to revolt against the British Crown. Today, American federalism is often characterised as a laboratory for experiment. A programme developed in one state or city can be examined by other states or cities for lessons about how to improve policies. This act of seeking solutions to problems from elsewhere is what is referred to as leaning across space. The basis for the practice of learning across space rests on the maxim that in an increasingly open environment, teachers dissatisfied with their present performance can seek for lessons from programme of activities that appear to be working elsewhere.Understandably therefore, the thesis underpinning lesson-drawing as bridging time and space involves a return to the original idea of social science, which was both 'comparative' and 'theoretical' (Rose, 1993, p.x). Put differently for the purposes of this article, lesson-drawing as bridging time and space simply infers that teachers would be effective at arriving at general propositions for improving their practice, if aside from learning from self-introspection, they observe and compare differences in the ways in which other practitioners respond to the common problems of teaching.

So clearly, the discussion in this section of the paper has highlighted lesson-drawing as a pre-condition and a determinant for teacher professional learning. Essentially, the section attributes the issue of teachers' inability and/or difficulty to transfer lessons learned from CPD programmes into practice inadvertently to their lack of understanding of the principles and practices of lesson-drawing, and hence their uncritical reflection on their

own practice and those of other practitioners in times of need. Thus, the section (and by extension the paper) makes the point strongly that for a CPD programme for teachers to translate visibly into practice, the import and export of such a programme can be valid only if systematic care is taken, through lesson-drawing, in analysing under what circumstances and to what extent such a programme in effect in one context could apply and be effective in another. The bottom line, as Rose (1993, p.xi) sums it up is that "even in the jet age, there is nothing wrong with suggesting that the policymakers [in this case teacher practitioners] should be able to walk through the steps necessary to learn from experience before they rush to the airport".

Lesson-drawing Processes

Having defined lesson-drawing and gone on to distil some of the key concepts underpinning its usage and operation in the previous section, the next task is to elucidate the processes of lesson-drawing to help put in context its usefulness as a strategy to enhancing teacher professional learning. The process of drawing a lesson involves four analytically distinct stages or steps (Rose, 1993, p.27). The first is searching experience for programmes that, in another place or time, appear to have brought satisfaction. Second, it is necessary to abstract a cause-and-effect model from what is observed. The third stage is to create a lesson, that is, a new programme for action based on what has been learned elsewhere. Finally, a prospective evaluation is needed to estimate the consequences of adopting the lesson, drawing on empirical evidence from elsewhere, and speculating about what will happen in the future if the lesson is applied. For clarity of purpose regarding what needs to be done at each step of the process, the stages of the lesson-drawing process is discussed crisply.

Searching Experience

The first step in drawing a lesson is to search for information about programmes that have been introduced elsewhere to deal with a problem similar to that confronting the searcher(s). In this endeavour, four key pointers are worth considering, especially for the purposes of arriving at or getting the required information that searchers seek. One, searchers need to know that the potential scope for the search is or may appear vast, yet the starting

point is not at random. This means that searchers must have a clear purpose of the search in mind and must begin the search on this premise.

Two, searchers should know that searching can extend across time and space, depending on the problem at hand. Regarding time, it is important for them to know that in education, just like in budgeting, officials normally search the past, comparing expenditures from previous years with this year's expenditures and proposals for next year's expenditures (Wildavsky, 1988, cited in Rose 1993, p.28). It is again important for them to rationalise the point that in some other instances, particularly those relating to capital expenditures on major projects such as roads and bridges, searchers may search the future for an estimate of the use that is likely to be made of a proposed highway or bridge after it is built (Rose, 1993). The point here is for searchers to know that searching across time for lessons is not a fixed activity that always commences from the present into the future. The very opposite is possible. Searching across space, on the other hand, is influenced normally by the level of government and/or system at which a problem arises. Normally, local/district officials turn to parallel agencies in other local areas/districts; regional officials to other regional officials; and national officials, in addition to examining their own past, may look to their counterparts in foreign countries for solutions to problems they face. Thus, lesson drawing across space is underpinned essentially by the 'globalist view' which holds that in an international system that is becoming increasingly open, ideas can flow across national boundaries as well as across state and local boundaries (Rose, 1991a, 1991c, 1991d, 1993).

Three, searchers also need to bear in mind that the object of the search is to find a programme or programmes that 'work'. To this end, it is important that a technical judgement that a programme is effective is not confused with a political judgement. A programme that works differs from one that cannot be implemented. From a political point of view, a programme works if it produces more satisfaction that dissatisfaction within the government responsible for it. From a narrowly technical perspective, however, we can say that a programme works if it has been implemented and remains in effect. So clearly, it is this narrowly technical view of 'what works', rather than the political view, that is what is being sought for within the context of lesson-drawing.

Four, it is important for the searchers seeking information about what works from other contexts to know about the relevance of 'transferability of experience' in lesson-drawing. They need to know that experience is not

being examined in order to produce history for its own sake or a treatise in comparing two contexts, but to gain 'fresh' insights into one's own problems here and now. Nailor (1991, cited in Rose, 1993, p.28) puts the issue of relevance of experience transfer in lesson-drawing succinctly and forcefully. Nailor (1991) argues that "policymakers [and in the context of this article teachers] need funded experience', that is knowledge that is sufficiently general to be capable of being transferred to the searchers' own agency [or context], yet sufficiently specific to be applicable to a particular problem.

Making a Model

The second step is analytic in nature. It involves creating a conceptual model of how programmes deal with a specific problem. It is important here to ensure that the model created does not describe a programme's attributes using words that are nation-specific. The model created should be generic, specifying the basic elements in clear concepts for transferability purposes. The point here is that, since lesson-drawing is about transferring measures from one place to another. It is therefore counter productive for a model to be specific and thereby concentrate on named individuals and events. Such ideographic details confuse what is specific to time and place with what is generic, and thus portable.

