

Research Article

Perceptions and Challenges in the Implementation of the In-In-Out Programme in the Selected Colleges of Education in Ghana

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Abstract: The purpose of the study was to assess the perceptions and challenges facing in the implementation process of the IN-IN-OUT programme in selected colleges of education in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The descriptive cross-sectional survey was employed as the research design in this study. The population was made up of supervisors, mentors, and mentees from St. Louis and Wesley Colleges of education who have been posted to various communities in the Ashanti Region of Ghana to practice teaching. Purposive and random Sampling techniques were used to select tutors, teacher-trainees, mentors and assemblymen in the practicing communities. The study's main data collection tools were questionnaires and interview and classroom observation protocols. The data collected were scored and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) computer software. Frequencies, percentages, and other measures of central tendencies were calculated. The study revealed that teacher-trainees, mentors, and assemblymen in the two (2) communities saw the IN-IN-OUT programme as useful to a large extent, even though they had varied opinions. While some say the program was merely useful, some see it as very useful and others saw the program as extremely useful. The study also revealed that the challenges faced by the various teacher trainees, mentors, and supervisors include social problems, financial difficulties, and time constraints. It is recommended that teacher trainees are posted to the rural and peri-urban communities, one can be sure that after their certification they will be fully prepared to face the challenges ahead of them. It is also recommended that the government and stakeholders should as a matter of urgency commit more money to this programme.

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1. Introduction

Development in any country cannot be without education since it is the key to any development process. The major concern of educational planners and policy makers is to develop the quality of education in all countries. This has given rise to a widespread desire to change the content and structure of education to meet the social and economic needs of society. The process of formal education depends on many factors for its success including good curricula, appropriate textbooks and teaching-learning materials, adequate infrastructure among others. The fundamental activity in the process of formal education, however, is teaching and learning without which the success thereof cannot be determined. The other important practical issue in education is teacher supply since no educational institution can survive without that. The availability of literature for students does not undermine the importance and presence of a good and qualified teacher in the teaching and learning situation [1]. Educators will agree that, though machines may be

used or are used in the instructional process in most countries, the role of the teacher in ensuring meaningful teaching and learning cannot be over-emphasized.

The aim of every school is to educate students in the country so as to help them meet the challenges that tomorrow will bring [2]. Teachers and educational workers who have the needed knowledge, skill and capacity are charged with the responsibility of meeting the needs of the younger generation and the nation at large in terms of equipping them with basic education. This can, however, not be effective without practical experience and skill possession. Sound teacher education is therefore fundamental and vital to the development and improvement of any educational programme, hence the need to seriously address the needs of men and women who make teaching their profession. Particular reference is to those who aid pupils in the development of socially acceptable skills and attitudes at the various levels of education in the country.

The future of any educational system depends on the extent to which good teachers are recruited for and remain in the profession [1]. Solutions to the problem of quality in secondary school education lies in educating and retaining qualified and dedicated teachers. The retention rate of teachers in the profession has a bearing, to some extent, on the limited retention of pupils in some communities as well as the poor quality of education reflected in the low levels of achievement among school children [2]. The Ministry of Education report quoting the World Bank stated that, in many of the remote areas especially in the northern half of the country, the large majority of children completing grade 6 or even junior high schools were completely illiterate [3].

A Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Sports, Madam Angelina Baiden-Amissah commenting on the quality of education in Ghana as at 1987 stated that illiteracy rate of sixty percent had fallen to thirty percent during the last twenty years. She added that only forty percent of school age children were in school. This was attributed to the collapse of the economy which compelled some teachers to take up second jobs in order to make ends meet [4]. The fact that society is dynamic explains the issue that the environment as well the people do not remain the same over the years. The old system of education, the curricula and syllabuses, the mode of administration and the teaching methods need to be enhanced and improved upon to be relevant for the modern society and time. The recognition that any system of education should serve the needs of the individual, the society and the nation as a whole gave rise to the proposed Educational Reform in Ghana. The nationwide implementation of the Educational Reform since the 1987/88 academic year has seen varied changes in the structure and curricula of schools over the years.

