

TEACHING PRACTICE SUPERVISION AS QUALITY ASSURANCE TOOL IN TEACHER PREPARATION: VIEWS OF TRAINEE TEACHERS ABOUT SUPERVISORS IN UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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ABSTRACT

Quality assurance in teacher training is significant to the overall attainment of teacher quality at the pre-tertiary level of any educational system. Despite institutional efforts being put into teaching practice, coupled with the immeasurable investments trainees are making, quality appears to be an elusive goal. This paper therefore examined teaching practice (TP) in the context of preparing quality teachers for actual field service. As a case study, the study documented evidence on teaching practice as laid down by the university of Cape Coast using questionnaires on 125 trainee teachers in the faculty of education. The study found that TP was beneficial to pre-service teachers in diverse ways even though trainees had some concerns which tended to water down quality of the exercise. As a result, novel recommendations were made to teacher training institutions to possibly look at innovative ways of streamlining activities to improve TP supervision and assessment in Ghana.

KEYWORDS: Assessment, Supervision, Teaching Practice, Teacher Preparation, Trainee Teachers

INTRODUCTION

TP is an important stage in the professional development of teachers. It provides an opportunity for pre-service teachers to apply the knowledge and theories learned on campus to the real classroom. Student teaching has been called the most challenging, rewarding, and critical stage of teacher education [1] and it is generally agreed that the student teaching experience is the key for teacher preparation programs [2]. Because it is so important, TP should be conducted in such a way that trainee teachers can continuously learn new knowledge and skills and develop professionally. Supervision of students doing TP if properly done can contribute to the quality of student teacher training. TP is a critical stage in the training of prospective teachers as it is a process of producing a master teacher. There are many mechanisms that are put in place to make TP a beneficial experience to trainee teachers and student supervision is a part of one of such mechanisms. Supervision and assessment of the trainee teachers is done principally by the teacher training institution and mentors in the schools where students conduct their TP. Often times, problems are associated with supervision and assessment of students on TP. For instance, supervisors give conflicting suggestions and sometimes supervision is ill-timed or delayed.

TP is an essential component of the student's professional training in all accredited institutions mandated to train teachers for the pre-tertiary sector. TP is therefore a core course for all the bachelor of education students in the university of Cape Coast. It is also one of the examined sections in the teacher education curriculum for all the 38 public colleges of education in Ghana. TP is internally (micro-teaching) and externally examined (off-campus TP). In some time past, trainee teachers were treated as apprentices and they taught under the supervision of experienced teachers. Since that era, teachers

have had to go through training procedures that are geared towards equipping pre-service teachers before actual professional field teaching. The evolution of teacher training strategies to ensure teacher quality, by training institutions in all respect should conform to the Ghana Education Standards. A teacher training model is used in the initial teacher training colleges (now the Colleges of Education accredited to award Diplomas in Basic Education) in Ghana. In the university of Cape Coast, students are made to take the off-campus teaching which is weighted twelve (12) credits hours in their respective schools for one full semester (usually in the first semester of level 400). Whatever model of TP the trainee teacher may be made to go through, the best place to learn to teach is in the classroom situation with real children just as the best place to learn to swim is in the swimming pool [3].

According to Bourdillion as cited in [4] TP goes beyond just knowing what to teach and knowing how to teach and the purpose of TP is to develop several competencies in the trainee teacher. It includes interpersonal, pedagogical, intercultural and psychological competencies. Students are prepared for TP through lectures, observations of competent qualified teachers teaching, micro and peer teaching. It is the responsibility of training institutions to deploy students for TP and all effort is made to attach students to competent qualified teachers by closely liaising with school heads [1]. An integral part of TP is student teacher supervision and assessment. The supervision is done through coordinated partnership between school personnel and college lecturers. Initial visits are meant to be supervisory especially in the case of the University of Cape Coast where trainee teachers do TP as a full semester course. Each training institution has its own assessment instrument. However, training institutions are generally guided by the core criteria of assessment of practical teaching endorsed by the Ghana Education Service (GES).