Thus, it is crucial to note that a model, for lesson-drawing purposes, is more than a taxonomy or checklist of programme requirements. Importantly, a model specifies cause-and-effect relationships that make a programme operate effectively. A cause-and-effect model specifies procedures for delivering a service. That is, it indicates, in clear unmitigated terms and language, actions that must be taken in the 'black box', in the case of education, in the classroom to turn teaching guidelines into an identifiable teaching practice or method. A model, according to Rose (1993) thus differs from a summary statistics such as a cost-benefit ratio, which reduces the complexities of delivering a programme to a single number. Detailing the mechanics of a programme, through creating a cause-and-effect relationship, is particularly important in lesson-drawing based on foreign experience. This is typically so because a model detailing a cause-and-effect relationship guards against selective perceptions that highlight the easy or attractive parts of a programme and leave in shadow the hard parts needed to make it work effectively (Muniak, 1985).

Creating a Lesson

Next to searching, finding and describing the attributes of a desirable programme in generic and unmitigated language comes the creation of the searchers' own lesson. Here, knowledge gained from experience, especially in searching for solutions to a problem elsewhere, is the starting point in designing a programme for adoption in the searchers' own context. Owing to the nature of activities at this stage, an element of creativity on the part of searchers is required here to create programmes to suit their own context. This is normally the case because differences in time and space do not make it possible for a carbon copy of a programme in effect elsewhere to be translated easily into a new context. Also, because a model of a programme is a construct instead of a photographic description of that programme, the elements that constitute it can readily be modified, provided that the removal of an element in the model is matched by its replacement by a functional equivalent, and that additions are not counterproductive. For these reasons, a large amount of flexibility is needed to take into account differences in circumstances between the agency 'exporting' an idea and the agency considering its 'import'.

The simplest way to draw a lesson into a 'new' context is to copy a programme. This is often possible in any nation because of the identity or close similarity of institutions, laws and structures of governance. While this still remains the case, copying has proven to be more difficult across national boundaries. The issue as Rose (1993, p.30) puts it is that "even if national governments are analytically no more than intervening variables, policymakers cannot ignore the variations due to differences in language and legal procedures". Other alternative ways of drawing a lesson aside copying include: adaptation, making a hybrid, synthesis and inspiration. (See Rose, 1993 for full discussion on these alternative ways of lesson-drawing.)

Prospective Evaluation Across Time and Space

The applicability of a lesson in a new context is always contingent, for which reason the final stage of lesson-drawing is normally on a prospective evaluation of the likelihood that a proposed new programme would be effective in a different context. Such prospective evaluations are based on the observation that an analysis across time and space is both comparative and dynamic. So, for example, for a state or nation Y which seeks to learn

lessons from state or nation X, the prospective evaluation will take the form of an analogy that: Where state/nation X is today, state/nation Y hopes to be tomorrow; and that the present situation of state/nation X is meant to become state/nation Y's future. Thus, prospective evaluation combines empirical evidence about how a programme operates in place X with hypotheses about the likely future effects of a similar programme in place Y. While any statement in lesson-drawing about the future inevitably has an element of speculation, prospective evaluation is bounded by empirical observation of a programme already in effect. In other words, although the conclusions of prospective evaluation are not certain, comparison of existing programmes with a proposed programme provides more empirical evidence than does a prospective evaluation based solely on assumptions about the future.

Prospective evaluation starts by observing how a programme operates in a context and developing a model of what is required to produce its effects in another context. In this regard, a review of experience elsewhere in introducing similar programmes provides lessons about problems of implementation (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1974). In this sense, therefore, prospective evaluation is concerned not only with whether a programme can be implemented but also with what substantive effects it may have. Overall, the purpose of prospective evaluation is forewarning as well as foreknowledge. Prospective evaluation gives warning of what to avoid, and it can do this early enough for this to be taken into consideration when drawing a lesson. While this has the propensity to lead to the better design of a new programme, it also has an element of foreknowledge in the sense that it can lead searchers to the conclusion that a programme that works elsewhere cannot work in their (i.e. searchers') context.

Implications of Lesson-drawing as a Proposal for Enhancing Teachers' CPD and Teacher Professional Learning

Covertly, this paper attributes Ghanaian teachers' difficulty to impact learners' learning outcomes positively to their (i.e. teachers') inability and/or difficulty to translate lessons learned from their CPD learning programmes into practice. Obviously, a contention such as this would have a host of implications for the educational system, particularly in the areas of policy, research and professional practice.

Implications for Education Policy

The contention of this article is that teachers, like policymakers, need to engage actively in lesson-drawing if they are to make meaning impact on learners' learning outcomes. Achieving this onerous task demands deliberate policy reforms and programmes to educate and re-orient teachers towards teaching, and particularly towards giving consideration to the concept of lesson-drawing as an integral component of their practice. Towards this end, for example, concerted efforts by the Ghanaian education authority needs to focus on integrating lesson drawing as a topic/course into the teacher training curriculum and programmes. Similarly, lesson-drawing topic and issues need to be included deliberately in capacity building programmes, including CPD sessions organised periodically to enhance teachers' professional learning.

Implications for Educational Research

Scientifically, the rationale for undertaking research essentially is to extend the frontiers of knowledge so that societal problems could be solved. The issues emerging from this paper imply, at least remotely, that perhaps rigorous and 'relevant' educational research studies are not being encouraged, in the Ghanaian context, the findings of which would orient teachers appropriately about their professional standards and ethics, and the role of lesson-drawing in their CPD learning processes. In this regard, policy reforms concerning educational research need to be initiated by the Ghanaian education authority to help teachers understand and put to good use the principles and practices of lesson-drawing in their daily routines as practitioners. One tacit way of getting this done is through integrating lesson-drawing into action research reforms being implemented to encourage teacher practitioners to begin to engage in and solve practical day-to-day problems they are faced with in their teaching practice.

Implications for Teacher Professional Practice

The debate surrounding teachers' CPD has bordered mainly on the (in)ability of teachers to improve students learning and meet expected standards for performance. As insights in this article indicate, Ghanaian teachers do not appear to be resourced and motivated enough to make good use of the

CPD opportunities available to them largely because they lack the ability to draw from and apply useful lessons from their own experiences and those of other practitioners to their professional practice. Clearly, addressing this anomaly, for example, through the inclusion of the principles, processes and practices of lesson drawing in teacher professional learning activities obviously would have implications for teachers' teaching practices. For instance, this would mean that teachers would have to alter their stance and become more receptive and amenable to institutional change. Similarly, teachers would have to demonstrate more commitment to their profession by working harder and diligently to impact the learning outcomes of their learners positively.