Teacher Education is one aspect of the educational sector that has gone through a series of changes with the aim of training and educating individuals to take up the responsibility of teaching children to fit into today's fast changing world. One very important aspect of teacher training is the need for practical training, since most professions thrive more effectively and meaningfully with practical experience in preparing them to become professionals in any field of endeavor. People studying medicine go on housemanship, while other technical students do industrial attachment and trainee teachers go for teaching practice. The then pre-service teacher training programme involved one year of practice teaching by the teacher trainees in their third and final year of the three-year certificate 'A' Post-Secondary Education Course. This was to ensure that future teachers obtain training in areas such as basic competencies in environmental science, theoretical education and instructional skills, and be given opportunities to combine these competencies in closely-supervised educational work-study programme prior to assuming a professional teaching career. The teacher training course structure in Ghana was referred to as the 'IN-IN-OUT' programme. This is because two of three years of the course was spent in the training colleges undertaking the taught courses while the last year was spent outside the colleges doing teaching practice. During

the third year, the teacher trainees were posted to schools where they practiced teaching but continued their studies, based on distance learning methodology.

The rationale of the IN-IN-OUT programme was to produce qualified and effective teachers for the basic schools through competence-based training. The task of teacher training colleges in Ghana is to help prospective teachers understand the basic concepts and principles that support the philosophy of living in harmony with others in society. In relation to this, there is a strong emphasis on integrating the teaching of theory with performance in the classroom. The content of the programme placed emphasis on the development of practical teaching skills instead of placing emphasis on academic studies. Through this work-study programme in schools, which lasted one academic year, teacher trainees learned to teach by teaching and thus became competent and efficient basic school teachers. A whole academic year of attachment to schools provided sufficient time for teacher trainees to practice teaching and become competent in teaching. This arrangement is in line with the school-focused mode of teacher education, which enabled teacher trainees to benefit from performance as a critical method for acquiring competent teacher status.

The implementation of the IN-IN-OUT programme begun in the 2001/2002 academic year, and all the final year students of all colleges of education in Ghana at the time were posted to various basic schools within the communities where the colleges were situated after undergoing a series of orientation sessions. Placement of the teacher trainees was done in such a way that, they lived in the various communities where they taught and not on the college campuses, just like a newly posted teacher. Prior to the placement of teacher trainees was the identification and selection of schools to be used as sites for the year-long practice teaching. This was done by the teacher training colleges in collaboration with the Education offices of the districts where the trainees will practice, and the Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service. This is to ensure that appropriate schools were selected for the attachment programme. The School Attachment Programme involved:

- Living in a new community
- Participating in planned activities within the school and local community.
- Preparation for completion of course and certification.

The responsibilities of teacher trainees during the school attachment programme as well as the outlined activities, in addition to the rules and regulations for the 'out' programme were clearly outlined in the manual provided for students. This manual issued by the Ghana Education Service and the Teacher Education Division was to serve as a guide for the teacher trainees on the School Attachment Programme. Furthermore, [5]. It was a policy decision that the first batch of teacher trainees should be posted to primary schools except for those offering French and Technical Skills because of the idea that the demand for teachers in the foreseeable future would be greater at the primary level than at the Junior High School level [5]. The goal of teacher education, therefore, should be geared towards meeting such a need. Included in the policy, among other issues, was the accommodation for teacher trainees and the need to combine teaching with their studies [5]. The policy decision under the IN-IN-OUT programme was that, during the period of school attachment, steps should be taken to ensure that accommodation for teacher trainees in the various communities was free in the meantime. This was based on the fact that teacher trainees did not pay any fees for lodging on their college campuses. Also, teacher trainees will combine teaching with studying, in that, the out segment is a requirement prior to their certification, for which they will be examined. Generally, since teachers from the three-year, post-secondary teacher training colleges teach in basic schools, emphasis must be placed on their practical training at such levels aside the peer teaching they practice in their second year of their stay at the college.

The introduction of the IN-IN-OUT programme into the curricula of teacher-training colleges was a step in the right direction aimed at improving the quality of professional

teachers in a technological world. It was also to help make the teacher a true agent of change in order to reflect the expectations of society. The last year of the three-year post-secondary course was spent in both rural and urban communities by the pre-service teachers and much attention was given them to ensure the achievement of specified goals on one hand, and the success of the programme on the other. The inception of the New Structure and Content of Education has seen several changes in the expansion, access, and enrollment of pupils at all levels of education. The teacher is one of the major implementors of any reforms in the education sector and must be well-informed to take up their roles in the various levels. Teacher training colleges are therefore faced with the challenge of training, educating and equipping trainees to be responsible for teaching basic schools in the country.