The quality agenda comes in here. There is currently a quality agenda running among teacher training institutions the world over, and within higher education in particular. It is a prominent and mainstream activity that seeks to ensure that there is accountability in the ways in which institutions go about their daily work. The notion of quality in the delivery of education is generally contextualised within three possible definitions: quality as value for money, quality as fit for purpose of the institution or quality as transforming [5]. [5] argues that the quality agenda that confronts many in higher education today involves mainly quality assurance processes based on public accountability. For example: accountability to a funding body, for example, the Government; a desire to improve outcomes; the prospect of new opportunities; being able to sustain programmes and activities; and an ability to demonstrate achievement against stated goals. [5] calls such quality assurance processes *retrospective* activities, because they look back to see what has been done rather than looking forward (*prospective*) to see what can be done to transform and change educational processes to improve the service delivery. It is in this light that TP supervision and assessment are viewed as quality assurance tools in ensuring quality teacher preparation for our country. The study was conceptually limited to only supervision and assessment of trainee teachers. The study did not for instance look at issues that touch on qualifications of supervisors in TP and supervisor's perception about the organisation of TP as quality tools in teacher preparation. In terms of geography, this research was concentrated on only undergraduate education students who go through TP and its setting was also in the university of Cape Coast. It is also distinctively clear that the study was delimited to the role of mentor teachers in the overall preparation of the trainee teacher on teaching practice.

Supervised TP is practical supervision of teaching under the tutelage of an established teacher and teachers should be adequately trained and supported. Does TP practice in our day and time have any positive effect on the professional competences of pre-service teachers? What the concerns of trainee teachers for whom TP is organized. In no doubt,

challenges are often associated with supervision and assessment of trainee teachers. Sometimes, trainee teacher's complain about improper grading procedures by supervisors, victimization of trainee teachers by supervisors, among others. As result, some of them have developed a dislike for some particular supervisors. Such problems can easily affect the overall quality of TP supervision and assessment. The purpose of this study was therefore to determine views of trainee teachers on the effectiveness of TP supervision and assessment as quality assurance tools of teacher preparation in the university of Cape Coast.

Pertinent questions which were interrogated and addressed in this study were: how is TP relevant in preparing the trainee teacher for actual professional field work?; what are some of the concerns of trainee teachers regarding TP supervision and assessment in the university of Cape Coast?; what suggestive measures do trainee teachers advance to improve TP supervision and assessment in the university of Cape Coast?; do the feedback methods such as oral feedback given by supervisors and the discussion of Form B with the trainee teacher adopted in the university of Cape Coast predict teaching effectiveness of trainee teachers.

LITERATURE OVERVIEW

Introduction

Teaching involves many skills that cannot be learnt at an instance. Some of these are that, teacher candidates find opportunities to develop skills in drawing learner's attention, asking questions, using and managing time effectively, and bring the lesson to a conclusion. Also, through micro teaching, the teacher's class management skill improve. They acquire the skills to choose appropriate learner activities, use teaching goals and overcome difficulties encountered during the process. During learner learning, on the other hand, teacher candidates improve their skills in giving feedback and measurement and conclusion. Furthermore, by observing the presentation of their colleagues, trainees find a chance to observe and evaluate different teaching strategies.

To train a competent and efficient teacher, all things being equal, the trainee teacher should be introduced progressively to the teaching situation with fewer complexities and then to more complex ones. Granted TP is an excellent tool to accomplish this objective, it is viewed and has often been used as a successful method in trainee teacher's education. For this reason, micro teaching and TP have been used in several places, stages of professional development for some time now [6].

Empirical Studies

In his contribution, [7] (as cited in [8]) found out that in Zambia student teachers were deliberately sent to remote rural schools. While this may assist in teacher distribution, it increased the logistical difficulties of supervision and in effect reduced the frequency of external supervision and supervision of student teachers by tutors from the training institution was limited. In Malawi, for example, tutors were expected to visit each student six times during the year of TP. However, this was prevented by difficulties of transportation and the unavailability of resources. The study further established that the impact of TP was diminished by the limited role it played in the final assessment of student teachers. In some cases, performance in TP had no impact at all on the final grade of the student. In Zambia, for example, there was no assessment of TP in the student overall grade. In her study [9] established that comments of supervising teachers remained limited to the use of skills like chalkboard writing, introducing lessons, class discipline and media use and less emphasis was given on the gradual development of student teachers, new approaches adopted and stimulus variation, whether they were being

effectively used in class or not. The study also established that supervision of student teachers did not include aspects of trainee as a member of the wider community.

In a study, [10] found out that 20% of the participants did not have their lessons being checked regularly by concerned supervisors while 80% were of the mind that their lessons were being checked regularly. In addition, 23% of the participants expressed the view that the class teachers were often present in their classes during TP while the other 77% opined that class teachers or mentors were often not present in their classes during the TP of the prospective teachers. [11] also examined patterns of student teacher's talk during TP.