So on the whole, and as it has become apparently clear, this paper does not set out to produce a 'grand theory' of/about teacher professional learning. Rather, the evidence points to one overriding implication worth stressing. The insights in this article imply that teachers can undertake a plethora of CPD programmes and professional learning sessions, but that whether or not they are able to derive anything useful from these arrangements depend on how they are helped to draw and apply useful lessons both from their own reflective practices and contexts, and those of other practitioners.

Concluding Thoughts

This paper has reflected critically on the difficulty Ghanaian teachers' face in translating lessons learned from their professional contexts into their classrooms. To help appreciate the complexities surrounding teacher professional learning broadly and holistically, the concept of lesson-drawing is proposed as a measure that could get Ghanaian teachers to begin to make positive impacts on CPD policy, research and practice. In the process,lesson-drawing is defined and some of the distinctive concepts underpinning its usage and operation are distilled. Following on from this, the processes of lesson-drawing are elucidated to help put in context its usefulness as a strategy to enhancing teacher professional learning.Thereafter, the implications of lesson-drawing as a proposal for enhancing teachers' CPD and teacher professional learning are outlined in the areas of policy, research and practice.

So clearly, the proposal of lesson-drawing as a strategy to enhance teacher professional learning sets the context for further empirical work that will assess the relevance of CPD for teacher learning and development

in Ghana. Essentially, this further empirical work would enable teacher practitioners to assess their own practice to be able to express their views regarding their experiences and challenges about their professional learning. The idea is to get the empirical work underway during the period of the changing professional context and status of teachers coupled with curriculum reform changes taking place currently in Ghana, to build on the emerging understandings of teacher learning and development. In this sense therefore, this article serves as a precursor to the 'hard-nose' empirical research to follow on the subject of teacher professional learning.

NOTES

1. In education, the term professional development may be used in reference to a wide variety of specialized training, formal education, or advanced rofessional learning intended to help administrators, teachers, and other educators improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness.
2. It needs to be acknowledged in practice that professional development (PD) for teachers in almost all countries encompasses and/or takes a broad range of forms. In most contexts, for example, PD experiences are funded by district, school or state budgets and programmes, or are supported by a foundation grant or other private sources. In some cases, they (i.e. PD sessions) range from one-day conference to a two-week workshop to a multi-year advanced-degree programmes. In many countries nowadays, they are delivered in person or online, during the school day or outside of normal school hours, and through one-on-one interactions or in group situations. They are also led and facilitated by teacher educators within a school or provided by outside consultants or organisations hired by a school or district.
3. Teacher professional learning differs from CPD for teachers on accounts that whereas the latter is an ongoing process of reflection and review that articulates with development planning that meets corporate, departmental and individual needs, the former is a process of self-development leading to personal growth as well as development of skills and knowledge that facilitates the education of young people. (See Middlewood *et al.*, 2005 for further exposition on this).
4. The initial implementation period of four years elapsed in 2018. However, with the express request from the Government of Ghana which was approved by the funders (i.e. DFID), the implementation period has been extended for additional two years, which mean that T-TEL activities would now grind to a halt in September, 2020.
5. It is important to note that CPD programmes, and by extension capacity building arrangements, for Ghanaian teachers at large are not organised by T-TEL alone. Other agencies such as GES, MOE, non-governmental organisations (NGOs),

international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and development partners are actively involved in this process.

6. Of course teachers' attitude towards reform changes may have been changing now owing to the plethora of interventions instituted to deal with resistance to institutional change. However, the point still remains that the author of this article served between 2015 and 2018 as a College Improvement Advisor (CIA) for the T-TEL project, and is therefore very conversant with Ghanaian teachers' attitudes to educational reform changes, at least during the period that he was a CIA.
7. Other possible reasons or instances where Ghanaian teachers have criticised CPD programmes organised for them include: when these programmes have been poorly designed, executed, scheduled, or facilitated, of when they felt that the programmes were irrelevant or added to their teaching needs and day-to-day professional responsibilities.

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Assessment of Stakeholders' Knowledge and Cooperation in Teaching Practicum in St. Joseph's College of Education, Bechem

PETER HARUNA, JAMES ADEFRAH, SEIDU YAKUBU, GODFRED ISAAC ANTWI & EMMANUEL ASANTE

Abstract

The production of high quality teachers for the nation remains a major preoccupation of Colleges of Education in Ghana, including St. Joseph's College of Education. This is a collaborative responsibility of all stakeholders. This study explored the perceptions of stakeholders about their roles in ensuring a successful practicum and their knowledge in modern trends of helping in the preparation, education and training of teacher trainees. One hundred and fifty (150) stakeholders made up of 25 tutors of St. Joseph's College of Education, 67 Mentors/ Lead mentors (teachers of partner schools of practicum), 12 Municipal and District Education Officers of partner districts, 16 Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) and School Management Committee (SMC) members of partner schools, 20 Landlords and Landladies, 4 Assembly members as well as 6 Traditional rulers, were used for the study. A semi-structured questionnaire was used for the data collection. It was found that the cooperation between St. Joseph's College of Education, Bechem and her partners was weak because of poor communication, lack of stakeholder engagement and review meetings. It was also found that there existed a knowledge gap on the part of stakeholders on their specific roles for a successful practicum, resulting in the lack of reflective practice for mentors and student teachers, student teachers not keeping Teaching Practice Journal (TPJ), appraisal meetings not held among stakeholders and little monitoring, supervision and evaluation of practicum activities. There was therefore the need to organise periodic in-service training for stakeholders to equip them and to keep them abreast with modern techniques in successful practicum, and to bring them together through engagement and review meetings to improve communication between them.

Introduction

Student teaching practice is a kind of apprenticeship engagement whereby teacher trainees are sent out to schools to gain practical and professional experience by translating into practice all the educational theories they have acquired or learnt during training (Fagbulu, 1984). It is a practical teaching activity by which the student teachers are given the opportunity in actual

school settings to demonstrate and improve their training in pedagogical skills over a period of time (Salawu & Adeoye, in NOUN, 2008). The term practice teaching has three major connotations: the practicing of teaching skills; the whole range of experiences that students go through in schools; and the practical aspects of the course as distinct from theoretical studies (Stones & Morris, 1977).

Teaching practice is an important aspect of the teacher education programme in Colleges of Education and in the Faculties of Education in Ghanaian Universities. It is during the teaching practice that teacher trainees are supported to put into practice the theories and principles of education which they have learnt in the classroom during the early years of their training (Ogonor & Badmus, 2006).

