

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Relevance of College-Based Departmentalised Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for the Academic Staff of Colleges of Education in the Volta Region of Ghana

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ABSTRACT

Continuous professional development is the heartbeat of today's tertiary education economy. It is the hallmark of performance in the continuous mission of improvement of national education and dynamism in the worldwide knowledge economy and management. This has led to the discourse of college education and CPD relevance in the accomplishment of production of high-quality teachers for the implementation of basic education in our country Ghana, making the theme an important topic for all stakeholders. This research was therefore conducted in 2017 to unearth the relative importance attached to the subject matter by tutors and administrators of some selected Volta Region Colleges of Education. The study was qualitative with a case study design that gathered data from 4 principals through semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions used on 4 vice principals and 12 tutors. The human coder system was employed under thematic analysis. In the findings, benefits of continuous professional development were capacity building, promotion in career, and improving learning outcomes of student teachers among others. The conclusion was drawn that the colleges needed to institute continuous professional development on departmental bases and own it as part of their internal academic and professional practice to help them nurture the faculty better as a means of safeguarding the profession, professional, public, and employer. Recommended that College Management should include college-based departmentalised CPD on their institution-wide academic programmes and budget for implementation to ensure effective execution of CPD activities in all the academic departments of the colleges.

Keywords: Continuous professional development, academic staff, college of education, learning outcome

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of continuous professional development (CPD) to the colleges of education (CoE) as a system cannot be overlooked. Colleges of Education need to prove their relevance as a system giving education to diverse students, through capacity building for their workforce. Allison (2013) reiterated the call for CPD when he mentioned that meeting the demands of the common core means teaching student teachers new approaches to instruction, through effective CPD of the change drivers. Recent education reforms have urged teachers to foster collaboration, debate and reflection among students, to develop cognitive processes like those called for in the new standards. In looking at this issue passionately, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) (2016) stated that in Ghana, between 85 and 90 per cent of a total school budget is used to pay employee salaries and the essence of successful instruction and good schools come from the thoughts and actions of the professionals in the schools who are mainly teachers. So, GNAT advocated that if one is to look for success in education, the most sensible thing to do is to provide continuous education for the educators.

Opfer and Pedder (2010) advised that institutions should create a CPD plan by considering their goals, skill and competency to be developed, and the objectives the staff will have to accomplish. Opfer and Pedder maintained that CPD for staff members should commence as soon as a new member joins the organisation. To this writer, all staff members should have a "living" professional development plan in place. They, therefore, stressed that planning for the CPD should not only be considered after a staff member is identified as having a shortfall of knowledge/competence, rather, but CPD is also part of the fibre of the organisational improvement plan. CPD should therefore be an ongoing thing throughout the year. This presupposes that membership in CPD cuts across the rank and file of the organisation throughout the operational year.

The purposes served by professional development processes have compelled management to mandate CPD as part of the conditionality to gaining promotion. Cases could be cited from the United States of America and other places, where states have various CPDs for the staff delivering the curriculum. For example, in Arkansas, they need to complete 60 hours of documented professional development activities annually, in Indiana, they are required to earn 90 Continuing Renewal Units (CRUs) per year; in Massachusetts, they need 150 Professional Development Points (PDPs), and in Georgia, they must earn 10 Professional Learning Units (PLUs) (Smith, 2016). For instance, teachers must further their education to improve their knowledge in their subject areas, learn new scientific theories, and undergo mentoring in specialized teaching techniques to apply to different subject areas in improving their general performance and credential (Bubb & Earley, 2007).

Recognizing the important relationship between CPD and teacher output, some universities, other tertiary institutions, and civic organisations have instituted policies in the area. The University of California has its 50th policy, which is on professional development, which says that the university is to provide assistance and support to staff employees to increase the effectiveness of their performance in their present university positions, as well as to encourage employees to obtain skills, knowledge, and abilities, which may improve their opportunities for career advancement within the university. The university viewed this policy as stemming from the view that professional development and continuous learning are necessary to maintain the quality of the university staff and their continued readiness and ability to contribute effectively to the mission and goals of the university (University of California, 2014). CPD may be directed at solving a felt need.

CPD may also be instituted as a systemic approach to ensuring continuous quality delivery and as a practice to satisfy quality assurance directives. For instance, anytime educational reforms or reviews occur, subject

teachers, and administrators are taken through the rudiments of the reform to build their capacity for effective implementation (MOE, 2004). This happens through workshops at regional or district or circuit or school levels. Typical examples could be cited from the educational reform of 1987, and the educational review of 2007 of basic, secondary, and teacher training college education in Ghana. A similar incident occurred in building the capacity of lecturers through cooperative education when the then technical institutes were being converted into polytechnics in the country (Afeti, 2004). In those instances, workshops were organized for teachers/tutors/lecturers and administrators to build their competencies in various subjects, pedagogy and administrative works. The teacher training colleges are no exception in the discourse on the CPD topic.