The perception of trainees about the IN-IN-OUT programme is that, they will enjoy the support of trained teachers on the field. This perception is so because the trained teachers have some degree of experience that the trainee teachers are yet to have. It can also be reasoned without difficulty is that money will be one of the crucial needs of teacher trainees. As students residing on campus, they were fed three times a day in addition to the monthly allowance they received from the government, however, in the field it must be their responsibility to fend for themselves. For success of the IN-IN-OUT programme, support services like counselling became an indispensable tool that the trainee teacher will need to help him or her cope with the challenges in the programme. Students' perception was that they would enjoy frequent visits by their school counsellors and same from their mentors. The basic school education programme on one hand underwent a reform, and the teacher training programme on the other hand, had also changed to the system of the IN-IN-OUT programme. The latter is supposed to efficiently train secondary school graduates who are admitted into the teacher training colleges within a three-year period to teach in these basic schools effectively. The three-year period of training teachers by the programme was split into two years of course work and one-year practical work. How will the training colleges blend these two aspects (academic and practical) of its programme in order to ensure that the individual trainee was well-equipped for teaching in the basic school? There were challenges that were envisaged in the IN-IN-OUT programme of teacher training colleges as regarded placement of trainees in practicing schools/communities, monitoring and supervision as well as accessibility and communication.

Also, challenges could be in the area of inter-personal relationships of mentees; mentee-mentor, mentee-supervisor, mentee-community, as well as mentee-pupils. These challenges if not identified in time and well-managed could be the beginning of serious problems that would undermine the success of the IN-IN-OUT programme and the teacher training programme as a whole. It was therefore necessary to identify and address the challenges faced in the implementation of the IN-IN-OUT programme in the teacher training colleges so that the investment made by stake-holders does not go waste. You cannot use yesterday's tools for today's job and expect to be in business tomorrow' [6]. The purpose of the study was to assess the challenges that were faced in the implementation process of the IN-IN-OUT programme in selected colleges of education in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The ought to answer these research questions. (1) What are your perceptions about the IN-IN-OUT programme of teacher training? (2) What challenges are faced in undertaking the programme? (3) What support services can be provided for practicing teachers?

2. Materials and Methods

The methodology of this study consisted of the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments, procedure for data collection and data analysis plan.

The descriptive cross-sectional survey was employed as research design in this study. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh explained that, descriptive surveys focus on determining the status of the defined population with respect to certain variables [7]. The purpose of descriptive survey is to count. When it cannot count everyone, it counts a representative sample and then makes inference about the population as a whole [8]. Best & Kahn explained further that, descriptive surveys also tell us how many members of a population have certain characteristics or how often certain events occur. In view of this, the descriptive survey was found to be the most appropriate design that could lead to meaningful findings and conclusions [8]. The descriptive survey was therefore employed to find out the strengths and weaknesses in the implementation of the IN-IN-OUT programme.

The population was made up of supervisors, mentors and mentees from St. Louis and Wesley Colleges of education who have been posted to various communities in the Ashanti Region of Ghana to practice teaching. Therefore, the study focused on about 1,850 teacher trainees, teachers, mentors and assemblymen. Purposive and random Sampling techniques were used to tutors, teacher-trainees, mentor and assemblymen in the practicing communities. The sample also included 5 tutors from each of 2 colleges as well as three mentors and an assemblyman from the community in which each college is located. These were however selected purposefully depending on those who were at post at the time of routine visits to the teaching practice schools. One hundred and twenty (120) teacher-trainees comprising sixty (60) teacher-trainees' teachers were randomly selected from each of the 2 colleges for the study. The list of all the teacher trainees were obtained from the teaching practice coordinators for the 2 colleges.

The main tools used for data collection in the study were questionnaires and interview and classroom observation protocols. This enabled the researcher to come up with the actual and real challenges faced in the organization and implementation of the programme in spite of its demerits [9]. The researchers used tools in order to ascertain whether the problem actually existed. This technique cannot be used without taking into consideration the various problems associated with classroom observation such as subjectivity and personal biases among others as identified by a few researchers [9, 10, 11]. This choice was also made in line with the policy initiatives for change and innovation in transforming teacher education in Ghana [12, 13]. Triangulation was used to ensure the reliability of the information provided by respondents: the responses given by teachers on an issue are compared with those given by student teachers as well as linked tutors.

The researchers visited the 2 colleges of education (Wesley and St. Louis) personally to officially introduce herself. The principal of Wesley College gave the go-ahead to carry out the research and interact with the people the researcher needed to get the information from. At St. Louis Training College on the other hand the researcher was introduced to the teaching practice coordinator to give all the needed help and information. The researcher, first of all, requested for a list of all student teachers with their schools of practice from the teaching practice coordinators. From these lists, a random sampling of 60 students was selected from each college. The researchers scheduled and administered questionnaires to teacher trainees of both colleges. The researcher visited them personally in the various communities they were posted to teach to administer the questionnaires. Some questionnaires given to trainees from St. Louis were submitted to the teaching practice coordinator so the researcher need not repeat the visit to the community. Out of 120 questionnaires administered, 112 were retrieved, showing a retrieval rate of 93%. The subsequent visits and follow ups to some other communities enabled the researcher to carry out the interviews with the people concerned, as well as make the observations needed. Observations were also made concerning various characteristics and situations that prevailed in the school community based on the information provided in the questionnaires.