Teaching practice exposes the trainees to the realities of teaching and the performance of professional activities. It is an opportunity for student teachers to test theories learnt and ideas developed in the classroom as they come into contact with real work situations. During this period, the various teaching methods learnt are utilised in actual classroom/school conditions under the supervision of competent and experienced teachers. The student teachers are also exposed to professional activities, which are part of the teachers' roles in schools(Ogonor & Badmus, 2006).Teacher training remains important in the education sector in Ghana due to the effect it is held to have on the quality of teachers produced and consequently the overarching effect on the pupils which is expected to translate into the quality of the human resource produced. It is imperative therefore for teacher trainees to possess practical classroom experience before they graduate.

Students who enter Colleges of Education are by policy expected to stay in College for two years to learn theories, principles of education and pedagogies and to spend one year out of college in an assigned community to do teaching practice. This is popularly referred to as the "in-in-out" programme, the *in-in* referring to the two years of in-college learning of theories and principles while the *out* refers to the one year spent in practice out of college. The *out* segment of the teacher education programme in the Colleges of Education in Ghana is a partnership, collaborative and complementary attempt to give the pre-service teacher real life practical exposure and experience in what it means to be a teacher. All stakeholders are therefore expected to play their roles well in ensuring that the *out* segment of teaching practice is well organised for a successful practicum.

The collaborative partners or stakeholders involved in the *out* segment

for St. Joseph's College of Education, Bechem, as for any other College of Education in Ghana, include:

- The college itself where the trainee receives initial training
- The school of attachment where the trainee is expected to practice
- The District Education Directorate with the oversight responsibility for the school of attachment
- The trainee on the attachment programme
- Opinion Leaders/Community of the school of attachment

Statement of the Problem

Producing high quality teachers for the nation remains the major preoccupation of Colleges of Education, and in particular, St. Joseph's College of Education. It is assumed that the training of a quality teaching workforce is a collaborative responsibility of all stakeholders. Cooperation among stakeholders is very essential in ensuring a successful practicum, which invariably takes place during the *out* segment of teacher training in the country. An effective collaboration and cooperation between college tutors and the other stakeholders is necessary in ensuring a successful practicum that will benefit the teacher trainees. This requires that both the college tutors and the other key stakeholders possess the necessary knowledge and understanding especially in the application of modern techniques inteaching and are also equipped with basic competencies in mentoring, supervising and monitoring teacher trainees during their practicum. Whereas by virtue of the professional training of college tutors, they are deemed to possess the expected knowledge and competencies, such certainty cannot simply be held for the other stakeholders. Yet it is required that these other stakeholders play their part in the teaching practicum collaboration. Consequently, the awareness of these stakeholders about their role and their level of cooperation in ensuring theproduction of quality teachers will determine the seriousness they will attach to the practicum exercise. However, it is uncertain the extent to which stakeholders know about their role in promoting effective teaching and learning in the classroom during the practicum segment of teacher education at St. Joseph's College of Education, Bechem. An in-depth investigation was therefore necessary to establishthe level of cooperation of stakeholders of St. Joseph's College of Education in the teaching practicum for teacher trainees, and their knowledge in modern teaching practice techniques.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore stakeholders' cooperation and knowledge about their roles in supporting teacher trainees to ensure a successful teaching practicum. The objectives of the study included the following:

1. To examine the level of cooperation of stakeholders in the teaching practice process.
2. To assess the level ofknowledge of mentorsin modern teaching practice techniques.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the conduct of the research:

1. What is the level of cooperation of stakeholders in the practicum process?
2. What is the level of stakeholders'knowledge in modern teaching practice techniques?

Literature Review

The engagement of stakeholders with educational institutions is considered as an investment strategy (Garlick, 2000), and a collaboration between an educational institution and its wider community has become central for developing a more just and civil society (Butcher, McFadden, & McMeniman, 2003). This collaboration is fundamental for establishing social capital, which is at the forefront of the attributes required by communities to generate viability in the global economy (Garlick, 2003). Kilpatrick (2003) envisages a relationship between the development of social capital and learning. Indeed, the literature emphasises the importance of developing learning communities, which aim at addressing their needs through partnerships in order to cultivate social capital (Kilpatrick *et al.,* 2003). Learning communities facilitated through educational partnerships may also create social cohesion, capacity building and economic development. There are features that assist the development of learning communities. For example, the combination of geographical locations, common interests, and community needs may lead to the formation of collaborative partnerships.

Importantly, community engagement with higher educational institutions can reinforce the values of education (Cope & Leatherwood, 2001), which occur most effectively when community groups and the institutions have united forces to promote systematic societal change and share the risks, responsibilities and rewards (Himmelmann, 1994).

Effective leadership is a key for developing learning communities and implementing innovations (Allen & Wing, 2003; Hargreaves *et al.*, 2001), and which in turn can make a difference to the educational outcomes (Shields & Glatter, 2003). As leadership is a creative endeavour, it may be considered as an art form (Grint, 2003), particularly as there is no one way to lead. Indeed, catering for unexpected situations necessitates carefully crafted flexibility from leaders (Fidler & Atton, 2004). The development of stakeholder engagement with educational institutions requires creative leadership that is generally works within a problem-based approach (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2002). However, the educational institution and its community (stakeholders) need to have a shared vision in order to forge common directions. Leadership needs to be strategically positioned around visions for securing school-community engagement (Preedy *et al.*, 2003). Effective educational leaders project a vision generally acceptable to all parties through common goals. This vision is largely based on collective values and beliefs so as to inspire, motivate and empower others to work toward achieving common goals (Allen & Wing, 2003). Similarly, the production and articulating of shared goals require clear visions (Allen & Wing, 2003). Not only should goals be explicit but so too should establishing procedures for accomplishing the goals, which include organising schedules and personnel to be involved in the school-community activities (Wiewel & Lieber, 1998). Visionary directions that lead to action may aid in benchmarking community engagement in order to measure future progress (Letven *et al.*, 2001). Indeed, a way to measure social capital is to benchmark criteria, which is to measure indicators at one point in time, measure the same criteria at another time, and compare the two (PASCAL Observatory, 2004). Without a collective understanding of the processes for initiating school-community engagement, visionary directions are empty. Key stakeholders need to understand the processes for establishing innovations, which involve understanding the values, needs, and expectations of the school.

