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Journal of Educational Management
Institute for Educational Planning and Administration
University of Cape Coast
Cape Coast, Ghana

JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Inquiries about the *Journal of Educational Management* (JEM) during the past few years that JEM was not available, have confirmed the management board's assertion of the increasing interests in educational management issues. The effective management of education institutions is a key success factor in the realization of the mission and goals of the institutions.

The foci of JEM are on efficient management of educational institutions, effective leadership for learning, and education institutions as learning communities. The JEM disseminates research findings and conclusions pertaining to the management of educational institutions to support the mission of the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration. The JEM also publishes nonresearch articles detailing best practices in educational management.

In this issue of JEM, there are 10 articles that address various issues spanning across women in educational leadership, parents' involvement in the education of their children, crisis management in schools, faculty professional development, assuring quality in the conduct of examinations, and emerging issues in the use of ICT for the management of educational institutions. This issue also includes one book review; Reader comments and inquiries about the journal are welcome.

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Janet Alberta Koomson

Abstract

The study explores the barriers which impede the progress of women faculty towards leadership positions within the public universities in Ghana. The multi-cited case study was designed to investigate the barriers that affect the progress of women faculty. One hundred and forty eight respondents from the six public universities made up the sample. Data for the study were collected using the questionnaire. The study revealed that most women faculty aspired for leadership positions within their universities. However, barriers such as role conflict, lack of publication, non existence of mentors and role models affected their progress towards leadership positions. Some of the effects of these barriers were lack of promotion, time constraints and marital strain.

Introduction

The low representation of women in Ghana's public universities, combined with their small numbers at higher professional levels can be attributed to several factors, which are barriers to their progress towards leadership positions. According to Brown and Barbosa (2001), barriers are obstacles that prevent the forward movement or any event or condition that makes career progress difficult. Stephenson and Burge (1997) and Brown and Barbosa, explain that the onset of such barriers frequently begins when women are children, and are reinforced throughout women's schooling, college, and work, and become more complex over time. They further state that barriers are significant factors in the career development process. This has support from Swanson and Woitke (1997) who indicate that barriers partially explain the gap between the abilities of women and their achievements, and this could explain the inhibitions of women's career aspirations. Some of these barriers are role conflict, gender stereotyping and Ghanaian cultural beliefs, values and the socialization processes. In this regard, it can be stated that institutions of higher education are microcosms of a gendered inequitable society. Women trying to advance their careers have, historically, encountered a "glass ceiling". Today, in many ways, they encounter a 'glass ceiling" where the "inferiority" of women continues to reflect and enlarge the men who maintain positions of prestige and leadership. The existence of a glass ceiling within organizations is a reflection of the inequality between genders that exist in the social and economic spheres. Although a change in social attitudes is being sought by institutions, "the predominance of males in the top managerial positions tends to perpetuate the glass ceiling" (Wylie, 1996, p. 23). Therefore, females are often rationalized as not

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possessing the suitable managerial experience that is needed at top level leadership.

In Ghana, the professional lives of most women are centered within a male-dominated society. In their book, *"Women's Ways of Knowing"*, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1997) argued that the silenced nature of women, particularly in academia, exists because of the historical male-dominated culture resident there. According to them, *"silent* women have little awareness of their intellectual capabilities and they live selfless and voiceless, at the behest of those around them" (p. 134). Women's lack of access to leadership positions indicate significant gender issues at the top level of leadership in Ghana's public universities.

Although low in numbers, women have been part of Ghanaian university faculties for a long time. The problem they have encountered has been progress in their academic career. While there are no laws in Ghana discriminating against women's involvement in socio-economic development, there are numerous areas where discriminatory practices exist as a consequence of the conditions of women's work, cultural beliefs and attitudes, value systems and behavioral norms, folklore and folksongs. Ghana's social system and traditions have operated against women leadership and as such have given men greater leverage in education, training, greater political and decision-making powers, thereby perpetuating women's inferior status. Although human rights (encompassing women's rights) are enshrined in the constitution of Ghana, it is up to individual institutions and organizations to enact gender- related policies, procedures, and practices within their work context. Ghana has six public universities made up of University of Ghana (Legon), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), University of Cape Coast (UCC), University of Education, Winneba (UEW), University of Development Studies (UDS) and University of Mines and Technology (UMAT). Unfortunately, statistics from these universities show that women are in the minority with regard to the various faculty ranks. Table 1 shows a detailed comparison of female and male faculty members and their ranks in Ghana's public universities.

Table 1: Faculty Statistics of Public Universities in Ghana

University	Gender	Professor	Asso. Prof	Snr. Lec.	Lecturer	Total
Legon	M	66	83	158	327	634
	F	5	20	43	50	118
	Total	71	103	201	377	752
KNUST	M	21	48	139	442	650
	F	2	4	21	34	61
	Total	23	52	160	476	711
UCC	M	13	45	77	215	350
	F	-	3	6	33	42
	Total	13	48	83	254	392
UEW	M	7	17	57	157	238
	F	2	1	11	35	43
	Total	9	18	68	192	281
UDS	M	2	1	14	142	159
	F	-	-	1	9	10
	Total	2	2	17	151	169
UMAT	M	3	3	11	33	50
	F	-	-	1	4	5
	Total	3	3	12	37	55

Source: University Annual Statistics (2008).

Table 1 provides an indication of females within the various ranks as compared to men. It is evident that there are few women within the higher ranks (Professor and Associate Professor) who could be considered for the position of Vice Chancellor. The University of Ghana has 25 women, Kwame Nkrumah University has six, and University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba, have three each, who would meet the rank qualification for Vice Chancellor. These low numbers of women represented at these levels limits the probability that a female will be selected to the position of VC.

In Ghanaian universities, leadership positions open to women faculty (as

well as men) are the Vice Chancellor, Dean of faculty and Head of Department (HoD). However, from the statistics of the various universities, these positions are dominated by men. Table 2 illustrates this reality.

Table 2 shows that there is no woman Pro VCs in any of the public universities in Ghana. UMAT, and UDS have no women who are Deans. UEW and UCC have one each, Legon has two and KNUST has the highest

University	Gender	VC	Pro VC	Dean	HoD
Legon	M	1	1	12	84
	F	0	0	2	17
	Total	1	1	14	104
KNUST	M	1	1	18	82
	F	0	0	4	11
	Total	1	1	22	93
UCC	M	0	1	7	39
	F	1	0	1	2
	Total	1	1	8	41
UEW	M	1	1	8	34
	F	0	0	1	6
	Total	1	1	9	40
UDS	M	1	1	7	25
	F	0	0	0	0
	Total	1	1	7	25
UMAT	M	1	1	2	6
	F	0	0	0	1
	Total	1	1	2	7

Source: University annual statistics (2008).

number of four. In considering HoDs, Table 2 shows the small numbers of women as compared to men who hold this position. UDS has no woman HoD, with UMAT having only one. UCC has two, UEW six, KNUST eleven and Legon has the largest number of seventeen. There is one woman VC (UCC), the first in the history of public universities in Ghana, which is a recent development (2008). However, in proportion to

men, it can be readily observed that in all of these positions, women are in the minority. Over the years, the administrative role of schools has been considered the preserve of men. There has been a glass ceiling which women come in contact with when working up the corporate ladder (Morrison & Glinow, 1990).

It can be realized that the slow progress of women faculty within the

universities compared to men raises concern and needs investigating. The purpose of the study was to investigate the various barriers that hinder the progress of Ghanaian women faculty towards the leadership position in the public universities. To explore the barriers to the progress of women faculty towards university leadership, this study will address the following research questions.

1. What are the barriers that impede women faculty members' progression toward leadership positions?

2. What are the effects of barriers to the progress of Women faculty towards leadership positions?

3. What leadership roles, do female faculty members aspire to?

A hypothesis was formulated to test whether there were significant differences in the means of barriers in the six public Universities in Ghana.
Ho: There are no statistically significant differences between the means of the barriers to the progress of women faculty of the different public universities in Ghana

H1: There are statistically significant differences between the means of the barriers to the progress of women faculty of the different public universities in Ghana.

Method

The research design, which was a descriptive survey, employed the quantitative research paradigm to explore the barriers to the progress of women faculty in the public universities in Ghana. Quantitative (questionnaire) data were analyzed for results. A multi-cited case study research design was appropriate for the phenomenon under investigation as the population and sample were selected from the six public universities in Ghana.

Population

Women faculty in KNUST, UCC, UEW, Legon, UDS and UMAT make up the population for the study. The study population consisted of 257 women faculty from six public universities in Ghana. Twenty women faculty were used to pilot the Questionnaire for Women Faculty (QFWF). The remaining 237 faculty constituted the study population.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The census was the sampling technique used. Thus, apart from women faculty who were part of the pilot testing (20), the rest (237) made up the sample. Out of this number, 148 completed and returned a usable questionnaire.

Instruments

The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire which was chosen with the research questions in mind. The Questionnaire for Women Faculty (QFWF) consisted of four sections with a total of 17 items, which had both closed and open-ended items. Section A solicited demographic data. Section B considered barriers for women faculty in their professional advancement towards leadership positions. The response options ranged from 1

(Not at all) to 5 (To a very large extent) for the five-point Likert-Like scale. Items in Section C were designed to reveal information on problems that barriers created for women faculty. Section D inquired about leadership roles female faculty members aspire to. A hypothesis was formulated to test whether there were significant differences in the means of barriers in the six public Universities in Ghana. A pilot testing was conducted using 20 women faculty from the various universities who were not part of the sample.

Analysis and Results

The purpose of the study was to seek answers to the barriers women faculty encounter as they progress within the university system. Analysis and results are discussed under the various research questions.

Research Question 1: What are the barriers that impede female faculty members' progression toward leadership positions?

Women faculty provided responses to items related to barriers to their progress within the university system. Means and standard deviations of the numerical responses of all items were generated and a single item mean weight (MW) of the overall mean was further calculated by dividing the overall mean by the total number of barriers listed in the question. The response scale of 5 (To a Very Large Extent), 4 (to a Large Extent), 3 (to a Little Extent), 2 (to *a Very Little Extent),* and 1 (not *at all) was used to describe the degree of manifestation.* The responses to this question are reported in Table 3.

Table 3: Barriers to the Progress of Women Faculty

Barriers	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of non-discriminatory policies in the work place	3.29	1.26
University culture	3.32	1.06
Cultural beliefs	3.44	1.15
Lack of years of experience in the university	3.46	1.22
Lack of female role models	3.46	1.28
National culture	3.52	1.03
Female socialization practices	3.55	1.18
Lack of involvement in professional organizations	3.57	1.21
Gender stereotypes	3.62	1.04
Lack of support from family members	3.65	1.23
Average mean of barriers: Section C	3.70	0.59
Role conflict	3.84	1.21
Lack of network of associates	3.87	1.05
Lack of a mentor or mentors	3.93	1.31
Lack of professional development opportunities	4.14	1.04
Lack of funding for research	4.21	0.92
Lack of publications	4.44	0.88
Total	**148**	**100%**

As indicated in Table 3, to a large extent (M=3.70, SD=0.59), the list of barriers negatively affect the progress of women faculty in their universities. The lack of professional development, lack of funding for research, lack of publications, role conflict, lack of network of associates and lack of mentors which were above the mean, were the greatest barriers to the progress of women faculty. Hirsch, Kett, and Trefil, (2002), Hammer and Thompson (2003), and Barnett (1998) all identified role conflict as a barrier to the upward mobility of women. Role conflict is a situation in which two or more job requirements are incompatible (Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil, 2002). They further contend that the conflict may also be caused by a division of loyalties between the two roles.

According to Makhubu (1998), an academic is seen as a gender neutral individual who had the right qualifications for employment. Therefore, there are no special measures in place to support women during the intensive period of childbearing and childrearing. The university's ostensible neutrality on these matters ignores critical differences between men and women, thus putting women at a disadvantage,

"making it extremely difficult for them to devote the kind of time required for excellence in research and scholarship. For many, it becomes a choice between family and career" (p. 129). This explains the inability of women in most cases to satisfy the promotions criteria of universities, many of which are based on strong research.

Lack of mentors is an issue that besets most women faculty as there are not many of them within the higher professional ranks and leadership positions (Tables 1 and 2). On the other hand, cross-gender mentoring can also become a problem for them. This has been expressed by Hansman (1998), when he indicated that women are likely to have more difficulty initiating and maintaining mentor relationships in male-dominated institutions because of the perception of inappropriate relationships created when a woman seeks a male mentor, which creates sexual tensions in the mentoring relationships, and office gossip about mentor-mentee pairings.

Research Question 2. What are the effects of barriers to the progress of Women faculty towards leadership positions? The analysis is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Effects of Barriers for Women Faculty

Problems	Frequency	Percent
Lack of Promotion	59	39.9
Lack of leadership positions	33	22.4
Pressure for time	33	22.4
Discrimination towards women within the system	12	8.0
Marital strain	11	7.3
Total	**148**	**100.0**

The most serious problem identified in Table 4 was the lack of promotion which automatically prevents women from acquiring leadership roles and might make women feel being discriminated against. This brings to the fore the importance of research and publishing, which is a big issue for women faculty. There is the need for women to be involved in research to enable them publish good papers, articles and books if they have leadership aspirations. Adler (1999) indicated that women who choose to combine marriage with career face a difficult situation and they hardly know how to apportion time and resources between these two major responsibilities. The lack of senior women faculty is frequently explained in terms of women's decision to prioritize family over career (Krais, 2002). According to Manuh, Gariba, and Budu (2007), though conditions do not force a stark choice between work and family, they were not usually compatible. This means that, they have to be able to multitask so that women faculty can participate in activities both academic and social and serve their community. According to Currie, Thiele and Lewis (2002), the two "greedy" institutions, university and family, are time consuming and require women to stretch themselves to meet the demands of each.

Research Question 3: Do you aspire to advance to leadership positions in the university? Table 5 outlines the responses of respondents

Table 5: Aspiration to Leadership Positions by Women Faculty

Women faculty aspiring for leadership positions were 65.5%. However, 34.5% of women faculty indicated they did not aspire to any leadership position. A follow-up question brought out varied reasons why about a third of respondents did not aspire for leadership positions. A majority of 55% of respondents indicated that they did not want to be in any leadership position because they could not conveniently combine their family and academic roles. This has support from

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	97	65.5
No	49	34.5
Total	148	100.0

Hall (1996), who contents that administrative positions demand nearly total immersion, long hours, many evening meetings, and high personal visibility. A reason given by 35% of respondents was that they did not have any chance of any leadership role within their universities because of their age, as they were either almost near retirement or the number of years left will realistically not make it possible for them to get into any leadership position. However 10% indicated that their low professional

level will not allow them to be considered for any leadership position. This is caused by lack of research and publishing. As Foster (2001) noted, promotion systems still largely rely on research output and publication records of candidates, although the stated criteria include excellence in teaching, and community work. Women are thus promoted less often than men and this is hardly surprising given their multiplicity of roles. "The greater demand on academic women's time hinders research productivity and reduces chances for progress" (p. 72).

Leadership positions which 65% of women faculty aspire to are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 : Aspired Leadership Positions of Respondents

Table 6 brings out the fact that women faculty aspire for all leadership positions open to members of academia, even to the highest one (VC, 11.7%). A majority of the 97 women faculty who aspire for leadership positions wanted to be deans (31.9%) or HoDs (30.8%). Although 6.0% indicated that they aspire for leadership

Positions	Frequencies	Percent
Dean	31	31.9
HoD	30	30.8
VC	11	11.7
ProVC	19	19.6
Undecided	6	6.0
Total	97	100.0

positions in future, they were undecided about the particular position.

Results of Hypotheses Test

Ho: There are no statistically significant differences between the means of the barriers to the progress of women faculty of the different public universities in Ghana.

H1: There are statistically significant differences between the means of the barriers to the progress of women faculty of the different public universities in Ghana.

The one-way ANOVA was conducted to test whether there were significant differences in the mean of barriers to the progress of women faculty in the six public universities of Ghana. The results are presented in Tables 7 and 8. The descriptive statistics made up of the means (M), standard deviation (SD), the sample and the confidence intervals of the various institutions are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Barriers of Women Faculty

Table 8:   One-Way Analysis of Variance for Mean Differences of Barriers for Women Faculty of the Six Public Universities in Ghana

With alpha level of .05, there were no statistical significant differences in the means of the barriers to the progress of women faculty of the various universities in Ghana, $F (5, 142) = .696$, $p = .627$. Thus the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

University	M	SD	n	Confidence Interval
Legon	3.72	1.17	50	3.39, 4.06
KNUST	3.76	1.08	36	3.40, 4.12
UCC	3.68	1.13	29	3.36, 4.13
UEW	3.53	1.11	24	3.05, 4.00
UDS	3.88	.99	6	2.83, 4.93
UMAT	3.67	.94	3	1.58, 5.76
Total	**3.70**	**1.07**	**148**	**2.93, 4.50**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	344.901	5	68.980	.696	.627
Within Groups	14068.396	142	99.073		
Total	14413.297	147			

This implies that women faculty within the various public universities had common barriers which hindered their progress toward leadership positions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Women faculty in all the public universities in Ghana have common barriers and problems which they have to strive to overcome. Most of them aspire for leadership positions such as the Deanship, HoDs, Pro-Vice Chancellors and the Vice - Chancellorship. This proves that even in a male dominated environment, women still have hopes of advancing to leadership positions. There is the need for women to support and be each other's keeper, as they are in a patriarchal system where women are marginalized.

Recommendations were made for both institutional leadership and women faculty.

Institutional Interventions.

To close the gender gap, it is important that women be made part of decision making bodies in the universities and redress structural barriers that influence the access and participation of both sexes, and women's active role in decision-making in the management and administration of universities. Junior faculty must also be offered the opportunity and responsibility of serving on different committees within and outside their faculties, as part of the socialization process in academia. This will help them develop their leadership potential and learning the ropes in higher education. Universities should find ways to empower women faculty. University leadership, HoDs, Deans, administrators, should support women who aspire to move up the academic ladder instead of frustrating them. Finally, employment equity policies should be fairly implemented so as not to disadvantage one group over another, or special favors extended to any special group of people. The leadership of universities should put in place interventions or actions that will reduce women's overall labor, as they combine their family roles with their career. For example, the provision of crèches (day nurseries) and primary schools on campus which can take care of children until women faculty are ready to go home will be an incentive to encourage the investment of more time in their academic career.

Recommendations for women Faculty.

There is the need for women faculty to plan early for career advancement, especially because the child-bearing phase normally affects their academic progress. If they plan around their multiple roles, they can survive within the academic environment and even afford to take up leadership positions. The need to develop a good research and publication profile is essential and a good step towards any leadership position. Women should not expect to be recognized and promoted just because they are competent, diligent, have talents and make contributions. They need to research and publish, so as to upgrade their curriculum vitae. Since the study revealed that women faculty in all six universities have common barriers, they can network together and find practical solutions to their common problems and seek encouragement from each other. In support, Johnsrud and Rosser (2000) intimated that not only do such networks provide opportunities for women to share experiences and offer support, but they also "allow a shift away from the male-centered academy. This shift allows women to engage with other women to create their own connections, which are separate from men, to decrease their isolation and build a power base" (p. 124).