The first step of data analysis in this study was the coding of all the close-ended questions. The open-ended questions were also categorized based on the answers provided and then coded. The data collected were scored and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) computer software. Frequencies, percentages and other measures of central tendencies were calculated. The analyses were carried out based on the research questions that initiated the study.

The tabular representation of data according to gender was of immense help in answering research question 1. The frequencies and percentages computed helped to identify the differences that existed between males and females in the IN-IN-OUT programme. Responses for research question 2 were analyzed with the help of frequencies and means that were calculated using the SPSS software. Information provided by mentors and the community (assemblyman) during the interview sessions were also considered alongside.

3. Results and Discussion

Generally, the respondents from St. Louis Training College were found in basic schools such Biemso R/C Primary 'B', Esanso R/C Primary, Kuffour L/A Junior Secondary, D.A. Experimental Primary-Abuakwa, and Toase R/C Primary, just to mention a few. Respondents from Wesley College on the other hand, were grouped into 4 zones and each zone was made up of a set of schools. The entire population of respondents was made up of 38.4% males and 61.6% females as shown in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Gender Distribution of Respondents for the Study

Gender	Number	%
Female	69	61.6
Male	43	38.4
Total	112	100.0

Table 2. Distribution of Student Teachers in Various Communities

Community Type	Number	%
Urban	4	3.6
Peri-urban	36	32.1
Rural	72	64.3
Total	112	100.0

It is obvious from [Table 2](#) that, the majority of students were in rural communities while the least percentage of 3.6 comprising 4 students were in urban communities. Generally, it was observed that, majority of the females were posted to the urban and peri-urban communities while the males were mainly posted to the rural communities. It is therefore possible to a large extent that, there are differences in the needs of males and females since the needs in an urban community are different from those in a rural community.

Research Question 1 sought to find out the perceptions of trainees about the IN-IN-OUT programme of teacher training. Perceptions of teacher trainees were categorized into 4: extremely useful, very useful, useful, and not useful as indicated on the questionnaire and illustrated in [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Perceptions of Teacher Trainees about the Usefulness of the IN-IN-OUT Programme

Perception	Number	%
Extremely Useful	23	20.5
Very Useful	37	33.0
Useful	45	40.2
Not Useful	7	6.3
Total	112	100.0

A look at the table shows that 93.7% of respondents were of the view that the IN-IN-OUT programme was useful, though the extent differed. It is therefore possible that the type of community in which students practiced played a major role in their perception of the IN-IN-OUT programme. [Table 4](#) on the other hand gives a summary of the views of the students about the IN-IN-OUT programme of teacher training.

Table 4. Views of Respondents about the Usefulness of the Teaching Practice Programme

Perception	Number	%
Extremely Useful	12	10.7
Very Useful	29	25.9
Useful	58	51.8
Not Useful	13	11.6
Total	112	100.0

Majority of the student teachers said the programme was successful. While 23 of the 112 student teachers saw the programme as extremely useful, 37 and 45 students were of the view that, the programme was very useful and useful respectively. They say the community sees the IN-IN-OUT programme differently.

All mentors interviewed saw the programme as useful with varied reasons. Some said the mentees do not only learn from mentors, but mentors also learn from mentees and keep themselves abreast with current principles of teaching and learning. Others thought that the out programme could be very useful and extremely useful depending on subsequent organization and implementation of the programme. The organization and implementation of subsequent OUT programmes must be done with adequate orientation for all the parties concerned: trainees, mentors, supervisors, the schools' communities. The mentors believed that if all parties involved in the out programme are prepared and educated well on the essence of the programme, it will be extremely useful not only to the local communities that accommodate the trainees but the nation at large.

Table 5. Challenges faced by Teacher Trainees on the Out Programme

Challenges	Number	%
Financial constraints	49	43.8
Inadequate time	9	8.0
Uncooperative attitude of teachers	2	1.8
Lack of Basic Amenities	21	18.8
Financial constraints and limited time	4	3.6
Money and uncooperative attitude of teachers	4	3.6
Money and lack of basic amenities	13	11.6
Time and uncooperative attitude of teachers	1	0.9
Time and lack of basic amenities	1	0.9
Lack of basic amenities & uncooperative attitude of teachers	2	1.8
Money, time, and uncooperative attitude of teachers	2	1.8
Money, time and lack of basic amenities	3	2.7
Money, time, and uncooperative attitude of teachers	2	1.8
Total	112	100.0

From [Table 5](#), it is clear that while most of the student teachers had one challenge to deal with, others had a combination of challenges to handle. The table shows that two student teachers were faced with all four categories of challenges mentioned. It is possible that these student teachers will be hard-pressed and therefore see the whole teaching practice as a burden rather than a benefit.