Processes for ensuring stakeholder engagement also include the consideration that partnerships are learning environments (Brukardt *et al*.,

2004).Change processes,therefore, need to be understood by all parties involved in the collaboration. Effective leaders create conditions to motivate and encourage commitment of key stakeholders to work as a group. The perspectives of participants need to be considered in order to develop a unique and tailored strategy to recruit each partner (Rubin, 2002). Building relationships and trust is part of the process and can aid the motivation of key stakeholders, particularly if leaders are mindful of their needs and purposes for establishing such relationships.

Collaboration is a planning approach that presupposes constructing relationships between parties, since planning, gathering resources, and implementing what has been planned are arrived at through joint effort (Wiewel & Lieber, 1998). Clearly, establishing trust between an educational institution and its community is the basis for creating long lasting partnerships. Forming these relationships will be met with positive and negative reactions as each party aims to discover their roles and responsibilities, for which reason there needs to be adequate time to establish such partnerships (Kriesky & Cote, 2003). Understanding change processes involves continuous flexibility, compromise, and feedback in order to strengthen a partnership (Wolff & Maurana, 2001). It is also required of partners to have a collective understanding of change processes and how to effectively negate innovations. Supportive working relationships rouse confidence in colleagues to experiment with practices (Hargreaves *et al.,* 2001) to create new theories of community engagement coupled with practical examples (Brukardt *et al*., 2004).

Effective collaboration can be facilitated through professional dialogue, and leaders need to ensure the allocation of sufficient time and resources for meaningful involvement (Hargreaves *et al.,* 2001). The leader becomes a context setter, the designer of a learning experience — not an authority figure with solutions (Fullan, 2001). Yet, involving more community partners in leadership generates greater team cohesion (Pugalee *et al.,* 2001), provided there are mutually beneficial arrangements with acommonly-shared agenda. Ramaley (2001) asserts that shared agenda ensures also the sharing of the power and responsibility as well as the risks and rewards. Furthermore, embracing an agenda aims at strengthening democracy, encouraging responsible citizenship and civic duty, and facilitating a commitment to education. Higher educational institutions that facilitate pre-service teacher education, have pre-tertiaryeducational institutions as their main community engagement, yet, these institutions or schools can be resistant

to change (Allan & Wing, 2003; Wagner, 2001), particularly as a large number of educational innovations have come and gone, creating skepticism among teachers (Wagner, 2001). In addition, teachers have pride in developing teaching programmes, and asking them to change their methods can be felt as demoralising. It is important that teachers are supported indealing with innovations (Hargreaves *et al.,* 2001), as engagement of the institution with the community has real potential to connect higher education to critical public issues (Brukardt *et al.,* 2004). Endeley (2014) adds that all stakeholders in the teaching practicum programme need to collaborate to ensure effective mentoring as it has huge potential to bring about learning, personal growth and development for professionals.

Methodology

A descriptive survey was the design adopted for the study. The choice of research design for a particular study is based on the purpose of the study, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007). Since this study sought to find out the current understanding and involvement of stakeholders in the pre-service teaching practice of St. Joseph's College of Education, Bechem, a survey design was considered most appropriate for its execution. The use of the survey paradigm helped to ascertain the perception of respondents on their involvement as well as their understanding of current practices in teaching practice for easy description of the situation.

The population of the study consisted of tutors of St. Joseph's College of Education, Mentors and Lead Mentors (teachers of partner schools of practice), Municipal and District Education Officers of partner Districts, as well as members of Parent/Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMC) of the partner schools. It also included Landlords/Landladies, Assembly members and Traditional rulers in the four partner administrative districts, namely, Ahafo-Ano North and Ahafo-Ano South districts of the Ashanti Region, and Tano North and Tano South Districts of the Ahafo Region.

A total of 150 participants were drawn from the population for the study.This was made up of 25 Tutors of St. Joseph's College of Education, 67 Teachers of partner schools (mentors and lead mentors), 12 Municipal and District Education Officers,16 PTA/SMC members, 20 Landlord/ Landladies, 4 Assembly members and 6 Traditional rulers. The categories of respondents were all selected through convenience sampling technique during the 2016/2017 practicum period in the four partner districts.

Questionnaires are used mostly to collect data on phenomena that are not easily observed, such as attitudes, motivation, and self-concepts (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). Semi-structured questionnaire was the main instrument used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire, which had both closed-ended and open-ended items, elicited demographic information of respondents, and also sought for their perception on the relationship between the College and its partners on practicum and their knowledge of modern techniques in teaching practice.

Data collected were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The qualitative data obtained from the open-ended items in the questionnaire were grouped into different categories/themes consistent with the research objectives and deduction and generalizations made using patterns and trend of responses. The quantitative data obtained from the closed-ended items were coded and entered into the computer using the SPSS programme. Specifically, the data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics, percentages, means and frequencies. The data were presented with the aid of figures, graphs and tables.

Results

Sixty-five percent (65%) of the respondents were males while 35% were females (Figure 1). As depicted in Figure 2, majority of the 150 respondents (44.7%) were teachers (Mentors and Lead mentors) from the partner basic schools, followed by the tutors from the college (16.7%). The category of respondents having the least representation was the Assembly members (2.7%).

Level of Stakeholder Cooperation with College

Quite a substantial proportion (77%) of the respondents agreed that the level of cooperation between St. Joseph's College of Education and the other stakeholders was weak and very weak (Figure 3). The respondents attributed the causes of the weak cooperation to poor communication, lack of stakeholder engagement, lack of review meetings and stakeholders' lack of knowledge of their responsibilities (Figure 4).