The colleges of education in Ghana, formerly called 'teacher training colleges' operated in the past as post-secondary non-tertiary institutions that had the mandate to produce teachers to teach at the basic schools (Newman, 2013). Their current status as university colleges called colleges of education put them at a higher pedestal in the production of a more seasoned and world-class teacher who will be able to compete in the international market in the teaching profession. Thus, CoEs need to embark on the vigorous continuous professional development of their personnel. Every professional development programme, no matter the nature, scope and situation, aims at improving the capacity of the serving officer on the job. Thus, it connotes human resource development. Thus, it is very important to have CPD instituted in all units of the educational institution especially, the academic units as they constitute the bulk of knowledge to be diffused to student teachers. This necessity has compelled research like this to guide practice.

In Ghana, basic education has taken a new dimension. Emanating from the Education Act of 2008, Act 778, is the Pre-tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management (PTPDM) policy by the MoE (MoE, 2015). The PTPDM policy seeks to promote standardisation of teachers' practice through CPD as a form of lifelong learning, (MoE, 2015; NTC, 2015). Regularising that demand, the NTC has, in collaboration with JICA, come up with the PTPDM policy with the subsidiary demand that all teachers would be licensed and promotion would be dependent upon fulfilment of standards set. The standards set the minimum criteria of Professional Values and Attitude (PVA), Professional Knowledge (PK), and Professional Practice (PP) expected of a teacher. The standard is also to be used as a professional tool to guide CoE tutors, and students (T-TEL PB, 2017). The standard brings into motion compulsory attendance in professional development programmes by a practising teacher. Thus, the CoE has been tasked to inculcate in the pre-service and in-service teachers of their catchment areas the right attitude towards professional practice through a commitment to personal CPD. This behoves the college tutors themselves to internalise the concept as a means of assuring quality in their professional practice. It has however been noticed that colleges of education do not have their own rigorous departmentalised CPD. It is most often what emanates from the mentoring University, University of Cape Coast that the college system responds to. Thus, internal policy on college-based departmentalised CPD is either non-existent or non-functional in the college system. Yet, with the demands of the PTPDM policy implementation to actualise related CPD mandates of Act 778 and Act 847, colleges need to pursue CPD dreams more on a departmental basis. The need to pursue the relevance of CPD for the academic staff was well highlighted by Yaqub, Owusu-Cole and Ofosua (2020) when they maintained in research finding that "colleges of education do not maximise the full potential of benefits that accrue from CPD programmes due to some profound challenges such as lack of a systemic and comprehensive training needs analysis and weak interaction between the institution seeking the training and the institutions providing the training" (para. 1). If the relevance of departmentalised CPD is not highlighted for stakeholders of the colleges of the education system to become conscious of the topic, engagement in CPD programmes would

continue to be marginalised. Yet the college system as a tertiary institution needs to become independent in its practices and not to continue be spoon-fed always. This prompted the research into the relevance of CPD for the academic staff-curriculum drivers of tertiary programmes.

The research was initiated to help discover the relative importance that the academic staff of the colleges of education attach to CPD as related to practice and theory. It was meant to sensitise the education public on the professional effect of continuous capacity building of the curriculum drivers and tutors in teacher education and beyond. The study purposed to broaden stakeholders' knowledge about the subject matter of CPD of academic staff. The study was guided by the research question: How important is CPD for the academic staff of colleges of education in the Volta Region of Ghana?

Continuous Professional Development

The value of CPD cannot be underrated. If educational institutions want to make the necessary impact, they must be very conscious of how current and prevailing their personnel are in the industry. Therefore, the CPD of the staff, especially the academic staff, of an educational institution must be an issue of priority. The essence of successful instruction and good schools comes from the thoughts and actions of the professionals in the schools who are mainly teachers and thus between 85 and 90 per cent of a total school budget is used to pay employee salaries, therefore, if one is to look for success in education, the most sensible thing to do is to provide continuous education for the educators (GNAT, 2016).

The importance attached to CPD is being promulgated all over the world. India had 48 academic staff colleges at a time, funded by the University Grants Committee, which offered mid-career training to all university staff; United Kingdom through the recommendation in the Dearing Report (1997) created an Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education for the purpose training for higher education staff was required in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; applicants for professorship needed to give evidence of their pedagogical skills, inclusion in staff contracts within institutions in Germany, Norway and Great Britain; clauses introduced in institutions of higher learning binding new academic staff to attend staff development courses, France creating a national plan for practice-oriented pedagogical training down to postgraduate applicants for teaching posts, and the growing number of staff development units within universities like 125 staff professional development units in Great Britain, 16 staff professional development units in Germany, 11 staff professional development units in the Netherlands and all universities in Finland (Fielden, 2011).