The second group of people, the mentors, had to struggle with relationship difficulties which had to do with their identity in terms of their professional qualifications as against the qualification of the mentees. From the interviews conducted, it was realized that some mentors had difficulty relating to their mentees and were unable to correct them when the need arose because of inferiority/superiority complex. While the mentors think and say they are more experienced, the mentees think they are more abreast with the trends and principles of teaching. The effectiveness of the teaching-learning process is therefore affected by the way mentors and mentees relate with one another in the classroom and the school's community as a whole. The challenges faced by supervisors or linked tutors include lack of adequate remuneration, increased workload, as well as proximity and accessibility of the practice schools, just to mention a few. Notwithstanding, the supervisors have their normal lessons of about 15 to 18 hours a week to teach in college. These linked tutors also have a maximum of 9 project works to supervise prior to the teacher trainees' final examination. All these contribute to the increased workload on the linked tutors, which might even affect their effectiveness and final output of work.

Table 6. Reasons Given for Identified Challenges

Reasons	Number	%
Insufficient allowances due to deduction	17	15.2
Feeding and paying utilities	43	38.4
Uncooperative attitude of the people in the community	12	10.7
Extra money required to buy food and complete project work	1	0.9
Water and electricity are not regular and are costly	3	2.7
Inability of the college to pay feeding allowances on time	6	5.4
Mentors expect mentees to do all the school work	2	1.8
Cost of living is very high	2	1.8
Many things to do within a limited time	10	8.9
Communicating with family and friends is difficult	16	14.3
Total	112	100.0

The requirement of the research was to identify the challenges faced in achieving success in the teaching practice program in terms of time, money and other logistics. The needs of the various groups concerned are related in some cases varied in others. Various reasons were given for the identified challenges as analyzed in [Table 6](#).

Table 7. Suggested Support Services to be Provided for the Teaching Practice Programme

Support Services	Numbers	%
Basic amenities	37	33.0
Mentors should be trained teachers	2	1.8
Feeding fees be added to allowances & paid at bank	27	24.1
Provision of textbooks for Mentees and pupils	6	5.4
Increment in allowances	2	1.8
Provision of charts & other materials to prepare TLMs	8	7.1
Educate students on difficulties & how to manage their lives	5	4.5
Regular seminars & workshops to update trainees & mentors	6	5.4
Adequate preparation at college before the out segment	14	12.5
Communities to sponsor mentees	2	1.8
Total	112	100

Though accommodation for teacher trainees on the program was free, it is surprising to note that a number of the respondents constituting 33 percent suggested the provision of basic amenities including accommodation in their teaching practice communities. This suggested that trainees had some reservations about the accommodation given them on their arrival at their teaching practice stations. A visit to some the residences of trainees revealed that their rooms were quite small and obviously congested.

Various support services were suggested by different respondents as in [Table 7](#). Added to these was the admission by 5.4% of the respondents that regular seminars and workshops should be organized to update trainees and their mentors. Their position was that society was dynamic and knowledge was progressive. It is interesting to observe that respondents reported their mentors could not appreciate the new methodological models that the teacher trainees were using. These workshops plus seminars would brace (mentors and mentees) up for the challenges in the classroom and beyond.

4. Conclusions and Recommendation

The study revealed that teacher-trainees, mentors and assemblymen in the two (2) community saw the IN-IN-OUT programme as useful to a large extent, even though they had varied opinions. While some say the program was merely useful, some see it as very useful and others saw the program as extremely useful. The study also revealed that the challenges faced by the various teacher-trainees', mentors and supervisors include social problems, financial difficulties and time constraints. It was clear from the findings that some groups or individuals had challenges in one area only, while others had two or more categories with the most common challenge being money. The IN-IN-OUT programme is a worthy educational policy and the benefit to the various stakeholders cannot be over-emphasized. It recommended that teacher-trainees' are posted to the rural and peri-urban communities, one can be sure that after their certification they would be fully prepared to face the challenges ahead of them, whether they are posted to the rural community or to any other area. The challenges facing the implementation of the programme are really formidable. The teacher-trainees, lamented about how unavailability of logistics and money affected them. For effective implementation of this laudable programme, it is also recommended that the government and stakeholders should as a matter of urgency commit more money to this programme.

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