Fifty percent (50%) of the mentors and lead mentors of the partner schools had never attended any refresher or update course on monitoring and mentorship and only 22% had had some form of training on monitoring

Figure 1: Gender distribution of respondents

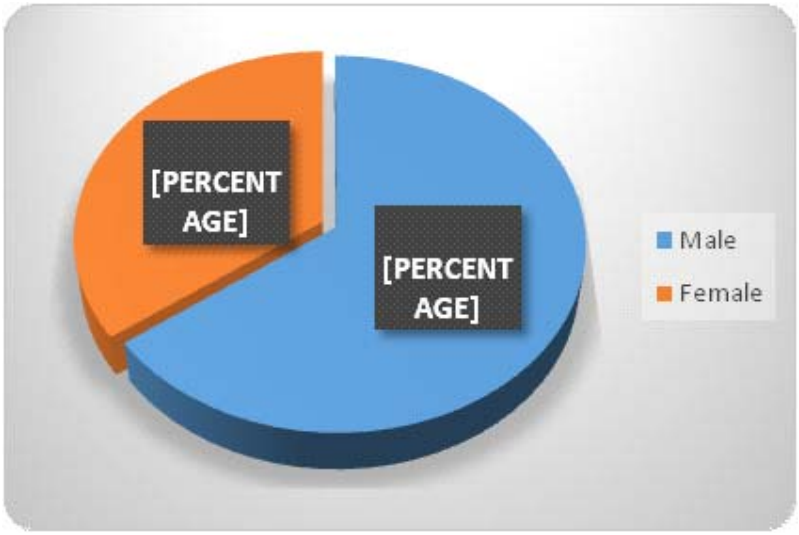


Figure 2: Percentage representation of Stakeholders

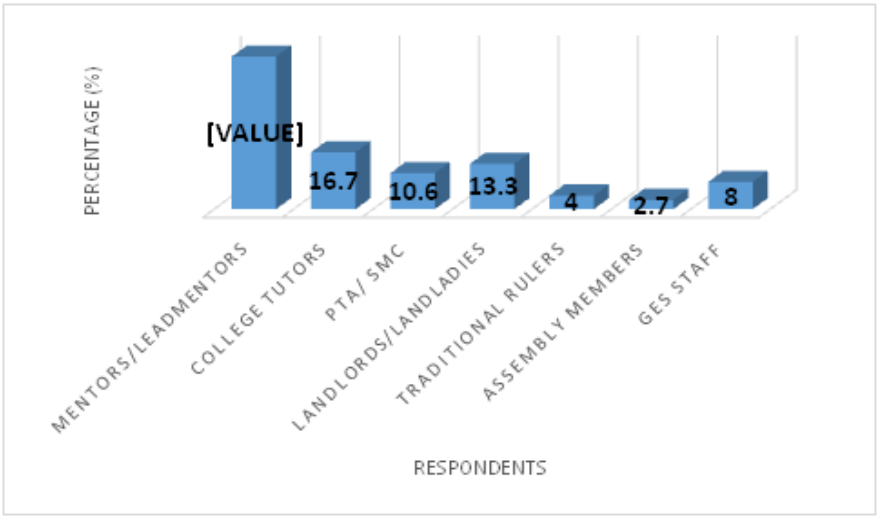


Figure 3: Stakeholders' level of cooperation

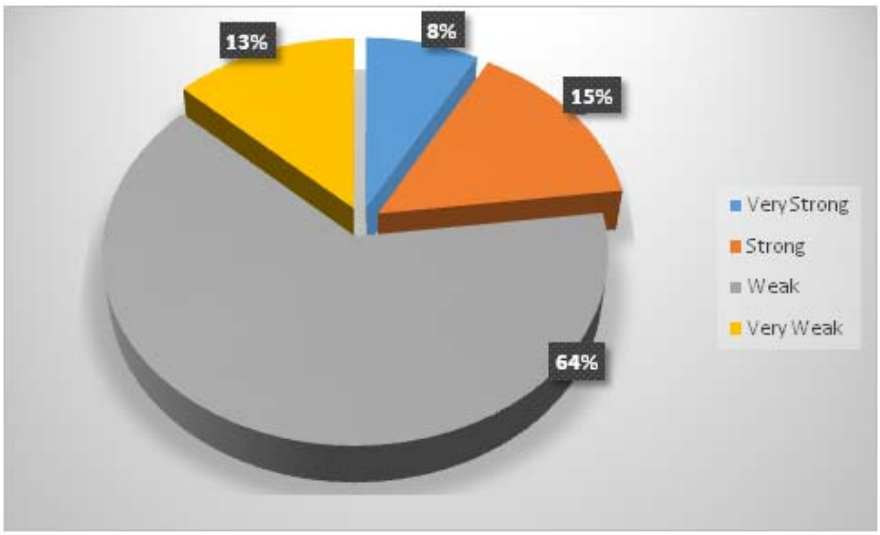
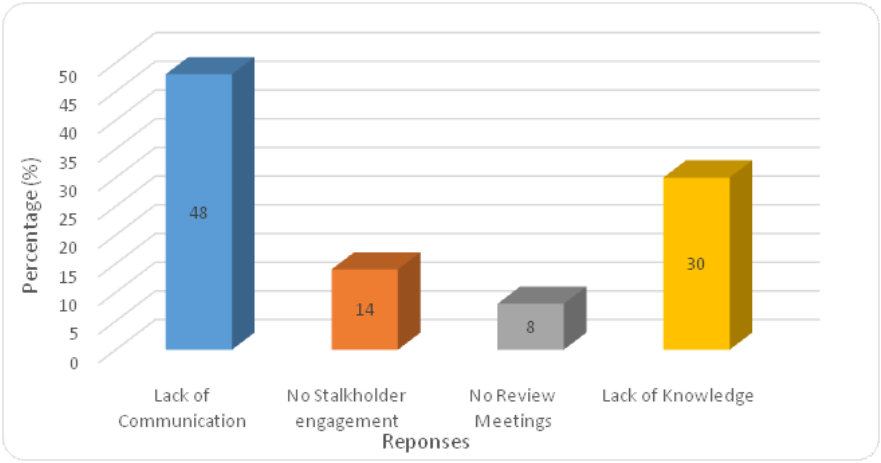


Figure 4: Causes of the weak stakeholder cooperation



and mentorship within the last three years (Table 1). This was likely to negatively affect the quality of the monitoring and mentorship they provided for the trainees.

Table 1: Last time Mentors attended monitoring and mentorship refresher course

Years	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*
1–3 Years	15	22.4
4–5 Years	10	14.9
Above 5 Years	8	12.0
Never	34	50.7
Total	67	100.0

Most of the respondents (86%) rated the support they provided their mentees as high and very high (Table 2). Forty-five percent (45%) of the respondents believed that the Teaching Practice was organised well with another 43% believing that it was well structured. Conversely, majority of the respondents, 55% and 57%, believed that the practicum sessions were poorly organised and not well structured respectively (Figures 5 and 6).