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PERCEPTIONS OF TOP MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST STAFF OF THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

Naa Adjeley Suta Alakija

Abstract

The study sought to explore factors influencing the low representation of women in management positions in the University of Cape Coast. An exploratory qualitative research design was employed to undertake the study. Data was collected through interviews with forty-one workers in management positions and analysed using the N6 package for analysing qualitative research. Generally, the respondents were of the view that women are not well represented in management positions. Notable reasons they gave included lack of requisite qualifications on the side of women and the University not being gender sensitive. The problems women in management positions faced were stressful career workload and domestic/family responsibilities and these kept them from climbing the managerial ladder. The respondents were of the view that women needed more opportunities to excel and aspire for management positions. The situation can be improved if institutions formulate policies geared toward fast tracking women with leadership potentials.

Introduction

Women are capable of performing duties and functions just as men do. They, like men, have the talents and capabilities of contributing effectively to nation building. Prominent historical examples of women leaders are Deborah, the judge, in the Old Testament, Joan of Arc, leading the French army, and Yaa Asantewaa, leading the Ashantis to fight the British (Addo-Adeku, 1992). Women have assumed responsibilities as Prime Ministers of nations, such as Golda Meier in Israel, Indira Ghandi in India, Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, Margaret Thatcher in Britain, Helen Johnson Sirleaf as President of Liberia and only to mention a few. We can also talk of the late Dr (Mrs.) Esther Ocloo, one of the leading industrialists in Ghana. The brilliant feats of leadership exhibited by these women are enough proof that women are capable of holding effective leadership roles given the opportunity and co-operation.

Although there are considerable variations in the respective roles of women and men in different cultures in recent times, there is no known society in which women are more powerful than men (Adu, 1999). To a large extent, there exists a highly even distribution of sexes within all sectors of the labour force and public offices where women find themselves located in lower paid and less skilled jobs. Perhaps the most dramatic change that has occurred is the increase in the number of both men and women receiving formal education, and thus becoming available for formal sector

employment. In the early years after Ghana's independence, it became for some a matter of national pride to have women in highly placed positions, as was the case when Nkrumah appointed three women ministers to his cabinet in 1985 (Adepoju & Oppong, 1994).It is a truism that some years past, women were not known in the circles of authority. Gender roles and attitudes towards them prevented women from getting into managerial positions. They were relegated to the background most probably because society at the time believed the woman's place was in the kitchen and all her time was taken up with bearing children, bringing them up and supporting the family. Therefore, all activities and positions that were considered to be the most important and accorded the highest prestige were defined as the special province of men and especially appropriate for men. This was the time when only few women had the opportunity of pursuing formal education and when only few women managed to attain university education. Women all over the world appear to have been exposed either covertly or overtly to discrimination in various ways – at work, in the home, at school and in local and international politics. In fact, even within the UN system, women are conspicuously fewer in leadership positions.

Although there are now many highly-qualified women in Ghana, they do not have equal representation in leadership positions in the educational sector. Dr Gloria Nikoi, former Chancellor of UCC has been the only woman Chancellor ever in the memories of Universities in Ghana,

and it was only recently (2008) that a woman in the person of Professor Naana Jane Opoku Agyeman was appointed the Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast. A few of them have also been appointed as Deans, Heads of Departments, Faculty Officers, Deputy Registrar and Senior Assistant Registrars in Ghana's public and private universities.

Theoretical Orientation

The study finds the liberal feminist theory most suitable as the framework within which the findings of this study will be discussed. Liberal feminism according to Anderson (2006) is rooted in the history of liberalism as a mode of political theory , one that developed particularly over the course of the nineteenth century and it is centred on the premise of equality and the capacity for existing democratic social institutions to create equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Rooted in thought over 200 years ago, liberalism is the foundation for democracy, it promotes the removal of particularistic barriers, that is, practices that discriminate based on particular characteristics such as gender, race, and religion. Liberal feminism is characterized by an emphasis on individual rights and equal opportunity. It assumes that the inequality of women stems both from the denial of equal rights and from women's learned reluctance to exercise their rights. In effect, the goal of liberal feminism is equality that is the construction of a social world where all persons can exercise individual freedom (Anderson, 2006). Although to many, this seems like an ideal solution for promoting gender

equality, it also has some fundamental limitations. Even with its strengths, liberal feminism can be criticized for its focus on individual autonomy and the absence of an analysis of structured inequality. The theory, like the liberal philosophy on which it is based, does not include an analysis of race or class differences and assumes that the basis for inequality lies mostly in past tradition, not in the continuing operation of systems of power and privilege. However opponents of affirmative action argue that the theory fails to explain the institutionalized basis for race and class oppression. By claiming that all persons regardless of race, class, or gender should have equal opportunities, liberals accept the existing system as valid, often without analyzing the structured inequality on which it is based (Anderson 2006). Eisenstein (1981) also argued that the goal of liberal feminism is equality, but in saying that women should be equal to men, liberal feminism does not specify which men women want to be equal to, thus it glosses over the class and race structure of societal relations. He further argued that liberal feminism leaves much unanswered because it does not explain the emergence of gender inequality nor can it account, other than by analogy, for effects of race and class stratification in women's lives. Its analysis for change tends to be limited to issues of equal opportunity and individual choice. As a political philosophy, it insists on individual liberty and challenges any social, political and economic practice that discriminates against persons on the basis of group or individual characteristics.

Another critique attacks liberal feminism because it emphasizes the rational above the emotional while humans need both. It also questioned liberal feminism's focus on the individual and not on the community. Liberal feminists believe that their philosophy positively answers each of these critiques and though liberal feminism at one time was racist, classist, and heterosexist, it has overcome these issues. With its focus on gender justice and its ability to adapt, liberal feminism is here to stay (Eisenstein 1981).

The liberal feminist theory informed the study mainly because its assumptions and arguments are in line with the findings of the research. The findings revealed that women were in the minority in the senior management positions due to discrimination, sexism, inequality and others that liberal feminists posit. Their main argument is individual rights and equal opportunity and these appear to be part of recommendations given by respondents.

Review of the literature

Gender and gender inequality
Feminist scholars continue to disagree on how gender inequity is defined, and how gender equity can be achieved. However there is agreement that the concept of gender is socially constructed, that women and their experiences have historically been excluded from the development of knowledge, and that feminists in all their diversity demand that the balance of power relationships be changed politically, structurally, and interpersonally (Schmuck, 1996). Until the

first-wave feminist critique took place, gender was not considered important in society and was subsequently ignored. Women were wives and mothers in a stratified patriarchal society, deriving their status from their fathers and husbands, and, therefore, did not need to be heard, nor studied. The first-wave feminists, with a limited focus on the rights of middle-class women, argued against inequality and a corrupt social system maintained by and for the benefit of men. Mary Wollstonecraft was one of the earliest Western women to articulate an understanding of the depth of gender inequality in her society, and believed that if socialized equitably, both men and women would develop character and virtue. She was very clear that the cause of women's oppression was men (Wollstonecraft, 1992).

By the late nineteenth century, the major influence on society was Darwin's ideology of the survival of the fittest, which included the sexual selection of men as the more evolved, and more varied, sex (Solomon, 1985). This positioned men as being in control of society to bring order over the "simpler" women (middle and upper class) who were placed on a pedestal and "protected" from having to labour outside of the home, for which they would need an education. Accordingly, feminists promoted a separate but equal life for women, reflecting two other current strains of thought prevalent at that time.

Voice and silence have been used by feminist scholars as metaphors for "women's views of the world and their place in it" (Belenky, Clinchy,

Goldberger, & Tarul, 1986). Women are beginning to claim back the power of their own lives but continue to face many obstacles. Men dominate work place conversations just as they control classroom discussion (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Men's reinforcement in the skills of interruption and speaking with confidence, received through their educational experience, render women powerless in the boardroom. A workplace culture of male dominance is continued and becomes more likely to reproduce itself, when men are supported and promoted because of the historical mores of society and the institution. In a landmark work, Joan Acker (1990) argued convincingly that all organizations are inherently gendered and not gender neutral, as they might appear. Lundgren and Prah (2010) also believed that many organizations, including universities are gendered in the sense that they are dominated by male values and interests, which permeate relationships between women and men. Through the largely unconscious, systemically cons-tructed, gender inequity reproduced in part by institutions of higher educa-tion, society has difficulty breaking the cycle.

History of Women in Higher Education

Within higher education, women have struggled against gender inequity in ways that mirror the wider societal movements. From separatist strategies of the early women's colleges, through the development of co-education, women and some men within institutions of higher education have challenged the resistant discourse of

gender difference. In the past, girls were educated, but primarily in domestic studies, so that they could assist their husbands and educate their sons (Rudolph, 1962). College education was considered unnecessary for women, as it was for most young men, due to its emphasis on the classics. However there were individual resistors to the societal norms, these were men and women, who developed colleges for women and accepted women into previously all male institutions. The growth of the state universities and the establishment of the land-grant colleges in the U.S gradually popularized co-educational higher education, starting in the West and then gaining acceptance in the East (Rudolph, 1962). Between 1902 and 1912 there was a large increase in the numbers of women enrolling in co-educational institutions (Solomon, 1985). This produced a new fear that women would take over and, by implication, devalue the education that colleges provided. One solution to this threat was to encourage segregation through the curriculum, with the division of courses into "those which were useful, full-blooded, and manly, and those which were ornamental, dilettantish, and feminine" (Rudolph, 1962; 324). The curriculum became a battleground for faculty concerns over 'student enrolments, with the view that unless men enrolled in a course in large numbers the subject would be devalued (Solomon, 1985).

The historical gendering of the curriculum and the subverted ideology that women do not need to be in institutions of education can be resistant to change in many forms. Sadker et al (1994) found that the most gender biased teaching practices in education occurred not in high school, but in the college classroom. Men are twice as likely to monopolize the class discussions and women are twice as likely to be silent. At Harvard, Krupnick (1985), also discovered a phenomenon where males perform, and females, even the most academically talented ones, watch the performance. When females did speak they were more likely to be interrupted. They were also more likely to preface their comments with self-deprecatory comments. Hall and Sandler (1982) found that professors gave males more nonverbal attention as well as increased eye contact, waited longer for an answer, and were more likely to remember the names of the males. However, despite the many barriers that existed and continue to exist, education has been, and continues to be, the way for women to uncover gender inequity and to redress the balance of power (Solomon, 1985).

The Ghanaian case is not very different. Several researchers argue that socio-cultural factors are important barriers to female education. According to Awumbila in Tsikata 2001, women were disabled from applying for clerical and administrative jobs, whiles the few who went to school were trained in home making. As if that was not enough, science and technology subjects, such as, physics, mathematics and engineering have become the preserve for males. Any female who ventures into such an area is viewed as having encroached (Andam, 1993; Anamuah-Mensah, 1995 in Brown et al 1996).

The low percentage of female participation in tertiary education, according to Prah (2002), needs to be understood as an end result of the more general constraints that women face in education.

In higher education "old-boy" networks have been in existence since the seventeenth century (O'Leary & J.M., 1990) where they were called the "invisible college." This was the group of favoured scholars who controlled finances, reputations, and the fate of new research and scientific ideas (Prize & Beaver, 1966). This pattern has continued both formally and informally since with challenges to its existence only emerging in the late 1970s/1980s (O'Leary & Mitchell, 1990). Several scholars have noted the exclusion of women from these networks in both the research and departmental arenas (Mitchell, 1987; Simon, Clark, & Galway, 1972; Zuckerman & Cole, 1975). Mitchell's study (1987) suggested that women were beginning to rely on female colleagues forming an "old girl" network of connections.

Professional organizations, including the Association for Women in Education and other women movements, have provided women with significant networking and leadership opportunities (Jones & Komives, 2001). Examples in Ghana includes: The Women's caucus of The University of Cape Coast and old girls Associations of various schools in Ghana women's wings from the already existing organizations such as the Trade Union Congress (TUC), Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), Registered Nurses Association, Ladies Associations in work places as well as Women's Self Help Associations and religious-based Women's Associations (Tsikata, 1989; Manuh, 1993 in Tsikata 2001).

The glass ceiling is considered an almost impenetrable, invisible barrier preventing women, minorities and men who do not fit the bill from obtaining senior management positions. Cracks by the small numbers who do achieve, soon repair themselves. It can be penetrated again but as equality and diversity boredom or denial is met with political ill will - recruitment, selection and training and promotion imbalance is less likely to be transparent or properly scrutinised for discrimination. It is apparent in higher education where women faculty are rarely full professors, and, if they are, it is in the humanities. As a general rule, the lower the faculty rank, the higher the percentage of women (Headlee et al, 1996). Structural gender bias, that is organizational bias existing within the policies and procedures of the university, is one explanation given for the slow rise of women into positions of authority.

Women's failure to move up to higher managerial positions is attributed by Kottis (1993) in Brown, Anokye & Britwum (1996), to the way in which power is acquired, maintained and exercised in bureaucratic organizations. In order to perform successfully and advance in their careers, managers have to acquire informal power associated with their positions. Informal power is developed on the basis of a network of relationships.

Other attitudes that promote the "Glass Ceiling" are male views about the capabilities, attributes, roles and aspirations of women which Kottis (1993) in Brown, Anokye & Britwum (1996), describes as outmoded. Such male views however create a situation where women have to work harder than men in order to gain the esteem of their male superiors, peers and subordinates.Women are judged by a criterion which is entirely different from those applied to their male counterparts: a criterion that reflects dominant cultural perceptions about what women's roles and attributes should be. Hardworking women are labelled as being "unfeminine". those who try to find a middle way between their career and personal life are "criticized as not being adequately committed to their work"(Kottis 1993 in Brown, Anokye & Britwum 1996).The "glass ceiling", according to Still (1992) is not always erected by external forces alone. It is also self-imposed by women who have imbibed the dominant male culture into which they have been socialized.

Mentorship, as reported by O'Leary and Mitchell (1990), derives from Greek mythology and describes support and guidance given by an older adult to a younger adult to help them advance through life and work. Today, mentoring is described as a hierarchically structured relationship whose function is to sponsor and coach the younger person towards career goals and to provide the psychosocial functions of role-modelling, acceptance, counselling and friendship (Kram, 1988). For women, a variety of different types of mentorship relationships have been described such as short-term mentors, peer mentors, and horizontal mentors who may be older and with longer job experience at the same level as the person being mentored (Duff, 1999). Another reported reason for the failure of women to support other women at work through mentoring has been called the "Queen Bee" syndrome. Queen Bees were described by Staines, Travis, and Jayerante (1974), as women who have achieved professional success, are strongly individualistic, and tend to deny the existence of sex discrimination. They were in positions of power but failed to help other women succeed. Various explanations have been offered as to why the Queen Bees were not supportive of other women. Kanter (1977), suggested that they feared other successful women challenging their power.

Study Area

The University of Cape Coast (UCC) is the study area. It is situated 5km west of Cape Coast municipality, and is located on a hill overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, it operates on two campuses, northern campus (new site) and southern campus (old site). It was established in 1962 out of a dire need for highly qualified and skilled personnel in education to provide leadership and enlightenment in the educational sector. The University started with a small intake of about 160 students distributed over three faculties, namely: Arts, Education and Science. The University now has a total student population of 37,162 and 320 teaching staff. The students take degree and diploma programmes in six faculties, which also offer post-

graduate programmes, such as master's and doctorate degrees (UCC diary, 2011).

Methods

The study employed exploratory and qualitative design. Exploratory qualitative research was chosen because it is designed to familiarize a researcher about the topic. The representation of women in management positions is better explored using this approach. This is because the study explores the reasons why there are few women in management positions and finds approximate answers to the research problem. This was to help satisfy the researcher's curiosity and also help test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study. The study population comprised all people in management positions in UCC. They include the Vice- Chancellor, the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Deputy Registrars, Assistant Registrars, all Deans of Faculties and Schools, Heads of Institutes, Departments, Sections, as well as Hall Masters and Wardens. No sample size was taken due to the limited number of respondents. Thus forty-eight respondents were interviewed. The study used interview schedule as the research instrument to collect the data. The data collected was edited, coded and analyzed for common themes. All the data that was generated was analyzed using the N6 Package for analyzing qualitative data.

The data

Socio-demographic background
Forty-one people in management positions were interviewed, with 25 males and 16 females representing sixty-one percent and thirty-nine percent respectively. Their ages ranged from 30-79, with the majority between ages 50-59, representing 49%. The mean age calculated was 50.4 and this happens to be within the majority age range of 50-59. This implies that the average age of people in management positions in UCC is 50.4. The academic qualification of respondents ranged from 2nd degree to doctorate with the majority, holding second degrees and the minority (39%) holding doctorate degrees. This appears to indicate that the university appoints people with higher degrees to management positions. Most of the respondents had 2nd degrees compared to those who had doctorates with 61% and 39% respectively. Almost all the respondents were married except two who were single with percentages of 95.1 and 4.9 respectively. On positions held, Heads of Department and registrars (Deputy and assistant registrars) accounted for majority of the respondents. They represented 39%, followed by heads of departments with 34.2% and then faculty officers with 12.2%. Respondents' years of work in the University ranged from one to twenty-five years. Nine respondents had worked for more than 20 years in the university. They included eight males and one female, representing 32% and 6.25% respectively. The average number of years of work for males was 15 and 10.2 for females. This implies that males in management positions work for longer years than their females counterparts.

Appointment and promotion of staff into managerial positions

Respondents reported that, they came to occupy their position by merit. The majority [80%] of the respondents reported that, academic qualification accounted for their appointment into managerial positions. The rest [20%] reported that they were in their positions as a result of their work experience. Most of the women (65%) admitted that they had ever been promoted. However, (15%) reported that they had not been promoted. Those who had been promoted believed that they were promoted based on qualifications they had acquired over time. On the other hand those who had not been promoted gave varied reasons. The reasons were that some had just got employed and were awaiting promotion, others blamed themselves for not acquiring the requisite qualifications for promotion, while others blamed it on service conditions and cumbersome promotion requirements.

Representation of women in managerial positions

The majority (68%) of the respondents were of the view that women were not well- represented in management positions. However, some respondents reported that women were well-represented. Those who thought women were not well represented in management positions were asked about factors that might have accounted for that situation. They indicated that women did not have the requisite qualifications, were saddled with family responsibilities, were discriminated against, and failed to apply for managerial positions.

Job Satisfaction among Women Respondents

Six, out of the seventeen women interviewed were not satisfied with their current positions because they felt discriminated against by men. The eleven remaining were satisfied with their positions and believed their positions had helped improve their lives, and made their voices heard. For one respondent, the position she occupies now has made her achieve her dreams and given her opportunity for carrier growth. Lack of mentorship and lack of formal preparation in the form of professional development programs and scholarship appear to have been the major constraints for women in this study. Very few of them experienced mentorship. What is noteworthy is the women's strong belief in learning –by – doing or on the job training. Institutional advertising policies, which make it difficult for women to compete fairly, can also be as much of a hindrance.