The findings suggested that cooperating teachers were the ones with whom student teachers had most conversations during TP. Student teachers spent the least time talking to their college or University supervisors and school principals. While findings of these researchers are related to the objectives of the study, the studies did not focus on conceptions of prospective teachers and views of student teacher supervisors on the effectiveness of TP supervision as a tool in quality assurance in Masvingo urban schools.

Relevance of TP to Trainee Teachers

[12] conducted a study on microteaching which is a kind of TP in Millikin University. In his study, he sought to find student's opinion on the microteaching course. A microteaching/TP survey which asked students to rate (from 1 to 10), six statements focusing upon various components of the experience was completed. In that study, overall student's perceptions of the microteaching or TP experience was very positive. The students indicated that the hands-on approach provided them with excellent opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in their area of teaching. Several students stated that they found the experience to be the most beneficial thus far in their programme, and the majority appreciated the opportunity to participate in the microteaching or TP experience.

The findings indicated that students enjoy the microteaching or TP experience, learn about their teaching abilities, increase their confidence and teaching skills, receive multiple forms of feedback on their lessons, and appreciate being able to see themselves "in action". In addition, by observing peer's lessons, they increase their repertoire of ideas and strategies for teaching future lessons.

In spite of the finding in this survey, the survey was done after the students have experienced the lesson and not before the teaching session. This might have resulted in such an outcome. Also, the study involved a few students restricted to a particular area with an entirely different culture compared to the culture found in the university of Cape Coast. It is also worthy to note that the practices adopted in the microteaching includes videotaping students lessons. This makes it possible for students to become witnesses to their own performance and thus could determine whether they are really making progress as they continue their lessons. At the end of the microteaching programme, the students were able to assess their own performance. No wonder they were all in agreement that TP is really beneficial to them.

If TP is relevant in training of teachers, then steps must be taken to reduce to the barest minimum, some of the problems that are associated with TP. In a recent study conducted by [8], it was found out that college supervisors did not visit students timeously and frequently and supervisors awarded scores before discussion with the student. Some students also were of the mind that TP supervisors were unfriendly and supervisor's reports were illegible and so were of little help to trainee teachers. Some trainee teachers in that study pointed out that supervisor bias compromised on the quality of

TP supervision and that there was lack of consensus on the part of supervisors in dealing with similar issues [8]. In addition mentor demotivation was stated as an impediment to effective TP supervision. These views given by trainee teachers concur with [13] who say some impediments to effective supervision include favoritism, lack of professional qualities, and lack of motivation.

Need for Feedback on Methods Adopted in TP

A lot of research has been conducted on the subject of feed back in preparation of teachers for schools. For instance, [14] conducted a study in Nigeria to determine the perceptions of undergraduate Agriculture Education students concerning the adequacy of microteaching techniques in teacher preparation. In that study, a structured questionnaire was administered to 96 randomly selected samples representing all undergraduates in parts II, III and IV. Results revealed that TP enhances student teacher's knowledge of agriculture content. Teaching practicum helps to improve student teacher's agriculture teaching competence. It was found to improve trainee teacher's attitude to teaching. Since feedback is an essential element used in the TP process, the positive responses students gave were indication that the feedback system was very effective. In this respect, it is important to consider another study conducted on TESL students in University Teknologi of Malaysia, (UTM), by [15].

This research was meant to collect the student's opinion on their microteaching course. In the questionnaire that had been distributed, the respondents were asked to respond to 11 items related to interest towards supervisors, benefits they gained from microteaching/TP, the tasks assigned and general view on microteaching/TP. The findings showed that a majority of the trainee teachers regarded microteaching as important. However, they could not give full commitment towards the subject since they had about six to seven other subjects to attend to. That is why the level of their perception towards microteaching was found to be moderate in the study. It could be said that the problems trainee teachers faced are likely to inhibit the full benefit they are supposed to get from it. What makes this study noteworthy is that, its findings perhaps explain why some students will do anything to avoid real classroom situations in order to attain their desired grades. However, the study does not deal directly with trainee teacher's perception of microteaching/TP on their actual teaching instincts on the field.

As a practice in the University of Cape Coast, the TP unit under the faculty of education obtains feedback from trainee teachers in the form of oral discussions with supervisors with trainees after teaching sessions. The supervisors are often required to interact with trainees to ascertain their problems and counsel them on ways of surmounting those problems. In the same manner, the supervisor is supposed also to discuss their comments in the form B with trainee teachers for them to ameliorate the subsequent teaching. The form B is composed of four parts where the supervisor makes their comments. In the first place, the good points of the trainee teacher are noted and the satisfactory parts in the lesson are also catalogued. This is followed by areas where the trainee teacher needs to improve upon in the teaching process. Finally, the supervisor then provides suggestions to the trainee teacher to improve teaching.