Table 2: Respondents' ability and preparedness to support mentees

Relationship	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*
Very High	66	44
High	63	42
Low	15	10
Very Low	6	4
Total	150	100

Knowledge of Stakeholders in Modern Teaching Practice Techniques

This section concentrated on the college tutors, mentors and lead mentors of the partner schools, since they are directly involved in mentoring, monitoring and supervising the student teachers. On holding reflective meetings with student teachers on practicum, 65 out of the 92 respondents (71%) did not hold reflective meetings with student teachers after each lesson or supervision session, either because they were not aware or did not understand how to do it (Figures 7 and 8).

Figure 5: Participants' perception on whether teaching practice was well organised

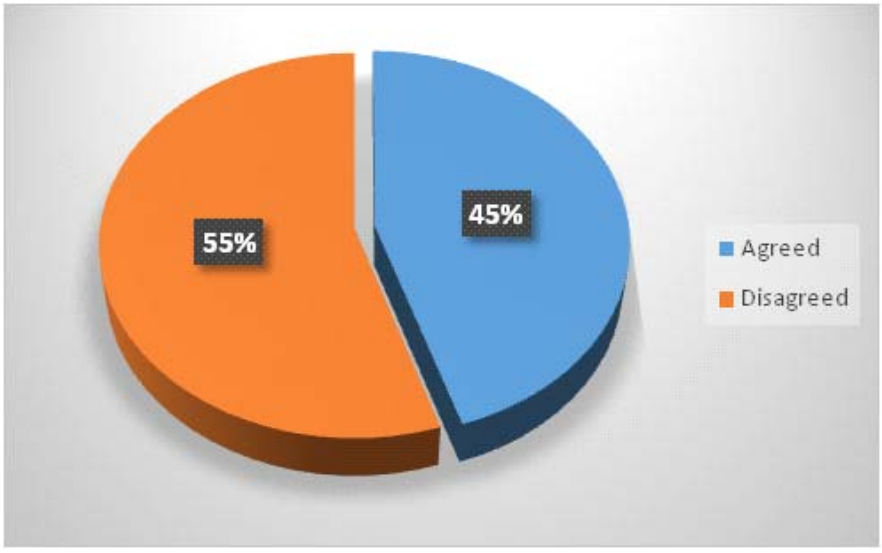


Figure 6: Stakeholders' perception on whether teaching practicewas well structured

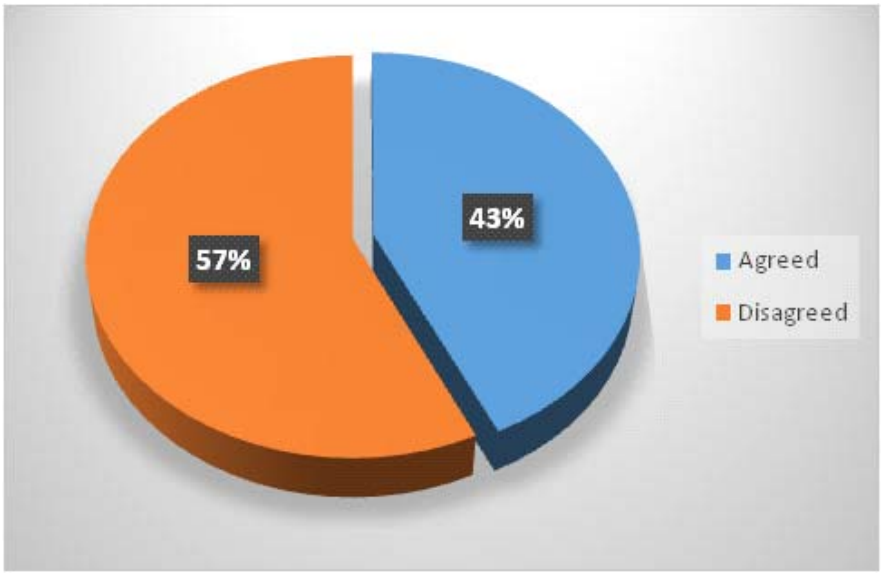


Figure 7: Holding Reflective meetings with student teachers

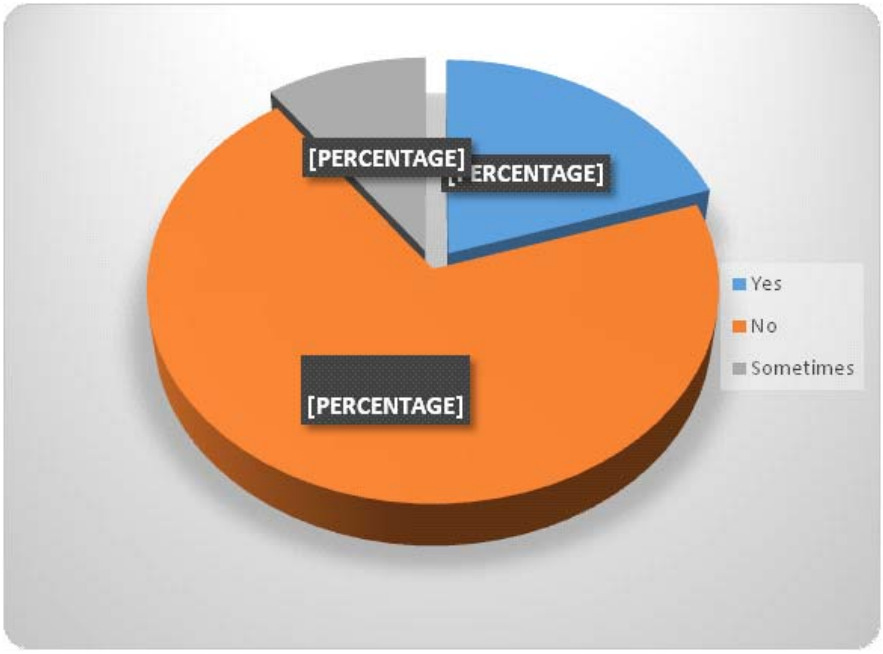
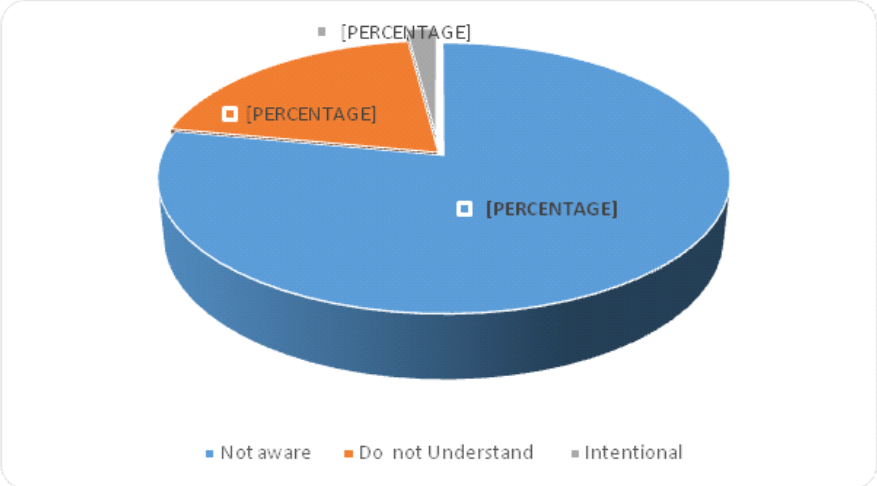