Higher educational institutions such as universities, colleges and polytechnics, are labour-intensive organisations; they depend on people for the delivery of their services and the quality of the staff in institutions of tertiary education is thus central to their effectiveness, in the same way, that it is to all people-centred organisations (Fielden, 2011). In support, Friedman, Durkin, Phillips and Davis (2000) alluded that CPD is a means for employers to garner a competent, adaptable workforce for performance. CPD is important because it ensures that the professional continues to be competent in his profession (Kloosterman, 2013). CPD should provide the professional with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that are needed for effective performance to meet the expectations placed on the professional by the employers, colleagues and the members of the professional association (Kloosterman, 2013). To Hawkins and Shohet (2006) well-meaning and effective workers are those who constantly learn to upgrade their knowledge and skill on the job.

CPD prepares and supports the teacher to manage future responsibility because it is a future-oriented process

and is considered the most important pedagogical activity used to improve teachers' effectiveness and enhance school improvement with all its constituent parts and as a means of a constant rebirth of knowledge (Ashebir, 2011). CPD serves as means of fulfilling the dynamism of the knowledge society (Friedman, Durkin, Phillips & Davis, 2000). CPD is a way of building a professional portfolio in professional practice and this behoves the teacher to undergo such professional capacity-building programmes (NTC, 2017).

CPD is a means of assuring a wary public that professionals are indeed up-to-date, given the rapid pace of technological advancement; and also serves as a means whereby professional associations can verify that the standards of their professions are being upheld (Friedman, Durkin, Phillips & Davis, 2000). CPD is accepted as an integral part of teacher education because only continuous learning and training assures a high level of expertise and enables the teachers to keep their professional skills and knowledge up-to-date as well as with the newest pedagogical approaches which are adjusted to the needs of the 21st century (Kloosterman, 2013). CPD is again viewed as means of tracking and tackling the attrition of the workforce (Fielden, 2011). To Fielden, in developing countries, one of the biggest problems is that of obtaining and then retaining staff in higher education. He substantiated this allegation by citing a study by Saint (1992) which showed that 22 out of 45 African universities still rely on foreigners to fill 20% or more of their faculty positions and to avert this, vice-chancellors endeavoured to offer key academic staff development opportunities and then the subsequent linkage and international partnership arrangements for skill upgrading. CPD is seen as a form of lifelong learning for professionals in assuring professionals and their clientele of up-to-date knowledge and skill in this age of rapid technological advancement (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Fraser, Carroll, McKinney & Reid, 2007; Ashebir, 2011).

METHOD

Research Design

In the study, knowledge was seen as being created and not acquired belonging to the interpretive paradigm which aligns with the nominalist school of thought that social reality could only be a result of human thinking and never exist in an external world to be objectively accessed. The study used a qualitative approach with a case study design to help understand the participants within the college of the education system about what their views might be on CPD and the relevance in the practice and sustainability of quality teacher education.

Setting and Participants

The population consisted of principals, vice principals and tutors who were heads of academic departments. In all, homogenous purposive, non-probability sampling was adopted in selecting four colleges of education with a total of 12 Tutors and 4 Vice Principals who produced data through open-ended questions and 4 Principals who were interviewed to form the accessible population out of the general population of tutors and college management. At the time of the study, Dambai was part of the then Volta Region and hence the Dambai College of Education was part of the colleges in the Volta Region of Ghana. Readers should kindly be informed that at the time of publication of the research findings in this manuscript, Dambai became the capital town of the newly created Oti Region of Ghana. The creation of the Region occurred in 2019. The details of the population sampled for the study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

Sample size for the study

| Colleges | Principal | Vice Principal | Tutors | Total |
|----------------|-----------|----------------|--------|-------|
| Akatsi | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| St. Teresa's | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| E. P. Amedzofe | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| Dambai | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| Grand Total | 4 | 4 | 12 | 20 |

Note. Table 1 gives the constituents of the research sample. The sample size is 20 consisting of 4 Principals, 4 Vice Principals, and 12 Tutors.

Instruments

The open-ended questionnaire was in two parts with Part A seeking information on the importance of CPD to the academic staff of the CoE and Part B on biographic data on the research participants as to the number of years they had been in the college system and specifically in their respective colleges. The questionnaire for both Vice Principals and the Tutors contained the same time of information. The semi-structured interview guide was designed and used in interviewing Principals. It contained the same items as those in the questionnaire. However, the interview process allowed Principals to give additional information as and when they deemed it necessary. The researcher also delved into issues for additional information when the need arose at various points within the interview as a way of probing into necessary issues

Procedure

Data was gathered through a direct visit by the researcher to all the research sites. Administrative permission was well ahead of time sought through the writing of an official letter to Principals of the selected colleges of education in the expression of interest to carry out the study by gathering data from them. After the permission was granted, the researcher travelled to the colleges concerned and shared consent seeking from the sampled groups. Upon the agreement of the sampled group, the researcher then carried on by distributing the questionnaire to them with an agreement on when they should be ready for her to get back to the colleges and collect. The interviews were conducted by the researcher entering into a professional agreement with the principals as to the best time for them to be able to grant the interviews to the researcher. This was also strictly adhered to through a visit by the researcher to the interviewees.