METHODOLOGY

Design

The simple descriptive design was employed in a case study fashion to conduct the study. The focus of this research design was to describe the nature or the current status of things as far as TP supervision and assessment are concerned. The design involved collecting data through questionnaire administration. It was chosen over the other designs

because it was deemed more suitable since it afforded the researchers the opportunity to collect data and examine the issue on TP supervision and assessment as quality assurance tools in its current state in the university of Cape Coast.

Population and Sampling

The accessible population comprised about 360 level 400 students offering Bachelor of Education courses in the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education (DASSE), University of Cape Coast. It consisted of Bachelor of Education (BEd.) level 400 Management, Social Science and Accounting major students in DASSE for the 2012/2013 academic year. Multiple sampling procedures were used to select 125 subjects for inclusion in the study. Through purposive sampling procedure, DASSE was chosen since that department remains the biggest in the university of Cape Coast with over eight (8) courses being run.

The researchers then purposively selected three programmes (Management, social Science and Accounting) from the department. Disproportionate quota sampling procedure was used to assign quotas to the various programme areas: Management 40, social Science 55 and Accounting 30. The simple random sampling technique, a probability procedure was finally used to pick the final elements within the three programme areas for the study.

Instrument

The instrument used was a questionnaire. The researchers decided on this instrument because it is the most appropriate in collecting quantitative and qualitative data [16]. The questionnaire was administered on the trainee teachers with the help of two research assistants. The questionnaire allowed for the objective data due to the use of close-ended items. The close-ended questions provided a number of alternatives from which the respondents were instructed to choose [17]. In order to ensure improved content validity of the instrument, it was given to some experts for proofreading, wording and restructuring of the items [18].

Data Analysis

Data were presented and analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Descriptive statistical tools such as frequencies, percentages were used to analyse the research questions. Again, an inferential tool such as the multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the hypothesis of the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

In this study, the questionnaire for trainee teachers did not have questions on sex, age, course and others because these did not constitute variables of interest to the researchers. This position concurs with the work of [19] who advanced that background information on a sample could be important but there is no rule that bio data should always be included in every instrument. Findings of the research question one has been presented below.

- **Research Question 1**

A majority of the trainee teachers 121(96.8%) expressed the view point that TP was of immense relevance to them and that it was not a waste of time at all. For instance, whereas 23(18.4%) of the trainee teachers agreed that TP is a mere academic exercise, 107(81.6%) disagreed with the statement. On the question of whether they thought microteaching helped them to develop basic teaching skills, 95(76.0%) strongly agreed, 15(12.0%) were undecided and 15(12.0%)

disagreed. Again, 101(80.8%) of them disagreed with the statement that TP should not be a compulsory activity for education students. On this item, only 24(19.2%) of them agreed. In the same vein, whereas 87(69.6%) of them agreed that TP affords the training institutions the opportunity to closely monitor their pre-service teaching, 22(17.6%) were undecided on the issue and 16(12.8%) disagreed. In response to whether trainee gets guidance on critical aspects of teaching via TP, 111(88.8%) strongly agreed and only 14(11.2%) disagreed. Finally, 109(87.2%) of the trainees indicated that TP boosted their teaching confidence even though 16(12.8%) also had a contrary view.

From the discussions, it could be deduced that TP, according to trainees is relevant in preparing the trainee teacher for actual professional field work. The finding of this study is similar to the one that was [12] which looked at the perception of student teachers towards microteaching. The outcome of that study also revealed that students had a positive perception about microteaching.

- **Research Question 2**

This question focused on some of the concerns trainee teachers had about TP supervision and assessment. The results showed varied representations of what they thought about. A majority of them, 99(79.2%) agreed with the statement that lecturers supervise/assess just a part of the lesson delivery even though 26(20.8%) disagreed completely. Also, 118(94.4%) agreed strongly that Supervisors write marks and comments even before they discuss issues emanating from the teaching with trainee teachers. At the same time, 71(56.8%) agreed that supervisors are often not friendly and that it seemed always as if they were distanced from the trainee teacher. Basing on trainee teachers opinions, 87(69.6%) strongly agreed that most supervisors are biased in awarding their scores even though 38(30.4%) disagreed with that position. On another item, a majority of the trainees, 78(62.4%) agreed that often times, supervisor’s assessment reports are illegible and therefore make feedback difficult for them whereas the rest 47(37.6%) disagreed their colleague’s stance.