Figure 8: Reasons for not holding reflective meetings



Also 68% of the respondents were not aware of the existence as well as the purpose of Teaching Practice Journal for which reason they probably held the view that trainees did not keep Teaching Practice Journals. Furthermore, majority of the respondents (77%) had never participated in teaching practice evaluation meetings (Table 4).

Table 4: General knowledge about Morden Practicum

Knowledge	*YES Number*	*Percentage (%)*	*NO Number*	*Percentage (%)*
Stakeholders holding reflective meetings with mentees	50	34	100	66
Awareness about TP Journal	48	32	102	68
Mentees keeping TP Journal	15	10	135	90
Engagement in TP stakeholders review meeting	33	22	117	78

Discussion

With the exception of a few of the respondents who agreed that there existed strong cooperation and coordination between the college and the stakeholders regarding teaching practice matters, a good majority (77%) disagreed that such strong cooperation and coordination existed. This implies that majority of the respondents thought that they were not involved in the pre-service training of the student teachers. This could be a serious hindrance to a successful practicum. Involving more community partners in leadership generates greater team cohesion (Pugalee *et al.*, 2001), share of power and responsibility as well as the risks and rewards (Ramaley, 2001).

Lack of communication between the college and the other stakeholders was the major factor the respondents attributed to as the cause of the poor cooperation among stakeholders. There was no or very little information from the college to other stakeholders on student teachers on teaching practice. Democratisation of educational structures in Ghana seeks to enhance ownership of education at community levels, shifting some of the responsibility around policy implementation away from national and regional authorities. Effective communication within schools and between communities and schools is very crucialfor success (Hunt, 2007). It is therefore of paramount importance to ensure effective communication between the

college and other stakeholders in order to promote effective collaboration towards the attainment of quality practicum for the college's teacher trainees.

Stakeholders such as traditional rulers, landlords and landladies, members of PTAs and SMCs felt sidelined and therefore stayed away from the teaching practice exercise. Even though some of them knew that they had roles to play in ensuring effective teaching practice in the schools within their traditional areas and localities, they felt not involved and therefore stayed away from the process. The poor cooperation and relationship among the stakeholders was attributed to the stakeholders' lack of knowledge of their responsibilities. Majority of the stakeholders, especially traditional rulers, landlords and landladies, PTAs, SMCs and some of the education officers did not know that they were stakeholders in the training of the student teachers. Despite the fact that majority of the respondents had no formal training on mentoring student teachers, the findings from the survey clearly indicated that stakeholders were ready and willing to support student teachers on teaching practice but were helpless as they had no knowledge about the role to play.

On the question of the extent of respondents' knowledge about modern teaching practicum techniques, it came to light that most mentors/lead mentors had no idea about reflective meetings and the keeping of Teaching Practice journals.This affected stakeholders in their quest to provide the trainees with the best modern teaching practice techniques. Reflective teaching practice entails an ongoing examination of beliefs and practices, their origins and their impacts on the teacher, the learners and the learning process (Stanley, 1998).The reflective process involves continuous self-observation and evaluation of the student teacher to understand individual actions and the reactions of learners (Brookfield, 1995; Theil, 1999). The success of reflective teaching requires the cooperation of staff of partnership schools with student teachers by creating a conducive school climate and providing the required material resources. On the other hand, student teachers are required to produce their own writings about their experiences as learners and teachers (Ogonor & Badmus, 2006).

Epstein and Kappan (1995) drew a positive association between the partnership of education stakeholders and students' outcome, and in this case, the staff of partnership schools and student teachers, as such collaboration could help the latter to grow professionally in a caring community. Therefore, practitioners are encouraged to provide opportunity and support for themselves and others for reflection on both the content

and the learning process as well as to model reflective thinking on the strategies for learning and what was learned (Schon, 1987; Clift, Houston & Pugach, 1990).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study which explored stakeholders' level of involvement in teaching practice in St. Joseph's College of Education, Bechem, as well as their knowledge in modern teaching practicum techniques, revealed a number of findings from which some conclusions could be drawn. The level of cooperation between the college and her partners was weak because of poor communication, lack of engagement and lack of review meetings. There existed knowledge gap on the part of stakeholders on their roles for a successful practicum. Mentors and lead mentors had little knowledge of reflective teaching practice and the use teaching practice journal. On the basis of such findings, it could be concluded that the practicum was poorly conducted and that the overall objective of equipping the trainees with practical orientation in the teaching process would not be fully realised. The preparation of the college before the start of the practicum was inadequate as it was taken for granted that the stakeholders would be able to deliver on expectation.

It is therefore recommended that since the production of competent teachers remains one major preoccupation of Colleges of Education in Ghana, measures should be put in place to bring all stakeholders together to ensure a successful practicum through engagement, review meetings and improved forms of communication. Also, the lead institution, St. Joseph's College of Education, Bechem, through its Teaching Practice Unit need to organise periodic workshops, in-service training etc. to upgrade stakeholders' knowledge on emerging best teaching practice techniques.

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