Attitudes towards Women in Management

Attitudes of people in management towards others could be a barrier or a springboard to their achievement. Respondents therefore were asked about the attitudes of both men and women towards them. To the women, there were two types of attitudes that men exhibit. While the majority of the women believe that men were encouraging in their behaviour towards them, few of the women believed that men were arrogant towards them and looked down upon them. The women who also answered questions about the attitudes of their female colleagues towards them as managers had interesting reports.

Almost all the women interviewed reported that their women colleagues were jealous of their positions. Even those who claimed their female colleagues are supportive and encouraging, could not help but add jealousy as an attitude showed by other women.

Problems Women Face in Management Positions

Two main problems were mentioned. These were stressful career workload and domestic/family responsibilities. Whereas (50%) of the women respondents believed domestic/family responsibilities posed a great challenge to them, the other half did not see that as a challenge in their management positions. Those who believed domestic/family responsibilities posed a challenge to their positions further explained that by virtue of the fact that they were married, they had less time for both their work and families and this indirectly affected their career achievement. Respondents, who did not see their domestic/family responsibilities as a challenge to their career, explained that they had understanding husbands who encouraged and gave them the needed support for their career achievement. The responses indicated that women in management positions faced a lot of problems. This was a contributing factor to their low representation.

Effects of Problems on the Positions of Women

The women respondents were asked how the problems they have mentioned affected their aspirations and rise to their current positions. This was necessary to help find out if

problems reported really affected the women in attaining their positions. Surprisingly, almost all the women admitted that the problem they had reported had little or no effect at all on their rise to management positions. To these women, though there were problems, they were able to overcome. Some (40%) women stated that the problems they mentioned made it difficult for them to occupy managerial positions. To them, such problems caused delays in getting promoted and in some cases, the abandonment of promotion offers.

Summary and conclusion

The aim of this study has been to investigate the reasons for the low representation of women in management positions in University of Cape and to make recommendations regarding what could be done to change the situation for the better. The absence of women in senior positions of management at the universities is well documented and so are the barriers that prevent women from advancing into management positions. The findings revealed that women were in the minority in the senior management positions. Although statistics show a positive trend toward the representation of women in the University of Cape Coast, the situation is different when it comes to women's representation in management positions. Obstacles still exist. However, there are strategies that women themselves and institutions can adopt to overcome these obstacles.

Significant findings which emerged from the study seem to suggest that the women who participated in the study

experienced little or no challenges and constraints before they advanced to management positions. For instance the majority of them did not find it difficult to move to their various positions as they were self-motivated and had adequate support from their colleagues and family. They got into their positions based on their qualifications and publications they had made. Moreover, they were motivated to accept the job chiefly by a desire to make a contribution to the development of their departments and the University. Lack of mentorship, lack of formal preparation in the form of professional development prog-rams and scholarship appear to have been the major constraints for women in this study. Very few of them experienced mentorship. What is noteworthy is the women's strong belief in learning –by – doing or on the job training. Consequently mentoring, training and scholarship for women should be advocated in the university. It would also be advisable for mentees to be proactive and flexible in their choice of a mentor.

One of the main obstacles to their advancement seems to be the dual role of career and family. The findings indicate that starting all academic careers late in life is as much an impediment to career advancement as lack of experience or lack of good research profiles. Institutional advertising policies, which make it difficult for women to compete fairly, can also be as much of a hindrance. Various strategies for overcoming obstacles to career advancement such as networks, mentoring and the like are suggested in the literature. The main strategies suggested by the respondents in this are determination and perseverance.

Change has come slowly. The number of women in managerial positions has increased over time. There are still insufficient women beyond the level of management positions in universities. However, more women seem eager to advance themselves despite the odds against them. More effort is required then, to ensure that more women are mentored into taking up leadership roles. Universities should also earmark a percentage of scholarships for women who aspire to move up into management positions.

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PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE GA EAST DISTRICT OF GREATER ACCRA REGION OF GHANA

Clement Agezo
Joseph M Dzinyela

Abstract

The concern for the home to play a more active and complementary role in promoting quality education of children is on the increase in many societies throughout the world, including Ghana. The purpose of the study was to examine the level of parents' involvement in the education of their children in primary schools in the Ga East District of Greater Accra Region. The research design was phenomenological. Fifty respondents made up of 10 headteachers, 20 teachers and 20 parents were involved in the study. Purposive sampling was used to select the heads and teachers of the schools while simple random sampling was used to select the parents. Unstructured interview was the only instrument used to elicit information from the respondents. The study found among others that most of the parents in the district were highly involved in the education of their wards. It was suggested that parents, especially working mothers should be encouraged to play a more meaningful role in the education of their children by providing them with a quiet place to study, helping them with homework, being firm about bedtime, monitoring their academic and social behaviours and providing them with their school needs, among others.

Introduction

It has long been known that the school, home and community are each important players in a child's education (US Department of Education, 1986). When parents, community members and teachers work cooperatively, children's lives are improved (Epstein, 1995). Children who see a variety of concerned adults, especially parents working to help them improve their school performance respond positively, leading to increased achievement (Fuller & Olsen, 1998). There is no question that parents' involvement pays off in better educational outcomes for children (Brewer, 2007).

Literature Review

Forming partnership with parents is a process of sharing information and establishing relationships. It involves enhancing the total experience of children through increased interactions between the home and the school, and enriching the programme through parents' participation and contributions (Catron & Allen, 1999). Parents' involvement in the education of their children helps to meet the needs of children, families and the programme. Children have the opportunity to interact with an expanded group of adults with diverse occupational interests, educational and cultural backgrounds and ideas. Children feel supported and secure in classroom

environment while parents also feel supported by teachers who listen to them, share information about their child, offer help with child-rearing problems and encourage them in their role as parents (Catron & Allen, 1999). Thus, the goal of parents' involvement is to produce a climate of shared responsibility for student learning. Schools in which parents are partners stand in stark contrast to those in which the school assumes sole responsibility for student learning (Sandfort, 1987).

Musaazi (1982) held the view that the school, through the headteacher, staff and pupils could harmonize parents, school and community interests, resources, agencies, materials and institutions for the benefit of both the pupils and the community. He further added that education is an activity which involves the co-operation of teachers, parents, children and the community as a whole. Parents are naturally interested in the education of their children and would want to know who is doing the teaching, what is being taught and how well it is being taught.

Epstein (1984) indicated that if teachers had to choose one aspect of the policy on parents' involvement to stress, they will definitely go in for the aspect that deals with teachers involving parents in helping their children in learning activities at home. He emphasized that when parents get involved in helping their children in school activities their readiness to do homework increases and so is their academic performance. Krein and Beller (1988) believed that when

parents are actively involved in every aspect of their child's school life, the child will perform at a much higher level than his or her counterparts who lack parental involvement since parents are by and large the child's first teacher.

In the USA, one of the eight goals of *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* was that "By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children" (Early, 1994, p. 3). This goal stresses the need for parents to play a major continuing role in their children's education after their children start school.

In a review of research literature on parents' involvement, Hawley and Rosenholtz (1983) identified parents' involvement as one of the four factors in effective schools that improve children's academic achievement. Hawley and Rosenholtz (1983) stressed that children have an advantage in school when their parents continuously support and encourage them in the performance of their school activities. This view was also supported by the findings of the National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) in 1981 in USA after reviewing 35 studies on the subject. The findings of all the studies were positive; parents' involvement in almost any form appears to produce measurable gains in student achievement. In 1987, the NCCE under Henderson examined 18 new studies that together with the earlier research studies strongly suggested that involving parents in the education

of their children can make a critical difference. It asserted that parents should not be left on the periphery of the educational enterprise, that their involvement is neither a quick fix nor a luxury; it is absolutely fundamental to a healthy system of public education.

Coleman (1966) maintained in his study that if schools do not make the effort to include parents in the learning process, children can find it difficult to integrate the separate experiences of home and school. William and Stallworth (1984) found that parents were eager to play a variety of roles at school, ranging from tutoring their children or helping in the classroom to sitting on committees that decide such matters as disciplinary policies or changes in curriculum. While some parents feel that some activities such as helping their children with home work should have a higher priority, others feel that all roles are important.

A study in 1983 by Johns-Hopkins University on effective schools found out that students whose parents help them with homework do better in school and have a more positive attitude towards education than students who do not receive such assistance. It has also been noted by researchers like Clark (1983) that the following behaviours are present in families whose children succeed in schools: parents (a) frequently initiating contacts with the school; (b) playing a major role in children's schooling; (c) demonstrating that they value education; (d) providing regular instruction and coaching; (e) monitoring school work on a firm and consistent basis; (f) giving positive

reinforcement of school work and interests; (g) having regular routines and meal times; and (h) encouraging good use of time and space. The report strongly suggested that parents' involvement and support of education are critical and that students whose parents closely monitor their academic progress and their general whereabouts perform significantly better in school.

In a related study carried out by Baku and Agyeman in 1997 on parents' participation in access and quality of education in four African countries, they found out that parents' participation in one form or the other exists in all communities but the level of participation was generally low. Baku and Agyeman (1997) however concluded that there is a strong positive relationship between parents' involvement in their children's education and quality of education

The researches provide some guidelines that can help keep schools on track. First, it is abundantly clear that everyone benefits when parents are involved in their children's education; second, individual children and their families function more effectively and there is an aggregate effect on the performance of students and teachers when schools collaborate with parents. Third, parents' involvement—whether based at home or at school has significant long lasting effects. These effects vary directly with the duration and intensity of the parents' involvement; the more the better.

There are many reasons however that make parents not to get involved in school activities. Such reasons may

include (i) parents having negative experiences in school; (ii) demands from other commitments; (iii) parents not knowing how to help their children; (iv) regarding involvement as an infringement on the teacher's authority; (v) logistical problems; (vi) lack of understanding of the school system; and (vii) lack of interest.

In Ghana, the issue for parental and community support for schools has become decidedly proactive especially during the Educational Reforms of 1987 and 2007. Educators are now asking parents to support the schools. Parents are being requested to help enforce the rules of the school, assist with homework, maintain their children's health, feed and clothe them, establish a positive home environment for learning, oversee the use of internet and promote good study habits. Schools should see themselves as an institution linking the home and the community. Though children rarely think of the home as a place of learning, conscious attempts are being made to let them understand the complementary role of the home to the school.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the involvement of parents in the education of their children in primary schools in the Ga East District of the Greater Accra Region. Specifically, the study sought to examine critically the various ways that parents are involved in the education of their children, the level of commitment and the challenges that they face in doing so.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

a. What are the basic obligations of parents to their children?

b. What are the various forms of communication between the school and the home?

c. How are parents involved in teaching/learning activities of their children at school?

d. What roles do parents play in the learning activities of their wards at home?

e. What roles do parents play in school level decision making and advocacy?

f. What are the challenges that parents' face in the education of their children?

Methodology

Research Design

The study was qualitative and employed the phenomenological approach. Judging from the main thrust of the study, this design was the most appropriate as it sought to have a deeper understanding of lived experiences of the phenomenon which is parents' involvement in the education of their children.

Participants

Fifty respondents in Ga East District constituted the sample. This was made up of 10 headteachers, 20 teachers and 20 parents. Ten primary schools where the headteachers spent at least three years were purposefully selected. The headteachers whose schools were selected became automatic participants. Two teachers who had stayed in each school the longest were

purposefully selected. It was assumed that these teachers possess rich experiences dealing with parents in their communities. Two parents were randomly selected from each participating school.

Setting

Ga East District is one of the peri-urban areas in the Greater Accra Region. It shares its southern boundary with Metropolitan Accra. Most of the people who live there are literate and work in Government Departments. Few however are farmers, traders and blue-collar workers. Ga East District can boast of many basic schools and two secondary schools.

Instrument

An unstructured interview was the only instrument used to collect data. The interview was used in order to have an in-depth knowledge and understanding about the phenomenon under study. The interview was unstructured and the headteachers, teachers and parents were those who shared their lived experiences.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission was sought from the District Director of Education for Ga East to conduct the study. A preliminary visit was then made to each participating school to explain the rationale for the study to the respondents and to solicit their assistance and cooperation. Specific dates were set for the conduct of the interview in each school. All efforts were made to establish good rapport with the three stakeholders before the interview began. All the interviews with heads and teachers took place at the school while that of the parents took place in the parents' homes. It was face to face and one- on-one interview. With the permission of the respondents, the interview was tape recorded. Field notes were also taken and facial expressions were captured in course of the interview. At the end of each interview session, respondents were asked for additional comments or concerns which were not covered during the interview process. The interviews were comprehensive and each session took one to two hours to conduct. In all 26 days were spent in collecting the data.

Validity

Member check was used to determine the accuracy of the findings. The transcribed scripts and the final report were sent to the participants to determine their accuracy and to comment on the findings. Again, the prolonged time spent in the field enabled us to develop in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Results and Discussion

Six themes of parents' involvement in the education of their children emerged and were examined critically. These are: parents' basic obligations to their children, school-home-school communications, parents' involvement at the school level, parents' role in the learning activities of their wards at home, parents' involvement in the school level decision making and advocacy, and challenges that parents' face in the education of their children.

Basic Obligations of Parents to their Children

It is important that parents meet the basic needs of children such as food, clothing, shelter, health care and safety. It is equally imperative that parents perform the early-child-rearing obligations such as formation of good habits and prepare the children for school.

It was found out that some parents provided their wards with food, shelter clothing, health care and safe environment. They gave their children home training in good manners, respect for authority and taking of responsibility. They also provided school supplies such as school bag, textbooks, mathematical set, exercise books, pens, pencils, supplementary readers and workbooks. Few parents however stated that they provided their children with positive home conditions for learning. These parents indicated that they laid the ground-work for pupils' success in school by building in them self-confidence, self-concept and self-reliance. They created space at home for studies for their wards and gave them sufficient time for their studies. They provided a home devoid of conflict and petty squabbles; they were warm, loving, caring and affectionate and created the impres-sion that the children were accepted and secured at home. Most of the headteachers and teachers however disputed many of the claims made by the parents. The headteachers and teachers held the view that very few parents were highly responsible and made sure that basic needs were provided; others reneged on their obligations of providing their wards the much needed basic needs such as nutritious food and healthcare. School bags were hardly provided likewise textbooks and supplementary readers, as they claim their income levels were low.

According to the headteachers and teachers, workshops on parenting, child development, nutrition, discipline, homework, viewing of television, the use of community resources and other relevant topics on child rearing practices that affect pupils' success in school were organized for parents. Handouts and flyers which list things parents should do at home to help their children learn at home were also given out to them at such workshops. Though these activities were rarely done and only at PTA meetings, they were found to be effective. One headteacher commented: "Parents have a right and responsibility to safeguard and nurture the physical, social, emotional and spiritual education of their children and to lay a sound foundation for responsible citizenship". Another headteacher stated: "If home training of the child is not completed before the child starts school, such a child enters school with a deficit which is difficult to redeem.

The finding is in line with that of Epstein (1987) that the most basic involvement of parents is providing for their children's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, health care, safety and general well- being. She emphasized the school supplies and space needed for school work to complete homework and get to school on time.

School-Home-School Communication

It was observed in the study that although schools differed in the form and frequency of school-home-communications it was established that at one time or the other each school sent home report cards, newsletters, notices of special events and calendars of the academic year. All the respondents stated that the commonest medium of communication to parents and from parents was the school children themselves. Few teachers ever spoke to parents on the phone about their wards, while many of them interacted with parents either at church or at the market place. Most of these teachers discussed issues which centre on discipline and academic performance. One teacher remarked: "I always discuss my pupils' academic progress and disciplinary issues with their parents anytime I meet them. Usually, they feel excited hearing about their wards' academic progress and praise me for the good work that I am doing". Another teacher stated that: "Written notices are sent to all parents about upcoming events such as Open Days, sporting activities and cultural festivals". A headteacher remarked "I always send newsletters to parents at the beginning and at the end of each term. The newsletters highlight plans, achievements and challenges of the term". Other means of communicating with parents, as indicated by respondents, were through Parent-Teacher-Associations (PTAs) meetings and Open Days. Open days offer opportune time for parents and guardians to interact with teachers and discuss their children's performance.

Home visits are important but are hardly carried out by headteachers and teachers because they do not have time, although most parents expressed interest in home visits by headteachers and teachers.

The finding agrees with that of Baku and Agyeman (1997) and Epstein (1987). One suggestion made by Baku and Agyeman (1997) for effective involvement of parents in schools in Ghana is to link the PTA leaders and the school so that school problems would be laid bare for immediate solution. Epstein (1987) also states that the school has an obligation to inform parents about school programmes and their children's progress and parents are expected to act on the information received from the school.

Parents' Activities at School

Programmes that involve parents in the schools do play a significant role in creating a desirable context for teaching and learning. It was found out in the study that few parents were used as resource persons in all the schools. Parents who are pastors preached to pupils during school worship, linguists/elders taught the history, traditions, and cultural practices of the people of the community, local craftsmen imparted their skills to the students; professionals such as doctors, nurses, lawyers, engineers, and accountants also participated in career awareness programmes. Drama troupes and artists also performed drama and demonstrated their talents.

Parents attended Open Days to examine their wards' school work and to interact with teachers on their children's academic performance and

social life. Few schools extended invitations to parents during sporting events, cultural activities, carols nights, and speech and prize-giving days. At such functions, headteachers hyped on the achievements and challenges such as truancy, delinquency, drug abuse and alcoholism and seek assistance from them. All the head teachers remarked that the presence of parents and the support they offer decrease conflict between the staff and the community and apathy toward the school. Parents also help in fund-raising activities to help improve facilities such as electricity supply, water supply, furniture and infrastructural development. This they do through the organization of mini harvests, special appeals to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), past pupils and prominent citizens in the area.

This finding confirms the views expressed by Epstein (1987) and Gestwicki (2000). Epstein (1987), states that when parents' involvement at the school level is well organized, teachers and the school staff provide better educational services to the students during the school day. Gestwicki (2000) observes that bringing in other adults with unique talents and abilities also adds to the excitement of the classroom and often leaves teachers feeling more satisfied with their work. Participation also benefits children by providing an enriched classroom environment.

Learning Activities of Wards at Home
It was observed that few parents in Ga East District played meaningful roles in the learning activities of their wards at home. These parents provided well-

lighted area at home as study places, drew time tables for their studies, monitored their studies, make sure all homework are completed before going to school the next day and monitored viewing of televisions. They also encouraged their wards to make effective use of community libraries.

The finding is in agreement with what Becker and Epstein (1982a) and Baku and Agyeman (1997) found in their studies. Becker and Epstein (1982a) reported in their study that involving parents in learning activities with their children at home is one kind of parents' involvement that teachers find particularly useful as the activities benefit student learning.