Among other things, the majority 93(74.4%) agreed strongly that their school mentors demotivated them during teaching practice. Lastly, 113(90.4%) of them strongly agreed that supervisors did not provide any feedback to them after supervisions even though 12(9.6%) of them disagreed. Almost all of them 116(92.8%) were not happy that most of the supervisors who were assigned them were not knowledgeable in the content area. The findings of the current study with particular regard to this research question confirm an earlier one which was conducted in Zimbabwe by [8]. In that study, the trainee teachers pointed out that supervisor bias compromised on quality of TP supervision.

- **Research Question 3**

This research question sought suggestions from trainee teachers on how to improve TP supervision and assessment in the university of Cape Coast? Table 1 presents the views and suggestions of trainee teachers on ways of improving TP in our teacher training institutions. The frequently occurring themes and sub-themes were collated and tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1: Suggestions of Trainee Teachers on Improving TP Supervision and Assessment

Suggestions	No.	%
• Supervisors should be friendly and should not make students fear them.	91	72.8
• Scoring by supervisors should be done after some oral discussion with trainee teachers.	123	98.4

Table 1: Contd.,

• Workshops on TP supervision should be run by training institutions for supervisors to standardize the process.	85	68.0
• The number of supervisions per trainee teacher for the TP period should be uniform for all trainees.	93	74.4
• The teaching practice unit should ensure that supervisors are chosen based on their knowledge in a particular subject area.	118	94.4

Table 1 portrays trainee teacher's suggestions about how to improve TP supervision. Gleaning data from the table, it is clear that 91(72.8%) of them suggested to supervisors to be friendly at all times with 123(98.4%) of them suggesting that scoring of trainee teachers should be done only after supervisors have discussed pertinent classroom issues with trainee teachers. Most of them explained that this may prepare them even before the supervision session. Again, 85(68.0%) of them also implored teacher training institutions to organise workshops for supervisors so as to standardize the whole enterprise of supervision. They explained that the situation where trainee's fate lies on the benevolence of their supervisors was highly unacceptable and unfair. They therefore argued that these workshops would help curtail if not erase completely, biases associated with supervision and assessment of trainees. Finally, 93(74.4%) reiterated that the number of supervisions per trainee teacher should be uniform. They intimated that sometimes, the disparities in the number of supervision gives course for worry since a trainee teacher's final grade may be determined to a large extent by the number of supervisions. Some also indicated that since the exercise is meant to sharpen the teaching skills of pre-service teachers, less emphasis should be placed on grading of trainees. Finally, they suggested that supervisors should be selected based on their content knowledge. They said the situation where supervisors were made to supervise subject areas different from their own did not help at all.

As [2], [1] noted, student teaching has been called the most challenging, rewarding, and critical stage of teacher education and it is generally agreed that the student teaching experience is the key for teacher preparation programs. It is in this light that taking these suggestions on board becomes so crucial in ensuring that TP is conducted in a way that trainee teachers continuously learn new knowledge and skills and develop professionally.

Hypothesis Testing

Multiple linear regression was conducted, using teaching competencies as dependent variable and oral feedback and Form B discussion as independent variables. Results are presented in the following Table 2:

Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Teaching Competencies (DV) from Oral Feedback and Form B Discussion (IVs)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			R
		B	Std. Error	B	T	Sig.	
1	Constant		24.32		-0.56	0.08	0.32
	Oral feedback	0.70	10.34	-0.09	1.78	0.06	0.26
	Form B discussion	0.57	0.27	0.67	3.23	0.02	0.67

Dependent Variable: Teaching Competencies

Table 2 shows a regression analysis, predicting teaching competencies from means of oral feedback and Form B discussion. The result for the oral discussion was not statistically significant, $F(1,125) = 42.34$, $p > 0.05$ (or: $F(1,125) = 42.34$, $p = 0.06$) whereas the result for the Form B discussion was statistically significant,

$F(1,125) = 42.34, p < 0.05$ (or: $F(1,125) = 42.34, p = 0.023$). For every one unit increase in discussion of Form B by supervisors, there is a corresponding increase in teaching competency of trainee teachers of 0.57. The R-Squared estimate was 0.433, suggesting that discussion of the Form B with trainee teachers explained 43.3% of the variability in trainee teacher's teaching competencies. As can be gleaned from Table 2, only discussion of Form B was significantly related to teaching competencies ($B = 0.57, p = 0.02$). This suggests that each 1-point increase in Form B discussion by supervisors with trainee teachers was associated, on average, to a 0.57-point increase in teaching competencies of trainee teachers. The two independent variables however are positively correlated with teaching competencies of trainee teachers ($r = 0.26; r = 0.67$ respectively). In a similar manner, results of a study by [14] revealed that TP enhances student teacher's knowledge of agriculture content. The study also found that feedback is an essential element used in the TP process.