Data Analysis

Manual coding was done under thematic analysis. In the analysis, the researcher immersed herself by reading the questionnaire scripts over and over to familiarize herself with the presentations. This was followed by going through the individual scripts and writing on sheets of paper the main ideas presented by participants to categorise and interview audio transcription followed immediately. Themes were then identified in forming a coding regime/framework. Consistency and inter-coder reliability were assured at this stage very well. Presentation of the results was done after inferences were made from the data. Alphabets used for identification of respondent groups were: 'QR' for questionnaire respondents; 'IR' for interview respondents; 'P' for Principal; 'VP' for 'Vice Principal' whilst 'T' denotes 'Tutor'. A numeral is attached to the designation of the participants to indicate their positioning at the time of the data processing. Thus, QRVP1 for instance means the questionnaire respondent who was a Vice Principal and whose responses happened to be the first data processed in that category. To ensure trustworthiness for credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability, methodological and respondent triangulation were implored coupled with the adoption of fair procedures in avoiding biases, giving the research ability to be replicated.

For transferability, any reader could replicate the study/use the findings if he/she feels his/her jurisdiction has similar issues as found in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question: How Relevant Is a College-Based Departmentalised CPD Programme for the Academic Staff of Colleges of Education in the Volta Region?

All the 12 tutors and four Vice Principals indicated that CPD results in capacity building. Vice Principals maintained that the curriculum is being implemented by the teachers and hence if their skills and knowledge get developed from time to time, they would be more capable of delivering the content and pedagogic aspects better to make the students also acquire such competencies. Tutors amounting to 10, further alluded that undergoing CPD programmes in the departments shows a clear commitment to self-development and professionalism among tutors in the subjects that are taught at the colleges.

Seven of the respondents stated that CPD is important in the fulfilment of the dynamism of the knowledge society. Three Vice Principals mentioned that CPD at the college level and the department would help the college in developing all the staff in their fields of specialization and teaching and improving the college as a whole as all college workers keep developing and improving their competencies on the programmes. One Vice Principal said that, in the college, professional training consists of content knowledge, pedagogic knowledge and specific pedagogic-content knowledge and that the best way of training teachers in the college, therefore, is the continuous building of the curriculum drivers' knowledge and skills in the domain. To her, the college would then stand to gain specifically in the programme since the programme would be geared towards meeting the specific needs and aspirations of the college system.

Most of the participants, including all the Vice Principals, resolved that tackling the attrition rate of the academic staff of the institutions is an important outcome of the CPD programme. A Vice Principal lamented that some of their tutors had left the college system because some felt they did not have enough competence to deliver the diploma curriculum, coupled with the call on tutors to get themselves further educated by going for further studies. To him, the college-departmentalised CPD programme would have helped such people better in getting them with settled minds about further studies and some additional skills to help for their delivery.

Except for QRT2, QRVP4 and QRT10, respondents agreed that CPD helps academic staff to preserve the value of tertiary institutions. To one of such tutors, the value of the CoE system is skewed towards the development of teaching competencies which is basic to the individual tutor's delivery of the curriculum in his specialized field and hence, once he or she does that effectively, the system is preserved. To him, tertiary education should not be seen as a statute of sculpture work for emulation by any tertiary institution. All the respondents consisting of the 12 tutors, and all the four Vice Principals, believed that CPD helps in preserving the identity of the institution.

In buttressing the point on the job market, six of the respondents contended that CPD is an important factor in fulfilling the demand and supply factor in the training of teachers in the colleges of education. One said the college departmentalized CPD can help tutors develop students better so that when the students graduate, they can teach better at the basic schools. To him, this would go a long way in improving the quality of education and the general standard of the basic schools' performance. Some of the teachers, numbering 11, stated that the departmental CPD would help their students improve their semester results. To five of these tutors, once the tutors refresh their minds on what they go to teach, they could be better facilitators in getting students to understand the content and

assimilate it more easily.

Filling the technological gap across the disciplines was identified by all the 12 tutors and the four Vice Principals. One Vice Principal said, by all means, in going through the CPD programme at the departmental level, the application of ICT skills in handling some topics would be demanded and this would help tutors to blend their manual skills and power point with other technological tools in handling their lessons. For one, the ICT department would become more effective in taking tutors through power point presentation because any tutor who may be featured in the CPD programme as the facilitator would at all cost wants to project part of the lesson to members using power point skills.

One Vice Principal also mentioned that some tutors may wish to do class blogging to carry information across to their students so with the departmental CPD in place, this area may also become a target to help both students and tutors use ICT skills better in making teaching and learning easier.

All participants except QRT9 held the view that the importance of the CPD programme is in the provision of effective institutional management. QRVP3 asserted that CPD promotes quality assurance activities in the institution. He said the college management would be very much improved because tutors, who feature on the management teams, would also have the opportunity to upgrade their understanding of certain things so that their style of administration at the management level would help improve human relations and general leadership.