School-Level Decision Making and Advocacy
All the schools have Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) that most headteachers regularly interact with. All the headteachers indicated that both the PTAs and SMCs played meaningful roles towards the progress of the schools. These bodies helped to solve problems, make decisions, and develop policies that make the school system more responsive and equitable to all families. They also played advocacy roles. In the study, the heads indicated that even though some members of the SMC showed apathy towards meetings, generally they helped in shaping polices and directions of the schools. They helped in crafting the vision and mission of the schools. The PTAs ensure that the schools meet the hopes and aspirations of parents and pupils

Challenges that Parents Face in the Education of their Children

Some of the parents had strong desire to influence school programmes and activities, yet felt unwelcome and powerless to do so as their efforts are perceived to be at variance with the rules and regulations governing the schools as laid down by the Ghana Education Service (GES). For instance, where some parents point out the wrong doings of some heads, the situation generally degenerates into conflicts and affects the school adversely. Some parents have also constituted themselves into "watch-dogs" on the implementation of GES policies and are quick to point out some of the wrong doings on the part of the school head. This usually degenerates into conflicts that adversely affect the schools. In few cases, some heads simply do not want parents to be present in their schools to interfere in the implementation of policies by the GES. They simply see the activities of parents as nuisance and people who have nothing worthwhile to contribute toward the improvement of the school.

In some schools, parents view Parent-Teacher-Association (PTAs) meetings as being designed by school authorities to levy parents. In this respect, parents do not have the desire to get involved in school activities. Almost all the headteachers confirmed that most parents who are market women hardly get involved in school programmes because they are too busy to do so.

Implications for Schools and Parents

The study has demonstrated that, parents' involvement in primary schools in Ga East District is generally encouraging. This has some implications for schools and parents.

Communicating with parents should continue as is being done in the district. Parents should be invited to the school at the beginning of every year to learn about the school's philosophy, policies and programme, meet staff and have opportunity to ask questions. A calendar could be published in each school year and given to every family with information on sporting and special events. It may include the school's motto, list of personnel in the school and important telephone numbers. Headteachers are encouraged to send termly newsletters to parents, stating achievements/progress made within the term and challenges facing the institution. Schools are also encouraged to create their own website for the public, especially for parents' use.

The headteachers and teachers must take the initiative to reach out to "hard to reach parents" and to devise a variety of strategies for them to participate in school activities and the education of their children. This means going into homes to meet with families, having meetings with parents in less intimidating settings and occasionally talking with parents at churches and other gatherings about the school and the need for parents to get more involved. He or she should also listen to parents' concerns. The important thing is that schools must take the initiative and adopt strategies needed to break the barriers and establish trust.

The school should encourage more parents to serve as resource persons in areas where they have the expertise. They may teach local history, dance, culture and traditions. They may also give lectures on topical issues like the AIDS, substance abuse, alcoholism, human rights and careers. This will enable the children to see other people as playing significant role in their lives.

Television is a great information and entertainment medium. However its potential to interfere with learning is enormous. Parents should intensify the monitoring of watching television by their children.

Homework usually keeps children busy at home. It is therefore imperative that homework is frequently given to children and parents entreated to supervise such work. Parents should be encouraged to supply their children with school needs such as school bag, school uniform, shoes, textbooks, pens and other relevant materials.

Parent-Teacher-Association meetings should not be viewed as the time or opportunity designed to levy parents; for such a practice would thwart parents' interest in the school, resulting in parents trying to avoid PTA meetings. It should be the occasion when issues concerning the progress of the school and welfare of the staff and children should be discussed. Through PTA meetings, parents should be made to believe that they have a right and responsibility to safeguard and nurture the physical, social, emotional and spiritual education of their children and to lay a

firm foundation for responsible citizenship.

Local media should be encouraged by school authorities to educate the public about home as a special learning place. The school should also produce a flyer that should list, for example, things parents can do to help their children learn.

Parents should be encouraged both formally and informally to comment on school policies and to share in the decision-making. School heads should build public awareness on issues that affect children such as drug and alcohol abuse and child abuse.

Parents' participation in a well-structured and well-managed programme can help eliminate harmful stereotypes that staff members may harbour about the community served by the school. By actively getting involved in the activities of the school, parents develop a sense of ownership of the school and responsibility for its outcomes. The presence of parents and the support they offer decrease conflict and apathy in the school. All these changes help to create a desirable school climate which makes teaching and learning more permeable. The improved student performance that results gives teachers hope and professional satisfaction and leads to a spiral of ever-better performance by students, staff members and parents.

Conclusion

The importance of working cooperatively with parents and communities cannot be overlooked in quality educational programmes for children.

Indeed, parents have spent and will continue to spend far more time with their children than teachers can ever do.

It is therefore imperative that teachers recognize this fact and work with parents and families to make sure that children have the best opportunities for growth and development.

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Crisis Management in Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis

Michael Amakyi

Abstract

*The study examined crisis manage-
ment in senior high schools in the
Cape Coast metropolis. A basic
interpretive study was conducted to
gather data from heads of senior high
schools in Cape Coast. The study
revealed that the schools remain
largely unprepared to handle crisis.
Also, the study informants indicated
that the schools do not have crisis
management plans and do adopt
reactive measures in addressing
crisis. Policy recommendations
included the development of crisis
management plan as an integral part
of the strategic plans of the schools.
Research recommendations included
replicating this study in other GES
designated districts and metropolis to
determine if findings reported here are
typical for the entire country.*

Introduction

Institutions inevitably experience
crises and schools have not been
spared. Crises are not limited to one
sector of society, but rather all are
affected. Pauchant and Mitroff (1992)
see a crisis as a disruption affecting
how an entity functions; posing threat
to its basic assumptions, its subjective
sense of self, and its existential core. A
crisis in a school infringes upon the
school day and impacts how the
school carries out its mission.

Ordinarily, schools have well-
structured programmes and function
with great efficiency under normal
conditions. However, schools face
unusual demands during crisis-
unexpected and unpredictable influ-
ences from school board members,
parents, other major stakeholders, and
the media. Life in the school changes
as staff members and students are
personally and collectively affected by
the crisis. During crises major facets of
a school's functioning are likely to be
jeopardized.

Crises in schools place greater
responsibilities on the shoulders of the
administrators. In addition to dealing
with the crisis and responding to the
demands of the school public,
especially the media, school
administrators have to keep the school
running. Expectedly, school adminis-
trators are to deal with crises quickly
and effectively, nevertheless, "many
school officials remain unprepared to
deal with most types of potential
crises" (Kowalski, 2008, p. 29).
Preparedness to effectively deal with
crisis becomes paramount to the
smooth running of the school. Crisis,
whether it occurs before, during, or
after the official school hours, affects
the operations of the school. It is thus
important that school authorities adopt
proactive measures to address crisis
instead of fire-fighting measures in
dealing with crisis (Gainey, 2009).

Problem Statement

During the last two decades schools have experienced crises that captured the attention of society. Kowalski (2010) points out that crisis in schools range in scope and intensity and can affect only an individual or an entire community. Whether it is food poisoning, disease outbreak, death of a student or staff, a natural disaster (e.g., fire or flood), negative media publication, or an act of real or threatened violence, These crises that can occur in a school remind society that although schools are relatively safe environments, they are not shielded from crises; they periodically experience crises.

Recent crises in schools and perceived public dissatisfaction of how the schools handled the crises signal that all is not well with crisis management in schools. The perceived public dissatisfaction suggests a variance in the level of expectations between the school and the school public on how crises are managed. Closely associated with the public dissatisfaction may be the absence of coordinated efforts to deal with the crisis, which manifests itself in various stakeholders often acting in isolation and in most cases getting in each other's way. Accordingly questions predicated on the school's ability to handle crises surface and the school's reputation is negatively affected creating a situation where the faith of the school public in the leadership of the school weakens. Eventually a climate of no confidence is created in the school leadership to lead the school in general and to carry out protracted reforms specifically.

Schools as social-political institutions thrive on the goodwill of the public hence the ability of the school to effectively handle crises increases the social capital of the school. Conversely, the social capital of the school diminishes when the public perceives the school as unable to handle crises. In an era of proliferation of the airwaves and heightened interests in what goes on in schools, what happens in a school can no longer be kept there. However, data about the extent to which senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis have effectively handled crises are nonexistent. The absence of such data makes it difficult for one to ascertain whether schools are properly positioned to handle crises. This condition is unlikely to change unless more is known about the best operating practices in handling crises by schools.

Purpose of Study

This study was an attempt to understand how senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis deal with crisis situations. Specifically, the study was intended to produce the following information about crisis management in senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis:

- Nature and impact of crises on the operations of the school and the response of the schools to the crisis situation.
- Level and amount of preparedness of senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis to deal with crises.
- Aftercare services to crisis situations in senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis.

The study was framed by the key research question: how do senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis deal with crisis situations?

Review of Related Theory

A school is usually expected to be a safe place for teaching and learning to take place, however, unexpected events that may disrupt the normal life in the school could occur. Various authors (e.g., Kowalski, 2005; Moriarity, Maeyama, & Fitzgerald, 1993; Trump, 1998) have identified crises in schools to include but not limited to situations and incidents involving the death of a student, a staff member, or a community member whose death affects a significant portion of the school population; natural disasters and major environmental crisis (i.e., fires, floods, rain storms, earthquakes); situation that involves a threat to the physical safety of students (i.e., school bus accident, structural failures in the school facility, abduction, violent acts); situation that involves a perceived threat to the emotional well-being of students; epidemics (food poisoning, water poisoning, flu); and negative media publication.

Ubben, Hughes, and Norris (2007) opine that the school has a responsibility to provide reasonable and prudent protection for its charges at all times. The school is responsible for taking all steps to promote the well-being of the students within the school and to guard the welfare of the staff. It behooves the school to develop a set of guidelines, if carefully followed, will result in protection for both students and staff. Such guidelines include the provision of information to prevent, prepare, and respond appropriately to unforeseen situations.

Parker (2008) suggests that school communities will be well positioned to cope with serious problems if they take time to prepare for crisis situations before they happen. Parker further states that the level of preparedness of a school impacts how the students deal with crises in both the short and long term. Crisis situations, particularly those occurring during school hours, create a wave of panic and confusion and threaten the unity and comfortable familiarity on which students and families depend.

The Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA (2008) recognizes that given the complexity of crisis situations and varied reactions from stakeholder groups, the proper handling of school-wide crises is essential to minimizing negative impact on learning and recommends that schools adopt, implement, and institutionalize a set of crisis intervention procedures. The Center suggests that "a comprehensive crisis intervention approach provides ways for school personnel, students, and parents to return to normalcy as quickly as feasible, address residual (longer-term) psychosocial problems, and explore preventive measures for the future." (p. 7)

Quinn (2002) affirms the need for crisis intervention plans and recommends that individuals and subgroups with diverse expertise need to be involved in the planning and implementation of the crisis intervention plans. The plans will

provide common strategies that schools will have ready to use in the event of a crisis situation. All who are involved should be provided with additional specialized in-service training. In developing crisis intervention plans, Trump (2000) avers that media coverage plays a major role in the management of crises and exhorts schools to pay particular attention to communication plan within the crisis intervention plan.

Schools can use the media as an effective communication vehicle for getting accurate information to stakeholders in a timely manner on efforts to mitigate crises. Communication, in and out of schools, is critical to meeting this expectation. Once the media become involved, schools face a public nightmare. Crisis can damage a school's reputation overnight and more importantly failure to communicate effectively during a crisis situation often produces a second-level problem for school officials (Kowalski, 2010). Kowalski, Petersen, and Fusarelli (2007) counsel administrators to prepare to communicate with the school public and the media and desist from using "no comment" when addressing especially the media during crisis a situation. They intimate that very often reporters and the public are suspicious that the "no comment" indicates that the administrators are attempting to conceal vital information.

Schonfeld and Newgass (2003) note experience teaches that schools can support and assist children and staff during and after a crisis situation. In the aftermath of a crisis, school-based intervention may be the most effective, logical, and practical way to provide assistance. This is particularly true if the school-based efforts are coordinated with other agencies.

Methodology

A basic interpretive study - understanding a phenomenon and the perspectives of the people involved and how they construct their worlds and the meaning they attribute to their experiences—was conducted to gather data from school heads of senior high schools ($n= 8$) in the Cape Coast metropolis. The school heads were purposively selected as their schools have recently experienced a crisis. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with the school heads of the selected senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis. The school heads were contacted and suitable days were scheduled for the interviews. The interviews were conducted over a period of one month, specifically, from July 5 to August 5, 2011. Each interview session lasted for about 50 minutes.

The interview protocol consisted of 15 main open-ended questions that addressed topics culled from suggestions for a linear approach to handling crisis: description of crisis; having a crisis management plan; ensuring security of the school during crisis; managing parents, media, and school public; disseminating information to stakeholders; providing aftercare services; returning school to normal operations; and documenting lessons learned from the crisis (Kowalski, 2010). Additional topics

which emerged as a result of follow-up and probing questions also were addressed. The additional topics mainly were to elicit clarification on what had earlier been said by the school heads or have the school heads further expand on an issue that had earlier been addressed.

The interview data were coded and analyzed to identify recurring themes that were grouped under (a) addressing crisis situations, (b) preparedness of senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis to deal with crises, and (c) recovery after crisis. Credibility and dependability were assured through member checks; the school heads were asked to comment on the interpretation of the data collected and peer debriefing; a colleague scanned the raw data and assessed whether the findings were plausible based on the data collected.

Findings and Discussion

Addressing crisis situations
Findings on addressing crisis in the school focused on issues pertaining to the description of nature of the crisis, how the informant learned about the crisis, the nature of the response of the school to the crisis, and the perception of the informant regarding the degree of impact of the crisis on the operations of the school. Three major crises were identified by the study informants.

The study informants identified negative media publication as a crisis experienced in the school. The informants intimated that media publications that negatively impact the school's reputation were often

times as a result of events in the school being blown out of proportion and taken out of context. A study informant indicated: *"because the media are in a hurry to be the first to put out a story, when you tell them that you will need to do a further investigation before you give a statement to the press, they still proceed to publish the story without your version. In such situations, events tend to be misrepresented."* The study informants stated that they experienced negative media publication at least once during the past academic year.

The informants learned about the negative media publication through various avenues (i.e., staff members, friends, family, district education officers). However, the predominant avenue for learning about the crisis was through a phone call from a friend. *"A friend called in the morning and asked if I had seen a publication in one of the dailies? Another friend called and asked me to tune in to a radio discussion on my school."*

The informants stated that they do not have in place an established communication plan showing communication pathways and protocols in the event of a crisis to communicate internally and externally. In response to how often they hold press briefings, the informants intimated that the nature of their employment contract does not permit them to hold press briefings nor to directly issue press statements to media houses. They are expected to give situational reports to their immediate governing authority who makes a determination whether to issue a press statement or not. On the other hand, the informants mentioned

that they make efforts to provide the staff with details of any ongoing developments associated with the crisis either at formal gatherings such as staff meetings or at informal gatherings.

However, Kowalski (2010) holds a contrary view on absence of communication plan in the schools. He argues that a school should have a communication plan detailing how communication should be carried out during and after crisis. In addition, he suggests that schools should have designated spokesperson or persons to reduce the likelihood of conflicting messages reaching the school public during a crisis.

The study informants opined that negative media publication had a significant impact on the life of the school. An informant stated: *"negative media publication is a source of worry. The stakeholders, especially the parents and the alumni, readily believe the stories they read and even before they crosscheck with the school, they start reacting violently towards you."* The informants unequivocally stated that negative media publications about the school affect every aspect of the school's life and weaken the morale of everyone in the school.

Social capital in the form of public satisfaction is essential for the operations of the school.

The critical role played by positive school image in school effectiveness is supported by various researchers. For example, Bauman (1996) points out a positive association between

public interest or satisfaction in a school and public support for the school. Similarly, Smith and Piele (2006) identify public support for schools as contingent on the degree of association with the school, which is influenced by the image one has of the school. Negative image erodes public support for the school.

Another school crisis experienced by the informants was a student leaving school for more than a day without permission. This type of crisis had been experienced by seven out of the eight informants. Students in the schools are to obtain explicit permission from the school authority (e.g. house master or mistress) before they leave the school's premises. *"In our situation where we are running boarding institutions, when a student goes missing from school, you are not sure what has really happened to the student. Is the student playing truancy or has the student been abducted? These thoughts will give a person severe headaches."* According to an informant, *"we act in loco parentis because the students are entrusted into our care by the parents hence it is a worrying scenario when as school head you are unable to ascertain the whereabouts of a student. When a student leaves the school without permission, the student does not go home to the parents; instead the student goes to spend the time with friends."*

The informants indicated that they learned of the crisis of a missing student from school through the senior house master. According to the study informants, the police is not contacted when a student goes missing from

school; instead the parents of the student are informed of what had happened and briefed on efforts to trace the whereabouts of the student. In addition, various masters are assigned to interview selected students who are perceived to have information about the movement of the missing student. *"We spare no effort in tracing the whereabouts of the student. The staff members continuously talk to students and ask probing questions and we are fortunate the approach has yielded good results in the past. The missing student is located and appropriate sanctions applied to him."*

The study informants stressed that ensuring the safety and security of the students was of prime concern to them hence when a student goes missing it affects the entire school operation. Every staff is involved and normal school routine gets disrupted. The identification of failure to ensure the security of the students as a major crisis in the school is congruent with the postulate of Trump (1998). Trump argues that security in the school is essential in creating good learning environment and goes on to describe security as preventing and responding to criminal acts and severe misbehaviour on the part of students.

Death of a student or a person closely associated with the school was identified by the informants as the third major crisis that occurred in the school. The study informants (*n=4*) who have experienced the death of a student on campus mentioned that it was very difficult to organize classes on that fateful day and the few subsequent days. According to one of the informants, *"the tragic news of the death of a student brought all activities on the campus to a halt. Groups of persons were seen gathered at various points in the school discussing the demise of the student. Some were openly shedding tears. The entire atmosphere on campus was of a mournful nature. The school administration took a decision that there will be no classes on that day. Normal classes resumed after about four days in an atmosphere considered as being not the best for organizing effective teaching and learning."*

As regards the death of a person closely associated with the school, one of the informants stated that when the news was received about the death of this prominent associate of the school and the authenticity of the news was verified, the normal school activities were brought to a standstill. The informant stated that though no one called for a halt to school activities, members of the school community: academic and non academic staff and students were in no mood to carry out any activity.

The study informants indicated that they were informed of the tragic news of the death of a student or a person associated with the school by a staff member. They further indicated that the schools do not have a designated staff to communicate such news to the school public; the tragic news was passed on by whoever heard it.

Also, the informants hinted that they did not have coordinated efforts among staff in responding to tragic news. The responses of the school community were influenced by the

degree to which they were affected by the tragic news; staff and student reacted differently. However, one of the informants identified a specific means through which the school responded to tragic news of the death of a person closely associated with the school. *"A general assembly of staff and students was convened and the sad news was formally passed on to the school. In addition to using the assembly to break the sad news to the school, it afforded us the opportunity to grieve together and console one another. We were not able to continue with the rest of the day's scheduled activities. I allowed people to express their emotions."*

The informants also stated that even though the schools have counselors, they were not assigned key responsibilities during the crisis. The role of the school counselor was clearly defined and communicated to the school community and the informants believed that those who needed assistance knew who to contact.