CONCLUSIONS

From the above discourse, it is clear that subjects for the study (trainee teachers) had positive attitude towards TP. They found it highly beneficial in the inculcation of practice skills and positioning the pre-service teacher well for future teaching experience. It is in this regard that this paper deems it appropriate to state that TP, as part of teacher's professional training cannot be underestimated in any nation. Teaching practice would remain an important component of the teacher training programme especially if society desires is to produce quality teachers. The exercise of TP boosts trainee teacher's confidence and prepares them for actual professional field work. Trainee teachers however have certain concerns which need urgent redress in order to improve the quality of the teacher training programme. Supervisors need not see teaching practice as a time to antagonise trainee teachers and vilify them unjustifiably. Being friends to trainee teachers and giving professional coaching to them are some of the surest ways of helping trainee teachers teach with confidence and hope during their training period. It would also be very helpful if supervisors consciously make the effort to assess trainees comprehensibly and not just a part of the lessons as some supervisors are in the habit of doing because this may not give global outlook of the trainee teacher's classroom competencies. Feedback for trainee teachers help them reorganize subsequent lessons and therefore it becomes imperative for supervisors to discuss delivered lessons with them (trainees) as a way of obtaining feedback for future remedial teaching. When these concerns are properly attended to, it would positively affect quality of teaching practice in the country. In this regard, workshops on TP run for supervisors by training institutions could help standardize TP.

The current study is significant because it would go a long way to contribute significantly to knowledge within teacher education in Ghana by providing useful insight to training institutions in the proper organisation of TP. It is envisaged, once the content of this paper is disseminated, that this material would serve as a useful source of information for supervisors to improve their practices and provide direction as to how they could strategize to make their supervision of trainee teachers better. These notwithstanding, the study would provide literature on the subject that would provoke future debate on the subject and stimulate future study.

The study was however limited in the sense of generalizing its findings to a larger population of Ghana especially due to the fact that a small sample size, comparatively was used for the study. It must be noted also that because the study did not cover supervisors, it is possible that responses of the trainee teachers would not represent the true picture of the issue on the ground. Again, since a self-report medium was used for data collection, it allowed for a certain number of distortions and biases in the responses of trainee teachers. These potentially blurred the genuineness of the responses.

It is recommended that future studies are conducted to cover a larger population space and also include the views of supervisors so that in-depth conclusions could be arrived at in respect of the same topic. This paper would be applied to activities pertaining of teacher training institutions such as the universities and the colleges of education who are charged with the core mandate of producing quality teachers in an era of perceived falling standards in our educational systems in Ghana.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study, the following are recommended for stakeholders in teacher education in Ghana.

- In view of the concerns of trainee teachers regarding TP, teacher training institutions should initiate stakeholder public consultative forums to solicit views on way of improving TP supervision and assessment.
- In order to make the process work better, the teaching practice unit of the university of Cape Coast should redouble its efforts to ensure 100% participation of all supervisors and trainee teachers in the annual orientation programmes before off-campus teaching sessions. These programmes should drum home the need for supervisors to regard trainees as mentees instead of critics. This would equip both supervisors and trainee teachers with the necessary skills to give off their best in mutually beneficial manner to make the exercise effective.
- The Institute of Education, the Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service and the Teaching Practice Unit of UCC should put their human and material resources together to come out with standardised TP processes, procedures and materials that would be useful to all trainee teachers irrespective of their training institutions. This would create uniformity in supervision and assessment practices in teacher training institutions in the country.
- The discussion of the Form B could predict effective teaching by trainee teachers. Therefore, the selectively trained serving officers in the district and regional offices of the GES (called Co-operating Supervisors) should be mandated to superintend over supervisors to make sure that they discuss the Form B with students after every lesson delivery.
- In order to improve the quality of supervision, the teaching practice unit should look beyond the borders of the university in the recruitment and engagement of supervisors in specialized subject areas to minimize the instance where less knowledgeable supervisors are tasked to assess trainees in 'foreign' subject areas. For instance, the University of Education, Winneba could liaise with the university of Cape Coast to supply supervisors for English education students.

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