This Vice Principal cited the heads of departments who also partake in the management of the colleges. A Vice Principal, QRVP1 also had the view that if CPD activities are occurring at the departmental level, then those who work at the central administration too could have the opportunity to request for capacity building in some of their operational issues, hence that would be a unique opportunity to upgrade their leadership skills for performance improvement.

Ensuring consistency in the promotional agenda is another importance of the CPD programme identified by the respondents. A Vice Principal and seven tutors associated themselves with this assertion. The Vice Principal reiterated his point by alluding to the policy demand on tutors to conduct research and publish for their promotion, and that the action research model, for instance, would help tutors realize the dream of publication. Apart from QRVP2 and QRT9, the rest of the respondents stated that the CPD programme serves the legal mandate of an institution.

Two Vice Principals, QRVP1 and QRVP4 mentioned the case of the policy being developed by the colleges which have staff professional development as the mandate for the staff, to at all cost undergo some CPD programme in the academic year to help upgrade their skills and knowledge in their subjects or operational areas. QRVP4 had the mind that the colleges have come far in their tertiary journey, so, to continue lagging in some aspects of the functions of the departments would not auger well and therefore CPD at the departmental level would be a means of bringing life to the departments to create the tertiary feel among members. Improving the learning outcome of learners is another importance of the CPD programme identified by all except QRT3 and QRT9 respondents.

In a semi-structured interview, a principal responded to the question on the relevance of CPD to the academic staff of the college of education by stating the following:

The rationale behind the introduction of this PDS is to enable the teachers to teach in a better manner where the learner is the focus. Right, so maybe participatory kind of a class where the teacher gives the

room and sets the tone for students' participation and so making learning more experiential. Focus on more pedagogic knowledge than content (IRP1).

To another principal,

Grading of the staff depends on their academic and professional engagement so CPD programmes would help the staff to upgrade, publish and carry out other important academic and professional assignments for their promotion. So let the staff know that going for further studies would put them on a better pedestal and be called upon one day to take up positions that are commensurate with the academic level ... CPD would surely better the academic and professional levels of our students. A cat doesn't give birth to a mouse so you are at that pedestal, which is the type you would give birth to and the bible says that a tree is known by its fruits so our products reflect the quality of we the trainers (IRP2).

Another principal also opined that:

CPD for the academic staff is necessary for them to be able to live up to expectations in terms of changes that are going on to be abreast with changes, build their capacity, current and impart that knowledge to teacher trainees. CPD aims at sharpening the skills and knowledge of staff so they would be able to translate the knowledge to the teaching of trainees and generally help in human resource development (IRP3).

The same principal (IRP3) reiterated by saying that "It will help the colleges reduce or avoid attrition. Already it is there because the NCTE is already requiring that staff who do not qualify to be flushed out of the colleges."

One principal affirmed his stand on CPD's contribution to quality delivery by stating that "Because better teachers would produce better students so we expect the advanced knowledge of teachers to help them produce better students" (IRP4). He further added that:

For the academic staff to be able to fit into the tertiary level and perform as such CPD is very necessary otherwise staff may not survive when the colleges take off seriously at the full tertiary level. It is the terminal degree that is required at the tertiary level so most of you who do not have must strive to have it. Especially now that you are going to be on campuses of the universities, you need to have it so that you can match up to the level of university lecturers (IRP4).

All the participants indicated that CPD results in the capacity building of the workers of the colleges. Some came up with the view that they would be more capable of delivering the content and pedagogic aspects better in their specialized fields in their department if the college-based departmentalised CPD is implemented. To some of them, the students stand to benefit more in their day-to-day learning with the enhanced skill of their tutors through the CPD. All the participants might have stated capacity building of staff because the fact remains that training and learning increase confidence and overall capability, and compliments career aspirations resulting in individuals adapting positively to changes in work or industry requirements. For example, hitherto, though not made compulsory, it was advantageous to the college tutor to have undergone some level of professional development workshop or activity within the three- or five-years due period for the next promotion in the Ghana Education Service. Currently with the implementation of the CoE Act, 2012, Act 847, in upgrading the teacher training colleges into CoE and as tertiary institutions, the onerous responsibility of quality teacher education delivery in higher learning institutions has been bestowed on the college tutor.

With this high expectation from the public and the education community specifically, the college system must promote activities that would develop the tutor in his or her specialized field to fulfil the mandate effectively. The surest way of such specific developments is through the departmentalised CPD which caters for the individual needs of each unit of each academic department. The finding is consistent with the discoveries of many authors. For instance, Fielden (2011) stated that higher education institutions, such as universities, colleges and polytechnics, are labour-intensive organisations; they depend on people for the delivery of their services and the quality of the staff in institutions of tertiary education is thus central to their effectiveness; Friedman, Durkin, Phillips, and Davis (2000) alluded that CPD is a means for employers to garner a competent and adaptable workforce for performance; and Kloosterman (2013) had the view that CPD ensures that the professional continues to be competent in his profession. Kloosterman expanded his view when he stated that CPD should provide the professional with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that are needed for effective performance to meet the expectations placed on the professional by the employers, colleagues and the members of the professional association. The majority of the participants also alluded to effective engagement in CPD programmes as a show of a clear commitment to self-development and professionalism.