Preparedness to deal with crisis

According to the informants, the schools do not have a documented crisis management plan that guided how they handled the crises. In addition, the schools do not have crisis response teams and do not organize drills to rehearse how to respond in times of crisis. However, the informants stated that they rely on the assigned duties and responsibilities of the various administrative positions in the school (e.g., housemasters or mistresses, senior housemaster or mistress, assistant heads) to deal with

crisis. The finding that the schools do not have a crisis management plan is not congruent with as the work of various authors (e.g., Johnson, 2000; Parker, 2008; Riley & McDaniel, 2000) on how schools prepare to handle crisis.

According to Brock, Sandoval, and Lewis (2001), a crisis management plan provides guidelines and protocols for addressing various crisis situations in a school. Parker (2008) acknowledges that there is no one size fits all kind of crisis management plan because each crisis situation requires special handling. He however, states that the presence of common strategies in a crisis plan that schools can have ready to use at a moment's notice, makes the possession of crisis management plan essential to handling a crisis.

A crisis management plan ensures that members of the school administration, staff, and key stakeholders are familiar with roles and processes in the event of a crisis. A crisis management plan facilitates a quick and coordinated response when crisis occurs (Poland & McCormick, 2000). Fearn-Banks (1996) posits that a crisis management plan serves as a tool of preparedness and acts as the framework for quick response to a crisis situation. A crisis management plan assists with coordination of resources, which is critical in maximizing the positive efforts and programs within the school and community to not only intervene effectively during a crisis, but to prevent crisis situations.

In assessing their own level of knowledge, skill, and disposition on a

continuum ranging from not being well prepared to being adequately prepared for responding to school crises, the study informants assessed themselves as being fairly prepared to handle crises. This finding is not consistent with the postulate of Seeger, Sellnow, and Ulmer (2003) who argue that effective and informed leadership at all levels is crucial to supporting students, families, and staff during and after a crisis. Additionally, school administrators should be well prepared and well resourced to handle crisis, for example, they can assist by funding continuing professional development activities in the area of crisis intervention.

Recovery after crisis

Findings dealing with recovery after crisis looked at the various aftercare services schools in the school and measures to return the school to normalcy. The study informants indicated that counseling services are available to the students. The schools have full-time school counselors assigned with the responsibility of taking care of the psychological and mental health needs of students. However, the school counselors do not provide services to the staff. Also, the school counselors have not been preparing teachers and other staff to assist with counseling services, especially with the immediate needs of crisis intervention. Finally, the informants stated that they do not have plans addressing concerted efforts at monitoring of students by staff to assess the emotional impact of crises on the students.

These findings are not consistent with the works of various authors (e.g., King, Price, Telljohann, & Wahl, 2000; Riley & McDaniel, 2000). The authors posit that the role of the school counselor is to provide direct counseling services to the students and the staff during and after crises. Additionally, the authors state that counseling support systems in schools are strengthened when school counselors prepare the staff to provide assistance with aftercare services. Kowalski (2010) points out that managing the aftermath of a crisis is probably the most ignored element of crisis management in schools. He opines that once the crisis is under control, professional counselors should assume greater role in providing services to both staff and students. He further admits that aftercare needs depend on the nature of the crisis experienced in the school, hence the need for creation of contingency plans for dealing with the aftermath of a crisis.

The informants indicated that they did not have laid down procedures to return the school to normal operations. They identified "time" as being a key element to guide when school operations return to normal. "*As time passes and other activities assume prominence in the school, life in the school gradually returns to normal.*" Trump (2000) suggests that as soon as possible, the school should return to normal operations. According to Kowalski (2010), students are better helped to deal with crisis when they are able to follow a schedule.

Conclusion

Senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis remain largely unprepared to handle a crisis. The schools have been engaging in firefighting approach in addressing crises. Despite the overwhelming emphasis in literature on the need for a crisis management plan, the schools do not have available a crisis management plan detailing prevention and response plans—coordinated and systematic institutional activities aimed at mitigating crises and ameliorating their impact on students when crises do occur.

Also, the schools have not taken proactive steps toward enhancing relationships and communication, especially with the media, before crises strike. The schools are inadequately prepared to address emergency notification of parents, handle internal staff communication, and cope with the demands of the media. Such failure on the part of the school had represented "crisis after the crisis" (Kowalski, 2005, p. 48) for school leaders. Rollo and Zdziarski (2007) intimate that how schools respond to a crisis can put a human face on the school. *Gainey (2009) states that preparedness* to address crises entails developing and implementing formal crisis-management plans, planning for two-way communication that builds relationships with internal and external stakeholders, and developing strategies for providing effective leadership within the culture of the school community.

Recommendations

The study recommends to school boards to assist senior high schools in the Cape Coast metropolis to develop a crisis management plan to be an integral part of the strategic plans of the schools. Also, this study provides limited insights into the relationship between the schools and agencies dealing with safety and security (e.g., Police Service, Fire Service, National Disaster Management Organization, Hospitals). This topic needs to be explored in greater depth. Finally, this study should be replicated in other GES designated districts and metropolis to determine if findings reported here are typical for the entire country.

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Investors In People: A Case Study of The Mathematics Department of Merton College, UK

Jonathan Fletcher

Abstract

The Investors in People study of the Mathematics Department of Merton College was undertaken in November 2008 to determine the extent to which the Mathematics Department met the indicators of the new Standard introduced by Investors in People UK in 2005 in the face of the changes that were being implemented in the whole college. The study involved 14 out of the 23 staff in the department. The main instruments used were structured interview schedules, albeit relevant documents were also examined. The key finding was that generally, managers were able to demonstrate an understanding of how to count the costs and benefits of learning and development, and the latter's impact on the performance of individuals in the Mathematics Department. It was recommended that the Policy Team of the college should develop an Action Plan to address some of the key issues identified in the study.

Introduction

The Investors in People Standard was developed in 1990 by the United Kingdom (UK) National Training Task Force, in partnership with leading business, personnel, professional and employee organisations. The Standard provides a national framework for improving business performance and competitiveness through a planned approach to setting and communicating business objectives and developing people to meet these objectives. It sets out a level of good practice for the training and development of people in order to achieve business goals. The Investors in People Standard has been a major UK success story in schools and other organisations since its introduction in 1990 (Investors in People UK, 2005). The Standard is based on three main principles:

Plan - develop strategies to improve performance.
Do - take action to improve the performance.
Review - evaluate the impact.

These three key principles are broken down into ten indicators, against which organisations wishing to be recognised as an Investor in People are assessed. The ten indicators are:

1. A strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood.
2. Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives.
3. Strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people.

4. The capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood.

5. Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people.

6. People's contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued.

7. People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision-making.

8. People learn and develop effectively.

9. Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation.

10. Improvements are continually made to the way people are managed and developed. (Investors in People UK, 2005, p 3).

The indicators are broken down further into 39 evidence criteria (See Appendix A). *Investors in People UK* was set up in 1993 to take ownership of the Standard and every three years, it reviews this to make sure that it is still relevant, accessible and beneficial to organisations of all types and sizes. Although the company is by definition UK based and orientated in its operations, interest from overseas has given the Standard an international dimension, both in terms of protection and development. *In any organisation where the Standard is used for the purpose of assessment, the design of the review, the sampling method and the conduct of the review are all governed by Investors in People UK. Internal reviewers are*

advised to follow the guidelines provided by Investors in People UK. According to the company, the review report should use the following headings:

Overview of the organisation - *briefly describe the role and structure of the organisation including any special factors e.g. recent or proposed changes to the structure and procedures, staff moves, relocation or redundancies*

Purpose and background to the review - *explain the purpose of the review and how it fits in with the overall Internal Review strategy of the organisation.*

Methodology - *describe how you gathered evidence i.e. through one-to-one interviews, focus groups and reference to supporting documents.*

Overall conclusion - *whether on the evidence from review, the Investors in People Standard is met or not met overall.*

Areas of good practice - *describe examples of good practice identified during the review.*

Areas for development - *describe significant areas for development identified during the review* (Investors in People UK, 2005, p 9 & pp 21-22).

The study at Merton College followed the above guidelines although, as it will be shown later, the way data were collected reflected the needs of the College. The author, who is certified *Internal Assessor,* was commissioned by the Policy Team of the College to

undertake the study in November, 2008.

Overview of the Mathematics Department of Merton College

Merton College, (referred to in this paper as "the College"), is an associate college of Kingston University. It is an attractive multi-cultural college currently situated on two green field sites at the outskirts of London. The College has two Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) and enjoys a high reputation within a lively, challenging and competitive catchment area. The College was in the process of moving to a single site at the time of the study and this had resulted in some on-going structural changes.

The College offers a wide range of courses and programmes which provide progression to higher education, or to employment. The courses are also designed to update, retrain and enhance career prospects for those already in employment

The mission of the College is to:
1. make a significant contribution to economic success of employers and individuals and to the personal/social well-being of our students;
2. be learner centred in our approach, and to ensure success;
3. maintain a workforce that delivers excellence;
4. promote and celebrate our reputation for enabling and encouraging inclusion, diversity and equality; and
5. build capacity to provide excellent learning by diversi-

fying its income sources and building its reputation as responsive and innovative institution. (Merton College Strategic Plan, 2008, p.1).

Being an Investor in People (IIP), Merton College positively encourages equal access to education and aims to provide quality service to all its students. This involves all of the workforce and is stated clearly in the College's plans for staff development (Merton College Strategic Plan, 2008.). Also, the College's equal opportunities policy states that all staff are considered to be equal and that the College seeks to support all of its employees through its management structures, training and development practices. This claim is part of what the Investors in People Standard was used to verify in the Mathematics Department of the College *(referred to in this paper as "the Department")*, which was undergoing a change as a result of the structural (and possibly cultural) changes that were being made in the College as a whole.

Structural changes are those changes that are concerned with the way functional units are organised to carry out their responsibilities. The focus includes policy and procedure, rules and regulations, management and staffing, facilities and equipment, and human resource practices (Kotter, 1996). Cultural changes, on the other hand, are concerned with the way people interact with each other, both in peer relationships and in superior-subordinate relationships. Since cultural changes are to do with people, it is arguably the more difficult of the two to successfully deal with (Kotter,

1996; Senior & Flemming, 2005).

Indeed, the human systems of an enterprise are what make or break any change initiative. As McGregor (1960) observes in his 'Theory Y', such systems work well if they are based on trust and positive view of humanity. The College claims to be a people's college and prides itself on its Investors in People status. The main research question therefore was: what impact did the changes have on the Mathematics Department of the College?

The Department is part of the School of Academic Studies and is in the same programme area as the Science Department and the Computing Department. As a result of the changes, the Department is *now* responsible for delivering all aspects of mathematics, including GCSE and GCE (AS and A Level) mathematics and related qualifications, vocational mathematics, workplace mathematics, numeracy, Application of Number (AoN) and Adult Basic Skills Numeracy (ABSN). Before the current on-going changes (that were initiated as a result of the College's massive investment in buildings and equipment), AoN and ABSN were part of the School of Community Education and lecturers from the Department taught the two courses under an arrangement in which money was transferred from the School of Community Education Cost Centre to the School of Academic Studies Cost Centre, for the service provided by the mathematics lecturers. The changes meant that the mathematics offered in the Department underpinned both vocational and academic develop-

ment, and all staff who taught mathematics and numeracy in the College reported to the Head of Mathematics Department (HMD).

The HMD was responsible for co-ordinating all mathematics activities across the College. He was also in charge of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of all teachers of mathematics, and ensured the sharing of good practice, subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. The Department made much effort to attract students to study mathematics and to ensure that students not only had a positive learning experience when studying mathematics, but that they developed positive attitudes to the subject and were well prepared for both higher education and employment. (Mathematics Self Assessment Report, 2008).

The college has a well-defined mathematics suite of rooms. These rooms are filled with interesting posters (on 2D and 3D shapes, formulae, application of mathematical concepts, etc) and models, and each room has at least ten computers. The use of ICT is much in evidence, both as a teaching tool and as a resource for students. Besides, the Department has mathematics intranet site (on Blackboard - the college intranet system) which is used by students to support independent learning. All common assignments and textbook worked solutions are available online, and staff have easy access to a database where they log and record all students' performance. This helps identify poor performance across the whole student base and enables effective strategies to deal with poor performance shared

across the classes. Scores are recorded and 'graded' automatically, and students' details can be accessed easily by any lecturer.

The mathematics intranet site is maintained by all mathematics lecturers, and each has a responsibility for a mathematics module. The site uses many in-house resources and also uses the Mathematics in Education and Industry (MEI) distance learning site. It is indeed, not surprising that the Department was graded 'outstanding' by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspectors in 2006.

The Ofsted report read:
Teaching and learning in mathematics are very good. Teachers use very effective strategies in mathematics lessons, exploiting well the DfES Standards Unit national pilot materials in activity-based learning. For example, in an advanced mathematics lesson, IT and Standards Unit materials and approaches were used very effectively to introduce the geometry of the circle. The active learning approach to teaching is transforming and revitalising learning. Lesson planning and schemes of work in mathematics are good, providing a sound basis for teaching and learning. In the best lessons, a wide range of learning activities challenges all students. Often, there is exceptional use of ICT in lessons. Students are well motivated and ask questions which display interest and understanding. Very good leadership in mathematics has successfully embedded the innovative activity-based approach in all programmes. (Ofsted, 2006, pp 7-8)

It is no exaggeration to posit that the Department (before the above changes) was a model department of the College and that all other departments had drawn inspiration from the successes of the mathematics department. It was against this background that the authors were commissioned to review the "new" Department ahead of the College's application for renewal of its Investor in People status. The renewal of the status involves an assessment by external assessors or by certified internal assessors supervised by an external assessor. The college opted for the latter and used the study as a "mock assessment".

Purpose and background to the study

The study of the Department took place in November, 2008. It was undertaken by the authors in order to find out the extent to which the Mathematics Department met the indicators of the new Standard in the face of the changes that were being implemented in the whole college. Since the Department was the most successful department in the College prior to the changes, it was hoped that it had taken the structural (and possibly cultural) changes in its stride and that any identified good practice (with regard to response to the changes) could be disseminated throughout the College. This was an important significance of the study.

The study was also indirectly investigating the impact of the changes on the College's Investors in People status, for if the Department did not meet any of the indicators (which it had met in the review before the structural changes), then this would help the

College to identify which of the indicators was affected by the changes, considering that the new Standard was not significantly different from the earlier one (Investors in People, UK, 2005). This would mean finding ways of meeting the indicator(s) before the application for the renewal of the College's Investors in People status was made.

Put simply, the College had acknowledged that the changes could affect the views of staff generally and that it was important to take the on-going changes into consideration in the IIP renewal venture. There is no gainsaying that improvements in business processes require change to an organisation's structure and culture. Yet, any significant change to the structure and culture is likely to be disruptive. Indeed, the various models which have been proposed which attempt to minimise the disruptive effects of organisational change while at the same time providing opportunities for improve-ments in the organization (e.g. Palmer, Dunford, & Aikin, 2006) are based on the premise that improved processes ought to be successfully assimilated into the organisation's structure and culture. In other words, the models assume that organisational change involves both structural and cultural change, and that there will always be resistance to change because of the "disruption" that is usually associated with the change.

As an important example of a change model (which informed our study), and without digressing from the main study, Kurt Lewin (Cited by Scott,

2007) described a model which he had developed earlier and which proposed a three-stage approach to change. The basic outline of the model is to first "unfreeze" the current situation so change can occur, then to make changes, and finally to "refreeze" the new situation in place. The first stage involves letting people appreciate the need for the change. It is important to point out that people often ask a number of questions the answers to which determine their ability to see the need for change. These questions include:

1. What sort of change is it?
2. How will the change affect me and my job?
3. How will I be evaluated?
4. How will this change be conducted?
5. What are the benefits?
6. What will the overall impact of the change be?
7. How can I help others with the change?

This series of questions is somewhat similar to Maslow's (1970) Needs Hierarchy. Maslow states that if a more basic level is not satisfied, a higher level will not be of importance to the organisational personnel. That is, if management cannot explain how the change will affect an employee (Question 2), then the employee will not help others change (Question 7). If employees are satisfied with the answers to basic questions as those stated above, then they are likely to see the need for the change in the first place. As (Cummings & Worley, 2004) rightly point out, management programmes that ignore this theoretical framework can fail.

The second stage of Lewin's model involves explaining what employees will be required to do under the new system. A powerful way to decrease resistance to change is to increase the participation of employees in making decisions about various aspects of the process. There are actually two reasons for employee participation. The more common reason is to increase employee commitment to the outcomes of the change, as they will have a sense of ownership in what is decided. A second reason is that employees have a great deal of knowledge and skill relevant to the issue at hand (e.g. increasing quality, identifying problems, and improving work processes), and their input should lead to higher quality decisions. The third and final stage of the model under discussion is taking measures to embed the change into people's thinking. Here the people involved in the change accept it and the change becomes incorporated into their understanding of the new system, which may later become part of their normal behaviour (Jones, 2008; Kotter, 1996).

It appears the most difficult stage of the model under discussion is the first one as employees may find it difficult to see the need for the change because they have not had the right answers to the questions posed above. The changes in the Department were on-going and staff were far from certain about how to handle the first stage of Lewin's model. Therefore, as explained below, the questions that were used in the interviews reflected some of the ideas Lewin made about changes generally and the first stage of his model in particular.

Methodology

The IIP study was basically qualitative in nature. It was designed to collect views of people in the organisation about how best improvements could be planned, implemented and evaluated. In social science research parlance, our target population for the review consisted of all teaching and non-teaching staff in the Mathematics Department. The sampling frame for the review coincided with the target population since the staff in the Department were the units of analysis of the study. In an attempt to preserve the random principle on which statistical inferences depend, while at the same time allowing for a design that would ensure adequate represen-tation of the staff in the Mathematics Department, the study used a stratified sampling method to select partici-pants. Stratification was done by category of Staff. This design was preferred to simple random sampling of individual staff of the Department not only because it was to ensure that all categories of staff were adequately represented, but it also avoided the problem of the non-teaching staff seeing the whole exercise as some-thing to do with teaching and learning only. As there were only two non-teaching staff among twenty-three staff the probability of choosing a member of the non-teaching staff using simple random sampling was significantly lower than that of choosing a member of the teaching staff by that method.

Sample size

Using the guidelines provided by Investors in People UK, regarding the selection of sample size, we selected

14 participants which constituted the sample size of 61% of the population-almost the same as the 60% recommended by Investors in people UK for the population size of 20 - 25.

Table 1 shows the sampling frame and the number of staff selected from each category.

Table 1 Sampling Frame for the Study

Category	Total	Number sampled	Sample proportion	Comments (scope of influence/ power)
Administrator	2	1	50%	Lower in Scope
Lecturer (Part time)	7	4	57%	Middle in scope
Lecturer (Full-time)	12	7	58%	Middle in Scope
Head of Department	1	1	100%	Higher in Scope
Senior Manager	1	1	100%	Higher in scope
Total	**23**	**14**	**60.9%**	

Instruments

Preparations towards the development of the main instruments for the study involved a number of steps. Preparations began with the study of a number of IIP reviews and the materials used in them. This was followed by three meetings, which were attended by the author and the appointed external assessor in the previous whole college review, to discuss the construction of the interview schedule. The ideas we shared at these meetings helped us to select and modify the items with which we constructed individually and sent to the meetings. In the third and final meeting, we constructed three separate structured interview schedules for people (staff of lower and middle scope), the HMD and the senior manager in charge of the delivery of mathematics, respectively. We tested our instruments in a small pilot involving 4 senior members of the College and one administrator, who worked at a different site in a different department. The senior members were two lecturers, one Head of Department (a middle manager) and the Senior Manager (SM) in charge of teaching in the Science Department. Since these members of staff were also members of the School of Academic Studies, we thought their responses to the items would help us modify the latter for the main study. As a result of the pilot study, we amended a few of the interview items to meet the specific needs of the Mathematics Department. For example, items regarding whole school meetings were included to capture the line of communication within the Department as a whole. Also items regarding the use of the Department's budget for staff development were amended to take note of

the specific needs on mathematics lecturers.

Data collection

The mechanics for collecting data for the study were straightforward. The researchers spent 17 days interviewing managers and other staff and looking at specific documents from the Department. The author also spent time with the HMD and the SM in charge of teaching and learning of mathematics in the College. They discussed the context of the Department, its aims and objectives, how it is managed and how its processes compare with the evidence requirements of the Standard. It must be pointed out that there is no obligation on any organization being assessed under IIP to present a single piece of paperwork to an external assessor or an internal review team. As Investors in People UK point out "Assessors are interested in the effect and impact of ... processes – not the paperwork itself" (Investors in People UK, 2005, p.10).

However, because the Departments of the College tend to document systematically, there was no difficulty in the Department showing the researchers documents which were deemed helpful for the exercise. For example, the researchers looked at the 2008 Self Assessment Report for the Department as well as minutes of meetings detailing examples of internal communication, consultations, reviews and students' attainments. To supplement the managerial perspective, they also interviewed a sample of both part-time and full-time lecturers as well as one of the administrators in the Department to get their perceptions about the Department in particular and the College as a whole. The researchers kept assuring the participants during the interviews that the purpose of the interviews was not to 'catch people out' but simply to get a real insight into how the Department functions. They also assured participants of confiden-tiality and the fact that no part of the report would identify any individual who took part in the study.

Each interview took between thirty minutes and one hour in a designated room for the exercise. Apart from the author and the selected interviewees, no one was allowed into the interview room while an interview was in progress. During each of the interviews, we went through the interview schedule asking the relevant questions and capturing quotes. At the end of each interview, the author read the summary and the quotes to the interviewee who confirmed the accuracy of both the summary and the quotes. The author thanked the interviewee and reassured them of confidentiality.

This procedure did not impose any significant limitation on the data, except that the reporting was done in such a way that no respondent was identified by those who had access to the report.

The feedback

At the end of the seventeenth day, **the author** met with management to give feedback on what had been found. As Investors in People UK observe, "this discussion is a key part of the assessment's value to the organisation by offering staff insights and suggestions about the organisation's operations which no other professional could provide" (Investors in People, 2005, p.11). As well as drawing on knowledge of practices in other organisations which **the author** was introduced to during their training as Internal Reviewers, they were also able to refer to good practice amongst staff in the Department in general. Furthermore, as the study was part of a process of continuous improvement, **the author** also identified areas he thought the Department had the opportunity to improve on. Indeed, "being an Investor in People means always being in a progressive and dynamic state" (Investors in People, 2005, p.12)

Overall conclusion

The overall conclusion of the researchers is that the "new" Mathematics Department of the College did not meet the Investors in People Standard as not all the indicators were met. As shown in Table 2, below, two out of the ten indicators were not met by the Department.

Table 2: Summary of Findings

Plan	Met	Not met	Do	Met	Not met	Evaluate	Met	Not met
Indicator 1		x	Indicator 5	✓		Indicator 9	✓	
Indicator 2	✓		Indicator 6	✓		Indicator 10	✓	
Indicator 3	✓		Indicator 7		x			
Indicator 4	✓		Indicator 8	✓				

Findings in detail

Details of the findings of the study are outlined below:

Indicator 1. A strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood. (Not met)

Members of staff interviewed knew the mission of the College, recalled the main elements of the 2008 Strategic Plan and were also able to outline the main objectives of the Department with regard to performance improvement. However, the majority of the people sampled (9 out of 14 or 64%) did not think they were consulted adequately on the development of the Strategic Plan and did not know how they were expected to achieve the College or the Department's objectives. One of the interviewees said: *"The mission was developed by Policy Team and we were just told what it is.....that's no consultation, is it?"*

Indicator 2. Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives. (Met)

Staff obviously appreciated the availability of Learning and Development (L & D) opportunities, saw them as a real advantage and commented on the range of activities. Specifically, staff were clear about the benefits of their L & D to themselves, their department and the College. Examples demonstrated an understanding of the costs and benefits of the development of people and their impact on performance. Managers also commented on the need to link L & D opportunities to the Department's objectives and hence to be more 'directive' in approving staff requests.

This was seen as an important target for the following year's Staff Review process. A member of the junior staff remarked with enthusiasm: *"I have the opportunity to go on courses to help me with my work"*

Indicator 3. Strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people (Met)

Both managers and other staff confirmed the existence of a system in place (e.g. annual reviews) to encourage managers and staff to take up relevant training and development opportunities, including secondments. Everyone interviewed felt that staff development opportunities were offered on an equal opportunities basis and that the College strategies for managing people were designed to promote equality of opportunity. One interviewee observed: *"My manager is quite encouraging and gives all the staff equal chance of going onto a course"*. It was clear that people right across the Department were involved in working to achieve high levels of awareness and of practice in this regard. Thus the claim in the College's Strategic Plan (2008) that "all staff are considered to be equal and that the College seeks to support all of its employees through its management structures, training and development practices" **(p.12) was confirmed by the staff who took part in the study. Furthermore,** staff were engaged in a wide range of development activities designed to support individuals and teams in working to improve their current and future contribution within the Department's strategic priorities.

Indicator 4. The capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood (Met)

Staff felt that managers were very organised, observant and efficient and that they managed very effectively staff performance and development. There seemed to be a ready understanding of the link between management capability and staff performance and quality. The staff interviewed made mention of the management charter and said they knew what was expected of their managers. The managers also seemed clear about their role and the skills needed to exercise it well. One of the managers pointed out that: *"There are sufficient guidelines (for managers) and line managers are well supported."* This view was shared by twelve out of the fourteen (86%) managers and staff interviewed.

Indicator 5. Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people. (Met)

Managers gave regular, timely and specific feedback to staff about their work performance – delivered at a time when the staff could do something about it, and not saved up for a future review! One respondent said: *"I like it when I get feedback about my work at the time when I can do something to change my way of working."*

Indicator 6. People's contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued (Met)

Staff commented that their managers (i.e. both the HMD and the SM) went out of their way to recognise and value

them. There were examples of staff receiving e-mails to congratulate them on significant successes and also timely words of appreciation. Managers also recognised the power of positive words of encouragement. Furthermore, the Merton College newsletter, Snippets, was seen by the majority of staff as an effective vehicle for the exchange of internal news and helped to celebrate achievements. Staff in the Department shared news of progress and reported that their efforts were appreciated by managers. One member of staff said: *"Words of encouragement and thanks from the head make me feel valued".*

Indicator 7. People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision-making. (Not met)

The vast majority (10 out of 12 or 83%) of the lecturers and administrator (excluding the HMD and the SM) interviewed did not think they were encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for decisions that affected their performance and the performance of the Department. Eight respondents thought the HMD encouraged too much consultation and this made them feel the Department could not achieve anything without consulting the leadership of the College. The majority of the staff interviewed thought decisions were taken by senior managers and they were simply "cajoled" to go along with the decisions. One member of staff who was very critical of management throughout the interview remarked: *"I totally feel disempowered...(I am) given no free reign to implement any decisions at tutorials"*

Indicator 8.   People learn and develop effectively. (Met)

Staff and managers commented on the broad range of effective staff development opportunities and felt they were developing in a continuous way through staff reviews. The majority of the staff confirmed that line managers were effective in supporting them meet their development needs and understood how they had applied their learning in their roles.   Staff were given the opportunity to engage in a rich range of targeted development activities which help them to tackle challenging aspects of their job with new confidence, skills and insights. Staff induction was given careful attention and the majority of the staff were impressed by its thoughtfulness. One new member of staff remarked: *"Induction is taken seriously – all team leaders are involved in this".* A couple of staff however felt that although the Staff Induction pro- gramme had changed recently for the better, they still felt there was a need for further development – or at least fine tuning. On the whole, both staff and management were happy about the development opportunities that were available to them in the College.

Indicator 9.   Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation. (Met)

Staff commented with warm approval about the various development opportunities available to them. Often mentioned was "Learning to Lead" a management development progr- amme for aspiring managers which seemed to have been enthusiastically received by all the staff who participated.   Managers described

how the impact of investment in learning and development was measured.   Indicators mentioned include low staff absence levels; more staff with IT skills; only 1 "untrained" lecturer was left to be teacher-trained in the part-time category. Managers also provided examples of how learning and development had improved communication and colla- boration. One of the managers said: *"The numeracy and the (pure) mathematics teams have come together and this had produced significant synergy and improved the department's performance".* This was confirmed by staff who thought that the learning and development they had received improved their own performance, that of the Department and that of the College as a whole.

Indicator 10.   Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation. (Met)

Both staff and managers commented favourably on the College's ability to manage, develop and get the most out of people. Managers provided examples of how the college was committed to continuous improve- ments in the development of staff and how their cost-benefit analysis of learning and development had helped them to better manage and develop people.   Examples included the funding of "new teachers' forum" and "aspiring managers" programmes. The majority of the people interviewed (11 out of 14 or 79%) were able to give specific examples of improvements that had been made to the way they were managed and developed. One of the staff said: *"The HMD is open to suggestions and this has made him more approachable now than before".*

Discussion

Generally, managers were able to demonstrate an understanding of how to count the costs and benefits of learning and development and the latter's impact on the performance of individuals, the Department and the College as a whole. Management of the Department were clear about strategies focused on developing people to improve performance and had taken steps to ensure that all staff had equality of access to learning and development opportunities. This was acknowledged by nearly all the people sampled. Managers and people celebrated continuous improvements in the way people were managed and developed to improve performance. The staff's contributions were recognised and valued and this encouraged their involvement in team planning and sharing of ideas and best practice. *The staff were very praiseworthy of their line manager who ran an 'open door' type of policy where the staff felt they could be listened to at any time about work or personal matters.*

While there was some verbal evidence to confirm that the senior manager and the HMD knew and understood the strategic aims and objectives of the College, the majority of the people interviewed (about 64%) had limited knowledge of these aims and objectives. People's limited understanding of the strategic aims and objectives of the College were put down to lack of consultation by senior management in the development of such aims and objectives. Staff felt they were not always involved in decision making in the Department and that they were not encouraged to put forward ideas. In several areas they were not encouraged to try things out and to learn from their mistakes.

Campbell and Alexander (1997) have observed that directionless strategies result when strategists fail to distinguish between purpose (what an organization exists to do) and constraints (what an organization must do in order to survive). According to the majority of the non-senior respondents (about 83%), there was a lack of clear distinction between the purpose and constraints in the College's strategic plan and this made it difficult for them to identify the value they were adding or could add to the work of the College. Yet, the basic ingredient of a good strategy is insight into how people can create value to the organization (Campbell and Alexander). The answer to developing a good strategy (as far as our study is concerned) is to understand both the benefit of having a well-articulated, stable purpose and the importance of discovering and exploiting insights about how to create more value as an organization. As Burnes (2004) rightly observes, in order to be successful, organizations must establish a flexible but clear strategic direction with a team-based organiza-tional concept and supporting systems in place.

With regard to people in an organization being encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision-making, Black and Hall (2002) have pointed out that change is effected successfully by democratic leaders and transforma-tional leaders who encourage participation of members in the

process. Indeed, there is the need to get staff involved fully in the identification of what needs to be changed, the development of a plan, the implementation and evaluation of the change after the change has been effected. In other words, all the people involved in the change should feel part of the change process. There is no gainsaying that management and employees tend to see change differently. To the manager, change means opportunity but to the employee, it may seem disruptive, imposed, and intrusive. An important way of overcoming employees' resistance to change is therefore by redefining their roles from mere implementers of change to both authors and implementers of change.

Conclusion and recommendation

Having carried out the study rigorously and in accordance with the guidelines provided for Assessors by Investors in People UK, the author is confident about the validity of the overall conclusion that the Mathematics Department of Merton College does not meet the requirements of the Investors in People Standard. If the findings of the study under discussion are anything to go by, then if College were to be reassessed by an External Assessor it would not meet the requirements necessary to achieve accreditation against the revised Investors in People Standard.

This is because to achieve accreditation, *all* aspects of *every* indicator must be judged to be met.

It is therefore recommended that Policy Team should develop an Action Plan to address some of the key issues identified. Since the Mathematics Department met all the indicators when the College was last assessed, it would appear that the current changes have not been "accepted" by all staff of the Department. For example, staff who joined the Department as a result of the current changes were generally negative in their responses to the items about the level of support they get from the Department. It is therefore important to target this category of staff for sensitization of the changes in the Department.

Finally, by way of recommendation, it may be helpful to conduct such studies on a regular basis to find out when the changes that the College has implemented will be "fully" accepted by members of staff in the Mathematics Department as well as other schools and departments of the College.

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Appendix A

Investors in People Evidence Criteria

Evidence Criteria	
1.1	Top managers make sure the organisation has a clear purpose and vision supported by a strategy for improving its performance.
1.2	Top managers make sure the organisation has a business plan with measurable performance objectives
1.3	Top managers make sure there are constructive relationships with representative groups (where they exist) and the groups are consulted when developing the organisation's business plan.
1.4	Managers can describe how they involve people when developing the organisation's business plan and when agreeing team and individual objectives.
1.5	People who are members of representative groups can confirm that top managers make sure there are constru ctive relationships with the groups and they are consulted when developing the organisation's business plan.
1.6	People can explain the objectives of their team and the organisation at a level that is appropriate to their role, and can describe how they a re expected to contribute to developing and achieving them.
2.1	Top managers can explain the organisation's learning and development needs, the plans and resources in place to meet them, how these link to achieving specific objectives and how the impact will be evaluated.
2.2	Managers can explain team learning and development needs, the activities planned to meet them, how these link to achieving specific team objectives and how the impact will be evaluated.
2.3	People can describe how they are involved in identifying their learning and development needs and the activities planned to meet them
2.4	People can explain what their learning and development activities should achieve for them, their team and the organisation.
3.1	Top managers can describe stra tegies they have in place to create an environment where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas to improve their own and other people's performance
3.2	Top managers recognise the different needs of people and can describe strategies they have in place to make sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop which will improve their performance
3.3	Managers recognise the different needs of people and can describe how they make sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop which will improve their performance
3.4	People believe managers are genuinely committed to making s ure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for them to learn and develop which will improve their performance.
3.5	People can give examples of how they have been encouraged to contribute idea s to improve their own and other people's performance
4.1	Top managers can describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively, and the plans they have in place to make sure managers have these capabilities.
4.2	Managers can describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to lead, manage and develop people effectively

4.3	People can describe what their manager should be doing to lead, manage and develop them effectively.
5.1	Managers can explain how they are effective in leading, managing and developing people.
5.2	Managers can give examples of how they giv e people constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate
5.3	People can explain how their managers are effective in leading, managing and developing them.
5.4	People can give examples of how they receive constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate
6.1	Managers can give examples of how they recognise and value people's individual contribution to the organisation
6.2	People can describe how they contribute to the organisation and believe they make a positive difference to its performance.
6.3	People can describe how their contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued.
7.1	Managers can describe how they promote a sense of ownership and responsibility by encouraging people to be involved i n decision-making, both individually and through representative groups, where they exist.
7.2	People can describe how they are encouraged to be involved in decision -making that affects the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation, at a level that is appropriate to their role.
7.3	People can describe how they are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for decisions that affect the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation, at a level that is appropriate to their role.
8.1	Managers can describe how they make sure people's learning and development needs are met.
8.2	People can describe how their learning and development needs have been met, what they have learnt and how they have applied this in their role.
8.3	People who are new to the organisation, and those new to a role, can describe how their induction has helped them to perform effectively
9.1	Top managers can describe the organisation's overall investment of time, money and resources in learning and development.
9.2	Top managers can explain, and quantify where appropriate, how learning and development has improved the performance of the organisation.
9.3	Top managers can describe how the evaluation of their investment in people is used to develop their strategy for improving the performance of the organisation.
9.4	Managers can give examples of how learning and development has improved the performance of their team and the organisation.
9.5	People can give examples of how learning and development has improved th eir performance, the performance of their team and that of the organisation
10.1	Top managers can give examples of how the evaluation of their investment in people has resulted in improvements in the organisation's strategy for managing and developing people.
10.2	Managers can give examples of improvements they have made to the way they manage and develop people.
10.3	People can give examples of improvements that have been made to the way the organisation manages and develops its people

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Determining Polytechnic Teachers' Professional Development and Curricular Quality through Collaborative Curriculum Design

Marie Afua Baah Bakah
Joke Voogt
Jules Pieters

Abstract

In this study collaborative curriculum design is addressed as an effective method for the continuing professional development of teachers in a polytechnic in Ghana during curriculum reform. Three design teams have been working to update engineering syllabuses to commensurate contemporary industrial skill demands as well as update their own knowledge in their subject areas for fourteen weeks. They embarked on industrial visits, incorporated relevant information in their courses and conducted teaching try-outs. Mixed methods were employed for data collection during design activities. Results indicated that teachers updated their domain knowledge and skills, design teams improved teacher collaboration while teacher ownership of and commitment to quality curriculum increased. Furthermore, teaching try-outs of updated courses were a success from both teachers and students perspectives. It was concluded that the relational nature of the interdependencies between the social and individual contributions to curriculum design illuminates the fabric of teachers' continuing professional development.