According to IRP1, CPD provides an opportunity for an individual to identify knowledge gaps and resolve them through a recognisable approach. All tutors are adults and should have the true conscience to be loyal to whatever they find themselves doing in any organisation of their choice in employment. With this, the tutor must accept responsibility for the statutes, conditions, and scheme of service in the particular department and that is what brings about promotion. It is therefore just proper for the tutor to show a clear sign of commitment to his or her work by getting committed to further professional development agenda in the college. This finding has a direct link with Hawkins and Shohet's (2006) ideology that well-meaning and effective workers are those who constantly learn to upgrade their knowledge and skill on the job because those workers view work as a call to personal development and hence get committed to CPD agenda. Directly related to these authors' views and the findings is Ashebir (2011) who also opined that CPD prepares and supports the teacher to manage future responsibility because it is a future-oriented process and considered the most important pedagogical activity used to improve teachers' effectiveness and enhance school improvement with all its constituent parts and as a means of the constant rebirth of knowledge.

Seven of the tutors stated that CPD is important in the fulfilment of the dynamism of the knowledge society. According to some of them, furthering education and knowledge in a teacher's subject area helps to expand knowledge or learn how to teach subject-area content and concepts more effectively helping the teacher to be confident and productive in his work. Three Vice Principals mentioned that CPD at the college level and the department would help the college in developing all the staff in their fields of specialization and teaching and also improving the college as a whole as all college workers keep developing and improving their competencies in the programmes, especially in the implementation of the new concepts and methodology of implementing the new curricular that are surfacing with the reform of education at the colleges stemming from the transition of the colleges into university colleges. A Vice Principal reiterated her point when she said that, in the college, professional training consists of content knowledge, pedagogic knowledge and specific pedagogic-content knowledge and that the best way of training teachers in the college, therefore, is the continuous building of their knowledge and skills in the domain. To her, the college would then stand to gain specifically in the programme since the programme would be geared towards meeting the specific needs and aspirations of the college system. This finding is consistent with Fielden (2011) who opined that the total of human knowledge is doubling every five or ten years, therefore it is

almost impossible for an individual staff member to remain in touch with the subject without a conscious investment in scholarship and self-tuition. In the case of supporting staff, Fielden vehemently put forth that there are equally rapid changes in management processes, techniques, and technology, hence the institution should recognize this and have a strategy for enabling everyone to confront this task, otherwise, teachers and the supporting staff would provide out of date information inefficiently in the institution. Directly in tune, is Friedman, Durkin, Phillips, and Davis (2000) with the view that CPD is a means of assuring a wary public that professionals are indeed up-to-date, given the rapid pace of technological advancement; and serves as a means whereby professional associations can verify that the standards of their professionals are being upheld.

Building a professional portfolio is relevant in professional practice and this behoves the teacher to undergo such professional capacity-building programmes (NTC, 2017). Some participants emphasized this characteristic. A Principal noted that CPD is widely accepted as an integral part of teacher education because only continuous learning and training assures a high level of expertise. Most participants, including all the Vice Principals and Principals, maintained that tracking and tackling the attrition rate of the academic staff of the institutions is an important outcome of the CPD programme. Some lamented that some of their tutors might have left the college system because of their feeling of incompetence in the delivery of the advanced curriculum. To these respondents, the college departmentalized CPD programme would have helped such people acquire additional knowledge and competence in their job to be able to withstand the pressure of the demand of the knowledge economy of the college system.

In buttressing this point, a principal underscored the importance of college-based departmentalised CPD to the college system when he referred to the motivation in the vitality and dynamism of the tutors' works as assured by the continuous professional gathering in promoting love and togetherness and promotion of the department. With this engagement, a tutor will not easily think of leaving their colleagues and his promotion is assured out of the process leading to his satisfaction. He added that once the staff gains motivation out of the programme because the higher education aspirations are being met for such staff, they would continue to serve in the college system. This finding agrees with Fielden (2011)'s claim that in developing countries, one of the biggest problems is of obtaining and then retaining staff. He advanced his argument by substantiating it with a finding from Saint (1992) which shows that 22 out of 45 African universities still rely on foreigners to fill 20% or more of their faculty positions and to avert this, vice-chancellors continue to endeavour to offer key academics the staff development opportunities and then the subsequent linkage and international partnership arrangements for skill upgrading. Friedman expressed a similar view, et al. (2000) who claimed that CPD is a means for individual professionals to ensure a measure of control and security in the often-precarious modern workplace. Apart from three, all the other respondents maintained that CPD helps academic staff to preserve the value of tertiary institutions.