Introduction

Curriculum renewal is a complex undertaking which requires the quality of two related processes: curriculum development and teacher professional development (PD) for it to be successful (Fullan, 2007). Recent insights in curriculum reform point to the need to increase the active involvement of teachers to promote ownership, commitment and successful implementation (Borko, 2004). The curriculum reform situation in Ghana's polytechnics, which have metamorphosed over the past 20 or more years, has called, as from these recent insights, for the involvement of teachers in curriculum design; updating Higher National Diploma (HND) programmes and designing Bachelor of Technology (B. Tech.) programmes. Having been upgraded to higher education institutions, polytechnics in Ghana provide higher technical and vocational education and training leading to the award of HND and B. Tech. in business and management, applied arts and sciences and engineering. The problem researched in this study is related to polytechnic teachers' PD as they embark on rigorous curriculum design due to the polytechnics' upgrading (Gervedink Nijhuis, Bakah & Akomaning, 2009; Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2005). The upgrade of polytechnics into tertiary institutions called for a curriculum

reform and the maintenance of competent teachers. One key area of concern for PD as expressed by polytechnic teachers and management in Ghana is for the former to update their knowledge and skills in their subject areas through embarking on industrial attachment (Bakah, Voogt & Pieters, in press) to effectively contribute to curriculum design. Furthermore, as technology is fast advancing, polytechnic teachers see the need to continuously pursue relevant knowledge to improve on their professional competence and be able to update their courses (Bakah, Voogt & Pieters, in press). As wide-reaching change takes place in society new kinds of work are emerging and new kinds of vocational curricula are needed to prepare citizens for employment in these contexts. When teachers are co-designers of new curricula, the curriculum development and teacher PD processes become intertwined: curriculum development activities can lead to increased professional development. On the contrary, increasing professional expertise can lead to further improving curriculum development as was revealed in a study by Bakah, Voogt and Pieters (2012) that showed that collaborative curriculum design (CCD) through design teams (DT) *enabled active learning, collaboration as well as dialogue on subject matter among teachers, and was a useful means for the PD process.* In this study we explore the impact of CCD in DTs on curriculum quality and teachers' professional development in the polytechnics. Studies have revealed the benefits of CCD in DTs (Millar et al., 2006; Simmie, 2007).

Collaborative curriculum design and design teams

CCD is gradually gaining ground in education as a promising way to create teacher ownership by involving them in curriculum innovation (Borko, 2004; Desimone, 2002). CCD processes have the potential to contribute to the PD of the teachers involved as well (Borko, 2004). By collaboratively designing, subject matter interactions occur which can be used as learning opportunities and the combination of doing and reflecting can enhance PD (Penuel et al., 2007). According to Supovitz (2002) much of the attention and widespread use of research on teams in order to improve practice and instruction comes from the organizational theories on group practice and communities in the workplace. Collaboration in teams or communities is presented as an effective response to increasing change and a knowledge based workforce (Handelzalts 2009). By collaborating, professionals pool their knowledge and can together create new knowledge.

Teachers' teams usually described in literature (i.e. professional learning communities, communities of practice) mostly focus on improving the teaching process through the PD of the teachers (Handelzalts, 2009). In the case of the DTs, PD or building of cohesion among teachers are seen as outcomes in a design process. The theoretical basis for the formation of DTs lies in the findings of a number of studies (e.g. Lieberman & Miller 2005) in which teaching is viewed as a complex intellectual activity with the inherent drive of experienced teachers to fulfil their learning, social and

intellectual needs as part of the process to realise their full potential. The DT concept provides teachers with a creative space to reconsider the teaching of their subject, the intellectual stimulus of working together and the challenge to move the thinking forward. In this way, teachers are invited to become curriculum makers (Simmie, 2007). According to Handelzalts (2009) a DT is a group of at least two teachers, from the same or related subjects, working together on a regular basis, with the goal to redesign and enact (a part of) their common curriculum. It is one means by which teachers can collectively participate in curriculum design, fulfil their learning, social and intellectual needs and are effective in bringing about teacher PD (Mishra, Koehler & Zhao, 2007; Penuel et al., 2007) and curriculum innovation (Mishra, Koehler & Zhao, 2007).

Collaborative curriculum design in this study: Structure and activities

The collaborative curriculum design activities took fourteen-weeks and included an introductory workshop, CCD activities, industrial visits and teaching try-outs. The introductory workshop, which was held in the first week, oriented teachers on CCD in teacher DTs. The first author as researcher was the main facilitator at the workshop and throughout the study. Starting from the second week, teachers in three teams, based on commonality in subject areas, worked collaboratively to update their courses to suit current technological practices in industry. The teachers visited industry in teams to acquire relevant information to make their courses

more practical and relevant in content. The Automobile team visited Caterpillars and Quansah Motors (representatives of Toyota Ghana) in Takoradi and Mechanical Lloyd (representatives of BMW) in Accra, the Production team visited Gratis Foundation and Westing Castings in Takoradi. Ghana Grid Company Limited (GRIDCo) and Takoradi International Company at Takoradi and Aboadze respectively were the industrial locations visited by the Electrical team. They were exposed to several technologies regarding their area of study. In many ways, this course redesign was a typical team experience for the teachers; for the most part, the teams worked at their own pace to complete the redesign of the courses. During the thirteenth and fourteenth weeks, teachers conducted teaching try-outs of the updated courses which were subsequently evaluated by the students. To understand how DTs impact on the curriculum and teacher professional development, the following research question is addressed in this study:

What is the impact of DTs on teacher professional learning and on curriculum practices?

Methods

Mixed methods in a multicase study embedded design (Yin, 1993) was applied with the DTs as the three cases, and teachers and students as units of analysis. The study investigated teachers' perceptions regarding their participation in DTs, their learning from co-design activities and changes in classroom practice. Students' evaluation of the teaching try-outs

helped to assess the impact of the updated courses.

Participants

Teachers
Overall, 16 teachers (all males), addressed in this study by **pseudonyms**, from the faculty of engineering at a polytechnic in Ghana took part in the study based on their availability as fulltime teachers and upon recommendation by their heads of department. The teachers were grouped into three teams which are Automobile, Production and Electrical DTs. Background characteristics of the teachers are provided in Table 2. The polytechnic was purposefully selected since it is situated in a relatively industrialised region of Ghana.

Table 1 Background characteristics of teachers

Design team	Teachers (pseudonyms)	Age	Highest academic qualification	Years of teaching at polytechnic	Number of students
Automobile (n=5)	Edem	46	Master's	1	Year 1:
	Atsu	54	HND	15	144
	Kwame	28	HND	3	Year 2: 38
	Wesley	32	HND	6	
	Sage	51	Bachelor's	7	
Production (n=5)	Douglas	69	Bachelor's	21	Year 1:
	Michael	63	Master's	3	104
	Robert	55	Master's	6	Year 2:
	Archi	52	Master's	3	106
	Tony	48	HND	23	
Electrical (n=6)	George	64	HND	17	Year 1:
	Ben	26	Bachelor's	2	151
	Cephas	39	Master's	3	Year
	Angelinos	32	HND	3	2: 120
	David	27	Master's	3	
	Antoine	26	HND	2	

Note: HND, higher national diploma, below bachelor level.

Instruments

Teachers also responded to close-ended 5 point Likert-scale questionnaire items, with 1 is strongly disagree to 5 is strongly agree on their perceptions of industrial attachment, CCD, teaching try-out, learning in DTs and their perceptions of DTs before and after the PD programme. There were five categories of semi-structured interview data collected from each teacher to find out their experiences during the following DT activities: industry visits, course update, teaching try-outs, perceptions of DTs and teacher learning in DTs. On average, each interview lasted 45 minutes and was audio taped. A logbook was kept by the first author in order to document the process of teachers working in the DTs.

Questionnaires were administered to students after the teaching try-out of

updated courses. The questionnaires consisted of 17 items on students' perceptions and experiences with the courses taught. Possible answers to all items were on a five point Likert-scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). After running factor analysis using PASW Statistics, two constructs obtained were *presentation* (=0.95) and *clarity* (=0.93) for student responses. *Presentation* in this study refers to the practice of showing and explaining content of the topic to the students and *clarity* denotes the practice of making content of the topic clear for students' comprehension of the concepts.

Data Analysis

Comparison of teachers' perceptions of DTs before and after the PD programme employed the PASW Statistics Mann-Whitney U non-parametric test on assumption that the population cannot be assumed to be normally distributed. Effect size was calculated using Cohen's *d* (Cohen, 1988) tentative benchmarks for the interpretation of effect sizes being d=0.2 a small, d=0.5 a medium and d=0.8 a large effect size. For students' responses an independent sample t-test was computed to find out whether significant differences existed regarding the experiences of partici-pants and non-participants in the teaching try-out in terms of the sub-scales *presentation* and *clarity*. Cohen's *d* (Cohen, 1988) was calculated to find out the extent of the differences. A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to evaluate the extent to which differences exist between the participants (Automobile, Production and Electrical HND students)

perceptions of the lesson they had in terms of *presentation* and *clarity*.

All interviews were transcribed and coded using codes generated from the study. The coding schemes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) were labelled: *industrial attachment evaluation, course update evaluation, teaching try-out appraisal, perceptions of DTs and teacher learning in DTs*. Atlas-ti software version 6.2 was used for the coding of all the interview data. Intercoder reliability (Lombard, Snyder-Duch & Bracken, 2002) was calculated using a random sample of 8 interviews from 16 teachers. There were two coders including the first author of this article. The intercoder reliability using Cohen's kappa (k) was 0.91. Information recorded in the logbook was analysed qualitatively using data reduction technique. Major themes were identified and clustered (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Results

Teachers' professional learning in DTs
Acquisition of knowledge and skills during visits to industry: Teachers' evaluation of the industrial attachment revealed that all the teams found the visit relevant. The overall means for acquisition of knowledge and skills (mean=4.37, SD=0.30) was high. Further details were provided by the teachers regarding the knowledge and skills they acquired at the industry. Michael in the Production team confessed that he personally had not encountered foundry work at the industry so it was a new experience for him. Antoine (Electrical team) expressed his excitement at some

observations he made for the first time:

"It was really interesting to see for the first time that the optical wire actually gets through the optical ground wire and from there it goes through the all diametric self supporting system ... to avoid any interference, that is, disturbance of carrier signals".

Atsu (Automobile team) also stated that, *"It was the first time we saw the torque convertor and its components even though we have always been mentioning it in teaching".* Most of the Automobile teachers appreciated the tremendous progress being made at the industry: eschewing trial and error process, precision in their work, ability to relate to them technically and their knowledge about the systems. Apart from the vehicle engines, the changes taking place in the cars mostly had to do with the electronic system which they were introduced to. The Electrical team found it very interesting to learn about the new communication system using the optical fibre. Some of the teachers realised that even the very simple maintenance procedures that they taught students had a shortfall and so were pleased to learn what the real industrial practices are. For instance Edem of the Automobile team indicated that:

> *"...I discovered that most of the components of the tractor are frozen before being used. Also detergents are used to clean machinery after it is disassembled so that exact portions for wear and tear*

are detected. Meanwhile what we teach is for a part to be replaced when they are not working but did not realize that dirt could be the problem".

Having observed teachers' admissions concerning their experiences at the industry, the knowledge they acquired on contemporary industrial operations was detailed and extensive as certain principles became clearer and for others some operations, machines and maintenance procedures were seen for the first time. Apart from resource persons' briefings, the teachers acquired some practical skills at the industry as a result of learning about machines and equipment and in some cases practicing their use or operating them through a hands-on training.

Co-design in DTs: During the course update certain areas and topics were selected for update based on team discussions regarding challenges of teaching the courses: unavailability of certain equipment for practical lesson demonstrations, obsolete equipment, limited knowhow on operations, verification on certain maintenance procedures, upgraded equipment not incorporated, teachers' and students' challenges with the course, current technological advancements and so on. Results of teachers' perception of the CCD activities showed a generally high means and standard deviations (mean=4.37, SD=0.22) for all the DTs.

All the teams engaged in identifying need areas for the courses they selected for update. With the syllabus, they were able to identify the areas of interest and according to Douglas

(Production team) *"... we identified need areas in the syllabus ... where in my opinion knowledge was weakest"*. Ensuring curriculum relevance and quality was the target of the teams as Wesley (Automobile team) informed that, *"We are rejuvenating the practical component of our courses and I find it very relevant"*. Teachers found the industrial visit a healthy one to being abreast with the current systems so as incorporate relevant topics in the syllabus. Angelinos (Electrical team) was of the view that the design activities compelled him to be responsible for quality of the curriculum. It was necessary for the teams to align their syllabus to what is existent in the industries since employers need graduates with readily available useful skills. Tony in the Production team remarked, *"It helps us to know what we should actually teach the students"*. Apart from enhancements to existing curriculum, teachers gained some basic (curriculum) design skills. They developed the expertise in analysing the various components of the course, including theory and practicals, verify/authenticate information and incorporating relevant knowledge in syllabus.

New approaches to teaching in teaching try-outs: During the teaching try-out by the Automobile team pictures in PowerPoint slides were used to explain the maintenance of hydraulic systems and board diagnostics. The Electrical team took their students through the lesson on synchronisation and tap changing using motion pictures, whilst hydraulics and joinery methods were taught by the Production team using PowerPoint slides. The teachers evaluated the teaching try-outs with responses to items such as: The lesson was generally interesting; Students understood the topic and explanation on equipment better; I explained concepts better than previously; Students had a clear and vivid picture of equipment; Students liked the mode of presentation; I applied skills acquired in industry and so on. Overall means showed that teachers appreciated the teaching try-out of their courses (mean=4.71, SD=0.20) in terms of imparting useful information to students in their lessons, indicating the success of the teaching try-outs.

The teaching try-outs were opportunities for teachers to teach the upgraded course during which they communicated what they had learned from the industry. It sharpened teachers' skill of imparting knowledge obtained from industry. They had gained confidence in the teaching of the updated courses due to knowledge they acquired and shared in DTs. Furthermore, teaching what is ongoing at the industry instead of working on the same old laboratory equipment in the polytechnic made the teaching livelier.

Updated curriculum and its quality
Teacher perspectives: During the teaching try-out, teachers revealed their experiences with teaching the updated courses. Having added new content to improve the quality of their courses was satisfying for the teachers. Revealing his teaching try-out experiences, Ben (Electrical team) indicated that:
> *"Earlier, we used only the small types of*

transformers meant for power distribution purposes but they (students) haven't seen a transmission transformer which is also called the power transformer so having seen it; students were very keen and interested in the lesson".

Teaching students what is existents at the industries gave a sense of meaning to the curriculum while teachers had the satisfaction that students learnt something more relevant. According to Sage (Automobile team), showing students components of the torque converter was a new thing in class because earlier on he only mentioned it. This boosted his confidence compared to earlier lesson. Students also found the lesson interesting, and easy to understand. Robert (Production team) was confident about imparting relevant knowledge to students on how blow holes which are casting defects are detected using ultrasonic sound detectors. Robert

said that, *"These are transformations that we have not included in our earlier teaching".*

Student perspectives: Students were generally fascinated by the lessons and stated that viewing clear and vivid images of equipment and industrial operations gave them a very broad knowledge of the topic and was a very good idea. The mode of delivery sustained their interest throughout the lessons. They were generally of the view that concepts became clearer and things they had to imagine or view diagrammatically in books were seen real, thus such *presentation* should be extended to other topics. The students evaluated the lessons and further confirmed their experiences which can be found in the results listed in Table 2. The overall means of aspects of the lesson reported by the students were very high; *presentation* (Mean = 4.21, SD = 0.47) and *clarity* (Mean = 4.04, SD = 0.56).

Table 2 Overall means for students' experiences

Students' Experiences	Non-Participant (n=293)		Participant (n=370)		Sig.	Effect Size
	M	SD	M	SD		
Presentation	2.96	1.08	4.21	.47	.0001*	1.50
Clarity	2.85	1.00	4.04	.56	.0001*	1.47

Note: M, means; SD, standard deviation; 1, strongly disagree to 5, strongly agree; * p <0.05.

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to evaluate the extent to which differences exist between the participant perceptions for the course they took. It was revealed that significant differences existed across

lessons for Automobile, Production and Electrical student groups in terms of both subscales *presentation* ($F=9.05$, $p=0.0001$) and *clarity* ($F=13.18$, $p=0.0001$). Using the Tukey HSD procedure, multiple comparisons between the three programmes were made to evaluate the pairwise differences among the means for the subscales. With respect to the lesson

for Production and Automobile students, pairwise significant differences (difference in means=.26, p=0.0001) were present. Also, pairwise significant differences (difference in means=0.17, **p=0.007) were there regarding the lessons for Production and Electrical students.** Apparently the relatively low rating of *presentation* for the Production lesson could be attributed to the somewhat poor images on the PowerPoint slides used in class due to inadequate illumination of the workshops in Westing Castings (an industry). Furthermore the extra high lights produced through welding affected visibility. Regarding *clarity*, pairwise differences existed between showed in terms of the Electrical and Auto-mobile/ Production lessons (resp. difference in means=0.24, p=0.001; difference in means=0.33, p=0.0001). The higher appreciation of the Electrical lesson regarding *clarity* could be attributed to the seemingly abstract nature of the topic which was taught previously without illustra-tions. As a result the intervention might have brought a great distinction between the way the topic 'synchronisation' was taught and therefore liked by the students.

Teachers' perceptions of DTs as a PD arrangement
Survey data from teachers showed their perceptions of DTs before and after engaging in its activities. Results indicate that a significant difference (p<0.05) existed between teachers' perceptions before and after the PD activities with a corresponding extremely large effect sizes ranging from 2.25 to 3.54. The overall significance (p=0.0001) and effect size (3.28) were both very high.

Dts were a useful means of bringing teachers together and a learning ground for many. Kwame (automobile team) was of the view that, *"Participating in DTs been a real eye-opener. There were ideas that never crossed my mind until my being in this team".* Through contributions from team members, a lot of ideas flowed for course update and teacher professional development. Ben (Electrical team) confirmed this saying, *"Being in a group also promotes strength than being single".* According to David (Electrical team), DT was very useful because whenever teamwork takes place there is always a brainstorm and something useful comes out of it due to the various experiences everyone has, therefore, he maximised the chance to learn from others. Teamwork gave the opportunity for teachers to speak with themselves, talk about issues that concern them, teaching and industry work. DT was a learning ground for teachers during CCD as evidenced in their questionnaire data. Results from the survey indicated that across all the teams, teacher learning occurred (mean=4.48, SD=0.36).

In spite of the positive results from the teachers on their DT experiences, they encountered certain challenges during teamwork which include conflicting timetables affecting meeting times and managing students' time during teacher absence during industry visit. However, it was suggested by the teachers that DT activities should be maintained in their departments and initiated in other departments in the polytechnic for curriculum design and teacher professional development. On the whole, they want it integrated into the polytechnic structure to enable teacher learning and collaboration.

Discussions and conclusions

This study sought to examine the impact of collaborative design activities on teacher PD and curricular quality among polytechnic teachers. The DT concept aimed to strengthen teamwork among colleagues in the same subject area as they embark on updating their knowledge and courses. The teachers' account of their experiences with working collaboratively in DTs has informed this study. To a very large extent, teachers showed dedication during all aspects of the design process and developed their knowledge and skills in the process. The discovery of current information on content in DTs improved their practical skills as supported by the social learning perspective on teachers' PD that teamwork is a powerful new element that provides a useful corrective to overly individualistic approaches to teacher development (McArdle & Coutts 2010). By collaboratively designing, the teachers gained the skill of interacting with each other on content as is the view of Penuel et al. (2007) that interactions through doing and reflecting can enhance PD. The teaching try-outs generated changes in teacher behaviour which included: greater confidence; enhanced beliefs among teachers of their power to make a difference to students' learning; development of enthusiasm for collaborative working, greater commitment to changing practice and willingness to try new things.