Some respondents regarded the value of the CoE system as skewed towards the development of teaching competencies which is basic to the individual tutor's delivery of the curriculum in his or her specialized field and hence, once he or she does that effectively, the system is preserved. The CoE system is noted for the unique role of the delivery of pre-service teacher education and its value, therefore, rests on the development of teaching competencies among basic education teachers. If college CPD helps in building the competencies of teachers, the attendant's effect would reflect in the quality of services rendered by the college products. A Principal advanced his submission by stating that very soon applicants to the colleges would become so selective. To him, the job market is almost one for all the graduates and people may want to associate with the best-performing institutions to enhance their chances of being picked quickly by the job market. He reiterated that once the government stops

mass posting of teacher trainees, the challenge posed to college graduates in job seeking would become glaringly. To him, it means that without these vital engagements, such as CPD, in making the colleges perform to the admiration of the potential market, people may not get interested in applying to particular colleges for admission and be trained at those colleges. He also maintained that although the mentoring university, UCC, and other state agencies like NCTE and NAB give some workshops to staff to help build their capacity, the home-based CPD out of departmental decision would be more effective since it resonates with the participants themselves and they may not feel that it is an imposition. Another Principal also buttressed the point when he stated:

College-based departmentalised CPD will help tutors to be able to live up to expectations in terms of changes that are going on so that tutors could be abreast with changes, build their capacity and impart that knowledge to teacher trainees (IRP3)

In buttressing the point on the job market, six of the participants contended that CPD is an important factor in fulfilling the demand and supply factor in the training of teachers in the colleges of education. The education system of Ghana is unique, addressing and fulfilling the educational goals of the country. In teacher training, the specific curriculum being implemented is supposed to help build the competencies of the teacher so that such teachers could also be fit in helping shape the lives and destiny of educands in line with national aspirations. CPD at the departments, therefore, has the mandate to compliment the teacher's content and pedagogic knowledge through professional practice so that when the teacher mounts the classroom in the college, he or she would deliver according to these specific desirable professional qualities to the benefit of the teacher trainees specifically and the public in general. If a teacher becomes deviants toward societal norms, he or she would certainly have the knowledge but the mode of delivery and impartation would lack because the right attitude to carry the knowledge across to beneficiaries would be lacking. Instead of such knowledge being tamped into, it would become a waste.

When demand and supply of needed knowledge are equal, the system produces the value for itself but when the supply is considered shoddy to the quality demanded, the system loses value. This is the reason when teachers conduct themselves abysmally, society loses interest or worse looks down upon the educational system. These revelations are consistent with that of Ashebir (2011), who maintained that it is mandatory to update professional qualities for school achievement and the response to that challenge is embracing the concept of professional training, to adapt to learning new skills through CPD. According to the author, a formidable CPDP should aim at forming a better and more effective teacher capable of adapting to a different school or classroom situation with a focus on improved learning outcomes for the learners. Fielden (2011) maintained that staff members are expected to be alert to the latest innovations in teaching methods and research supports.

Several tutors (11) also stated that the departmental CPD would help their students improve their semester results. To five of these tutors, once the tutors refresh their minds on what they go to teach, they could be better facilitators in getting students to understand the content and assimilate it more easily. Filling the technological gap across all disciplines was identified by a good number of respondents as being one of the importance of CPD. Participants had the picture that CPD programmes at the departmental level bring into focus more use of ICT skills in the departments in handling some topics. Tutors would like to blend their manual skills and power point with other technological tools in handling their lessons. To some respondents, the ICT department would become more effective in taking tutors through power point presentation because any tutor who may be featured in the CPD programme as the facilitator would at all cost wants to project part of the lesson to members using power point skills. Even departmental ICT coordinators would become more proactive in seeing such units functioning. For

example, class blogging to carry information across to students and other departmental members would become more feasible and achievable. With this, the function of CoE as stated in Act 847 that the college should expose students to modern and innovative techniques of teaching and learning to promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills in the classroom, would be achieved to an extent through the CPD programmes. With ICT skills, tutors could teach better by creating simulations and other interactive classrooms for teacher trainees and the students could also be motivated to learn better. A Principal reiterated his point when he stated:

Grading of the staff depends on their academic and professional engagements so CPD programmes in the departments and the college would help the staff to upgrade, publish and carry out other important academic and professional assignments for their promotion. So let the staff know that going for further studies would put them on a better pedestal and be called upon one day to take up positions that are commensurate with the academic level. (IRP2)

The participants attest to the fact that CPD meets the changing demand of the labour market. Institutions seek to be responsive to national and regional demands by retraining their staff to meet the standards. Economies are dramatically changing in their perspective of what standards ought to be pursued within a frame of time. The teachers of the 19th and 20th centuries could not be the teachers society would like in the 21st century as the needs of society keep changing demanding dynamism on the part of administrators and educational stakeholders to craft innovative paths and chatter such as producing pragmatic teachers who would be able to adapt to the changing needs of society. If we were taught through direct face-to-face interaction with our instructors, today's world with its transcendental challenges in meeting the ever-increasing needs of our educands, we could not afford to emphasize the face-to-face lessons, but rather promote virtual learning opportunities to increase accessibility and affordability in the educational engagement of today's children. One of the best ways to promote the opportunity of meeting the current demand of the teacher labour market is to get the college's departments and units in fostering relationships with relevant and similar departments to groom departmental members in current trends of teacher demand.

All the participants except QRT9 held the view that the importance of the CPD programme is in the provision of effective institutional management. The management of the college like any other tertiary institution gets the academic staff at various levels mounting the administration of the institution. In this regard, when tutors are well groomed in the departmental CPD, featuring on committees and other administrative levels would not be a challenge. As part of the CPD programme delves into professional attitude and practice, it harnesses the opportunity for the tutors to become more ethically focused in the day-to-day execution of their assignments. It might be for this reason that one of the respondents asserted that CPD promotes quality assurance activities in the institution. He said the college management would be very much improved because tutors, who feature on the management teams, would also have the opportunity to upgrade their understanding of certain things so that their style of administration at the management level would help improve human relations and general leadership.

Ensuring consistency in the promotional agenda is another importance of the CPD programme identified by the respondents. The departmental CPD which would have the model of action research implemented could help the tutors venture into researching topical issues in their specialized fields and improve such conditions. This activity of research and publication would provide an opportunity for staff to get their promotions. Once a tutor gets promoted, he or she would have morale boosted for higher commitment and performance. This becomes advantageous to the individual, departments, and the college as a whole. Some respondents even felt that the

policy being developed by the colleges which have staff CPD as the mandate for the staff would help all the staff to upgrade their skills and knowledge in their subjects or operational areas so that on the tertiary journey, the college would not continue to lag in some aspects of the functions of the departments.

Improving the learning outcome of learners is another importance of the CPD programme identified by all except QRT3 and QRT9 respondents. A Principal thought that CPD could help students achieve better as stated by the questionnaire respondents and argued that:

It is a means of bettering the academic and professional levels of our students. A cat doesn't give birth to a mouse so you are at that pedestal, which is the type you would give birth to and the bible says that a tree is known by its fruits so our products reflect the quality of 'we' the trainers (IRP2).

This finding is consistent with Ashebir (2011) who affirmed that in-service education is an indicator of the health of an education system as it contributes to a better teaching force and improved learner outcomes. Apart from QRVP2 and QRT9, the rest of the participants stated that CPD serves the legal mandate of the CoE. Under 'Aims of colleges of education in the CoE Act, the second point stated that 'build the professional and academic capacities of serving teachers through regular continuing education (GoG, 2012, p.4). This is advocated for because a college that does not plan and engage its academic staff in CPD would soon outlive its usefulness since knowledge is dynamic so are the needs of society, the education sector cannot be static.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study, the general benefits of CPD to the academic staff included safeguarding the public; the professional; the profession; and the employer. Specific benefits were: as a means of capacity building of staff in the respective courses of the teacher education curriculum of the CoE; tracking and tackling the attrition rate of the academic staff of the CoE; central to the quality of higher education; filling of the technological gap across all disciplines; serving promotional agenda; promoting quality assurance activities and serving the legal mandate of colleges for the ultimate purpose of helping improve the learning outcome of learners. It is concluded that all participants saw the need for the practice of college-based departmentalised CPD, hence the need for its integration into the colleges' programme. College-based departmentalised CPD is envisaged to safeguard the profession, the professional, the employer and the public. It, therefore, behooves college management to explore the technicalities/resources / legal mandates needed to be employed in instituting comprehensive college-based departmentalised CPD for the academic staff in harnessing the opportunity for improvement in the skills, knowledge and practice of the academic staff as experts of their various fields.

Recommendations

1. College Management should institute departmentalised CPD for the academic staff. The colleges need to embark on their systemic CPD programme for the academic staff and departmental basis. Emphasis should be on the fulfilment of individualised professional development planning (IPDP) that gives reason to the academic staff to commit himself/herself to self-development which culminates in system development.
2. College Management should promote the development of a broad spectrum of college-based CPD programmes featuring inter-department and if possible inter-college CPD plans to form teacher education stakeholder network of CPD activities. In engaging in this, institutional values and beliefs,

ethical leadership marked by vision, mission and motto statements of the college(s) should be imbibed into the programmes since these are philosophical foundations of the college and therefore give reasons for corporate strategy resulting in the corporate social responsibility of all stakeholders to the college within the programme.

3. Heads of departments/units should own their CPD plans. Every department has its unique body of content knowledge, pedagogic knowledge, and pedagogic-content knowledge, hence planning a CPD programme for the staff on a departmental basis would be more effective in getting all departments active and interested in their CPD practices. In the broad spectrum of departmental CPD, the intra-unit CPD programme must be featured.

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