Collaboration in DTs enhanced teacher learning and increased subject matter dialogue which confirms the findings of Borko (2004) that CCD processes have the potential to contribute to the PD of the teachers involved. Teacher learning and PD was impressive during CCD as similarly was the case in the study of Mishra, Koehler and Zhao (2007) and Penuel et al. (2007). The study of Borko (2004) suggests that PD interventions that make extensive use of teacher collaboration are particularly successful in supporting teacher learning. Teacher learning impacted positively on their classroom practices as a result of redressing particular challenges in their courses and improving curriculum quality. Andrews and Lewis (2007) also found that where teachers work collaboratively, it not only enhanced their knowledge base, but also had a significant impact on their classroom work. This was evident in the teaching try-out where students appreciated the knowledge they acquired, a finding similar to that of Millar et al. (2006) whose studies with DTs to develop research-based classroom materials resulted in increased student's motivation. DT in this intervention clearly appeared to be a valuable approach to teamwork among polytechnic teachers for them to update their knowledge and skills and update their courses (cf. Millar et al., 2006; Simmie, 2007). Despite the few initial challenges that teachers encountered in DTs combining design activities with already heavy teaching workloads, their teamwork to advance ideas had enormous returns making it a promising strategy for their knowledge update. The result of this case study basically confirms the findings of a similar study conducted in another polytechnic in Ghana by the authors of this work (anonymous). Therefore, although generalising this study worldwide might not be possible, results from the two studies confirm

that CCD is a useful means for teachers' PD apart from ensuring curriculum quality. Consequently, the findings here have far reaching implications for polytechnic education in Ghana and sub-Saharan Africa.

In conclusion, findings suggest that teachers improved their knowledge during CCD. DT is a worthwhile undertaking for teachers' PD during CCD. Findings from this study authenticate the valuable characteristics of collaboration among teachers as a useful means for teacher interaction and teacher learning and DTs served that purpose well. Thus this study provides insights into engaging teachers in teamwork for their PD. It also highlights the importance of engaging teachers in the update of their own courses as well as making them conscious of maintaining curriculum quality and relevance. CCD encourages grass root participation in making curricular decisions and instils a sense of ownership among teachers. It becomes evident from the implications of this study that it is worthwhile to connect teachers through teamwork and allow their reflections on current practices and promote creativity. This study provides evidence of some characteristics that learning comm-unities exhibit as indicated by Bolam et al. (2005) such as shared values and vision; collective responsibility for pupils' learning; collaboration focused on learning; individual and collective professional learning; reflective professional inquiry; openness, networks and partnerships; inclusive membership; mutual trust, respect and support. Consequently, findings demonstrate teacher learning in their

work environments and the emphasis to and promote quality teaching and learning. The relational nature of the interdependencies between the social and individual contributions illuminates the fabric of teachers' PD and subject matter discourse.

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Teaching as a Profession in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects

R. W. Okunloye

Abstract

*This paper examines the ranging
controversy about the professional
standing of teaching in Nigeria and
the factors that contributed to the
prevailing status and rating of
teaching as a profession in Nigeria. It
further examines the challenges and
prospects of its becoming a highly
rated profession of comparable
standing to other well established
profession in the future. The paper
also proffers suggestions on how to
effect a positive turn around in the
professional status of teaching in
Nigeria.*

Introduction

There are lots uncertainties about
whether or not teaching is a profession
in Nigeria. The uncertainty about the
professional standing of teaching in
Nigeria is traceable to the concept of
teaching as an activity or occupation,
the conception of who a teacher is, and
the partial presence or absence of
those characteristics associated with
other established professions, such as
Law, Medicine, Engineering, among
others.   This problem is further
compounded by conflicting concep-
tion of a profession.   The term,
profession, has been defined in the
generic, symbolic, ideological and
specialist occupation or pragmatic
perspectives.   From the generic

viewpoint, a profession can be defined
as a field of economic activity
requiring academic preparation above
the high school level (Encyclopaedia
of Education, 1971).   A profession
from the symbolic perspective, is a
symbol for a desired conception of
one's work and by extension of one's
self (the worker) (Hughes, 1958).
From the ideological conception, the
term profession is used as a bargaining
position in an occupation's efforts to
improve its status, rewards and
condition (Halmos 1971: Reiff, 1971
and Haug, 1973;).   From specialist
occupation or pragmatic viewpoint, a
profession refers to a body, a field of
economic activity, a job description
that provides a specialised service
based on the acquisition of specialised
knowledge and skill by members who
subscribe to a recognized regulatory
body and code of ethics governing
practitioners and control or admission
of new members (Jimoh, 2004; and
Konoye, 2005).

Antagonists and protagonists of the
professional standing of teaching have
made reference to the presence or
absence of the characteristics of which
a profession can be distinguished by
teaching.   These characteristics
include:

1. an occupation which per-
    forms a crucial social
    function.

2. the exercise of this function requires a considerable degree of skill.

3. the skill is exercised in a situation which are not wholly routine but involve the handing of new problems and situations.

4. members of the profession possess and draw on a systematic body of knowledge to meet professional demands, in addition to the knowledge gained through experience.

5. the acquisition of the required expertise and systematic body of knowledge and the development of specific skills require a lengthy period of higher education.

6. the period of education and training also involves the process of socialisation into professional values.

7. the professional values, which members imbibe and took oath of allegiance to, are predominantly clients interest centred and they are stated in a code of ethics.

8. by virtue of the requisite expert knowledge and skill demanded for professional practice, entry qualifications and work standard of members are controlled by a recognised, certificating, regulatory and profession affiliated institutional agency.

9. the registered and recognised professional bodies tend to have greater autonomy over professional practice and

exhibit high degree of commitment to professional development by sponsoring continuing education programmes for new and old members.

10. members of the profession are usually rewarded by high prestige adequate remuneration and general condition of service which also motivate them to remain on the job (Hoyle, 1980; Farrant, 1998; Ciwar, 2002; Olorundare, 2003; Jimoh, 2004; and Konoye, 2005).

This paper examines the state of teaching as a profession in Nigeria against this background. It also examines the problems facing its professional standing and discusses the prospects of teaching becoming an established profession in Nigeria.

The State Of The Teaching Profession In Nigeria

The claim and perception of teaching as a profession in the generic symbolic and ideological senses are undisputable. From a generic viewpoint, anybody involved in teaching with any certificate above high school can rightly claim to be a teacher. Also when by way of self-esteem or self-concept teachers regard themselves as professionals and their work as one of the most dignified profession, they are said to have a symbolic perspective of teaching and themselves as teachers. Ideologically speaking, in labour employer relations or collective bargaining, teachers can rate their profession as indispensable in the society and therefore demand the best

remuneration package from their employers in private or public schools. However, its claim as a profession in the specialist occupation and pragmatic sense has generated much controversy. Established professions, such as law, medicine and engineering buttressed their claims of being a profession on the basis of near or complete possession of those ten characteristics of a profession as identified above.

Teachers, Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) and others who have put up an advocacy about teaching as a profession have identified those characteristics of a real profession which are true of teaching in Nigeria. Firstly, teaching as an occupation is a very crucial, if not the most crucial social function in any given society. The followers, leaders and all other experts in any given society are products of teaching and teachers in as much as such individuals must have passed through a school setting to acquire the minimum education possible.

Secondly, teaching as an activity requires basic skills such as communication, explaining, questioning and organising which are learnt and not unborn (Farrant, 1998). Thirdly, teaching requires the acquisition of systematic body of knowledge in specialised teacher training education institutions for effective and successful practice (such as Teacher Training Colleges, Colleges of Education and University).

Fourthly, teaching has a code of conduct (COC) for teachers as enunciated in Teachers Registration Council (TRC) of Nigeria's Teachers' Code of Conduct (2004). However, the code of conduct still lacks binding force on members because other enforcement agencies and processes that are spelt out by the TRC Acts 31 of 1993 have not been implemented in each state of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Ciwar, 2002). Specifically, Teacher Investigation Panel (TIP) and Teachers Disciplinary Committee (TDC) are yet to be established. Neither has a single case been tried nor punitive measures meted on erring member(s) at state or federal level in Nigeria. This is not the case in other established professions such as medicine. For example, the Nigeria Medical and Dental Council openly tried and pronounced judgement in cases of professional misconduct involving their members in 2006.

Fifthly, the Local Education Authorities, State Ministries of Education and Federal Ministry of Education have distinguished between professionally qualified and unqualified teachers of different levels of education in Nigeria. Grade Two Teachers Certificate used to be the minimum professional qualification recognised at the Primary School level. It was in recognition of the professional standing and requirement of teaching that Nigerian Educational Research Council (1980) declared that 'those who do not possess the Grade II qualification will be eliminated in due course and that by 2000 AD every Primary School Teacher will have to possess the Nigeria Certificate of Education (NCE)" (p.67) to practice in Nigeria.

The most recent step towards the standardisation of the entry requirements into the profession was introduced in 2004 by the TRC (2004). The TRC recognised and categorised four professional classes or grades of teachers in Nigeria, namely, A,B,C, and D as follows:

Class A: Holders of Ph.D in Education or Masters in other field plus certificate in education (e.g Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) and NCE)

Class B: Holders of Masters degree in Education or Masters in other field plus Certificate in Education (e.g. PGDE, NCE)

Class C: Holders of Bachelors degree in Education or Bachelors in other field plus certificate in education (e.g. PGDE, NCE)

Class D: Holders of NCE or equivalent.

The TRC also stipulated NCE as the minimum entry qualification into the profession, while giving professional registration to holders of grade II certificate or equivalent. It also gave this category of teachers (grade II) a two-year moratorium to acquire higher teaching qualification that will qualify them to be registered in class D stated above. This moratorium expired in 2006 and holders of the certificate were deemed to be unqualified to teach at the primary school level. In spite of these remarkable efforts which started in the year 2000 and subsequently improved upon by the TRC (2004), no other enforcement measures have been taken to ensure adherence to the recognised entry requirements into

teaching in Nigeria apart from the registration of teachers by the TRC.

While it is commendable that conscious effort are being made by the Federal Government of Nigeria through the establishment of the TRC and the systematic implementation of professionalization of teaching, the job is yet to be accorded its proper and deserved recognition as a profession in Nigeria. This is because the TRC Act of 1993 has not been fully implemented. More pathetic is the predominant use of non-professionals in teaching by private school proprietors in Nursery and Primary schools in Nigeria. More importantly, the failure of practicing teachers to meet significantly those enumerated criteria of a profession have pointed to the clients' (learners) interest centeredness of teachers even at the expense of their individual and collective welfare. Teachers, over the years, have shown great restraint in embarking on industrial action to prevent the interruption of pupils' education.

Each of the criteria of professional characteristics of teaching highlighted above will be examined more closely with reference to the prevailing concept of teaching, the amorphous conception of a teacher and the predominant use of non-professionals in teaching in private Nursery and Primary schools.

The concept of teaching is much less exact than other concepts that are descriptive of professional activities. For instance, this is revealed by the fact that almost any activity, including ordinary conversation, parental guidance, sermon, and so forth, are regarded as teaching (Musgrave &

Taylor, 1969; Judge, 1974; Cremin, 1976; and Langford, 1978). The implication is that the real teaching activities of professional activity.

By extension of the general concept of teaching, is the amorphous conception of who a teacher is. The vague conception of a teacher is that he or she is someone paid to instruct (Musgrave and Taylor, 1969, Hoyle, 1969). Hence, just anybody can claim to be a teacher. This misconception has portrayed teaching as more or less of a non-professional job.

Also, the predominance of unqualified individuals in teaching, particularly in private Nursery and Primary schools in Nigeria had greatly eroded the professional standing of teachers; given the substantive role such individuals play in the school system.

In addition, teaching has not been accorded real professional standing because its members have failed to meet in a significant manner, those criteria or characteristics of a profession. Teachers neither have control over the services, which they offer, nor the training and work standards of their members (Hoyle, 1980; and Farrant 1988).

The teachers' code of conduct prepared by the TRC of Nigeria is not administered on members as some other professions do when admitting new members and it has no binding force on teachers as applicable to those other established professions as earlier highlighted. Major steps to ensure that the present COC of teachers issued by the TRC must be taken. For instance, the oath of allegiance to the COC must be legally administered on members at

the point of entry into the profession as applicable to Medicine and Law among other established profession. In addition the enforcement agencies namely the TIP and TDC are yet to be established at the state level. While the present trade union body of teachers at primary and post primary levels – NUT lacks the capacity and structure to function as a COC enforcement agency unless reconstituted and re-registered as a professional body. The problem of enforcement of the standardized entry requirement into teaching had persisted over the years even in the face of current efforts by the TRC to regularize or abrogate the proliferation of entry points into teaching. In the same vein, the length of training of teachers, particularly those making entry at grade II and N.C.E. points are comparatively shorter than what obtains in other established professions.

Finally, the poor remuneration of teachers and condition of service still persist in teaching, as it is true of the public sector in Nigeria. The long expected and NUT advocated Teachers Salary Scale (TSS) that was to be approved by the Federal Government seems to have been abandon in the course of the introduction of a unified wages and salaries in the public sector in Nigeria under the recent approved Consolidated Salary Scale (CSS). The poor remuneration of teachers has turned teaching into a stopgap or stepping stone job in search of other lucrative jobs. The poor condition of service has also turned a sizeable proportion of teachers to part-time teachers on account of involvement in other part-time economic activities e.g. trading, farming, among others further eroded among professional teachers.

Problems and Prospects of Teachings in Nigeria

Teaching has remained a lowly recognized profession in Nigeria because some of the problems that had attended the conception, treatment and practice of teaching in the country have remained largely unresolved.

The extent to which these problems are drastically and urgently addressed by teacher, teachers professional association, government and other stakeholders in the Nigerian educational system will determine whether a bleak or bright future will attend teaching in Nigeria. Therefore, the prospect of teaching becoming a profession of comparable status to other well established professions in Nigeria depends on how the situations and circumstances that had persistently depreciated the status and practice of teaching in Nigeria are addressed.

If teachers rightly perceive teaching and private and government concerns in Nigeria recognised teaching as a specialised job description and regards teachers as professionals then a bright future awaits teaching and teachers in Nigeria. This new thinking about teaching may put an end to the incessant intervention of government in the certification and admission of new entrants into the profession. It may also end the regime of multiple and loose entry points in the profession when the prescribed minimum entry qualification into teaching at primary school level of education (NCE) as recommended by the Bagauda Report and stipulated by the TRC of Nigeria is implemented (NERC, 1980; TRC, 2004).

If the Union is re-registered as a professional body as against its present trade union status and given adequate autonomy to regulate entry, training and work standards of teachers, teaching may become a highly rated, recognized, remunerated and profession.

If a good remuneration package that is peculiar to teaching is introduced, self-concept of teachers will positively improve and the profession will cease to be a transit point for those engaged in teaching pending the availability of other desired well paid jobs. This is evident in the enrolment trend in Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) programmes in Faculties of Education in Nigeria that improved significantly in the last two years when the much-publicised Teachers Salary Scale (TSS) was on the drawing board. When an improved and exclusive TSS is introduced, the prevailing high rate of turnover of teachers into other lucrative professions may significantly decline if not completely eradicated. More importantly, serious minded prospective teachers may be attracted to make a career in teaching.

Conclusion

The earlier the problems confronting teaching as a profession in Nigeria are addressed the better. If the problems are adequately tackled, teaching may eventually become a highly rated profession in the nearest future. However, if the problems are allowed to persist or tackled peripherally, teaching may yet degenerate into an all-comers job where quacks would out number qualified teachers. This will not augur well for the nation as no nation or educational system can

develop beyond the quality of its teachers. The time to take decisive action is now.

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Curbing Examination Malpractices in Ghanaian Tertiary Institutions: The Case of Takoradi Polytechnic

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Abstract

Examination malpractice occurs at all levels of education. The situation is not different at Takoradi Polytechnic. Recent media reports indicate that examination malpractices in its various forms are on the increase in Tertiary Institutions in Ghana. This has raised serious concerns among stakeholders in education considering the fact that the buzz word today is quality education. This research was set out to investigate the rate, types/forms, causes, punishments, effects and most important how the ion of the menace can be curbed at the Polytechnic in particular; and others Polytechnic at large.

Presented in this report are the results of the study at Takoradi Polytechnic and its implication for other tertiary institutions in Ghana. The study revealed that examination malpractice occurs regularly at Takoradi Polytechnic mostly because of problems with the provision of Guidance and Counselling Services to students and social activities on campus. The problem has become a habit for some students and has made the interpretation of feedback from assessment unrealistic to assessors. Most importantly, how the problem has effective been managed is also discussed in this report. The results of the research *form a basis for further discussions on examination malpractice and this opens a number of fields for further research and debate.*

Introduction

The main objective of Tertiary education in Ghana is to furnish students with the requisite knowledge and skill for employment and national development. This requires that students pass periodic assessment and evaluation at all levels of their education. Students in their bid to do so engage in all sorts of misconducts including examination malpractices. Examination malpractices in its various forms occur in both internal and external examinations at Takoradi Polytechnic. To make matters worse, it is not only students that are involved, parents, teachers and examination officials, all collude with students to perpetrate this misconduct. The involvement of the above mentioned agents makes it even more difficult to combat the problem. In fact the menace was almost a ritual at the Polytechnic.

Purpose of the Study

Considering the persistence of examination malpractices at Takoradi Polytechnic and other Tertiary Institutions in Ghana, and the fact that the buzz word today is quality education; it was worthwhile to investigate the problem of examination malpractice at Takoradi Polytechnic and its management. The following were investigated:

- The rate of examination malpractices at Takoradi Polytechnic;
- Why people engage in examination malpractices and;
- How the menace has been controlled at the Polytechnic.

Research Problem

Although examinations are not the only instruments for assessing and evaluating knowledge and skills, it has emerged as the major established yardstick for the assessment of students (Adomako, 2005). According to the National Board for Professional and Technician Examination's (NABPTEX) Institutional Guidelines for Polytechnics (1994), the purpose of students' assessment is to ensure that students can demonstrate that they have fulfilled the objective of the programme of study and have achieved the standard required for the award of Higher National Diploma (HND). In doing this, students are continuously assessed in quizzes; take home assignments, mid-semester examinations and end of semester examination. The Guidelines further states that for a yearly academic progression for students, an average Cumulative Grade Point of not less than 1.5 is required. A student who fails four or more courses at the end of any semester will be withdrawn. These and many other requirements make examination malpractice more or less very attractive to students.

The persistence of the menace at the Polytechnic has in times past impelled the Academic Board of the Polytechnic to set up a four member Committee to look into the problem and make recommendations (June, 2006). Based on the recommendations of the Committee, several measures were put in place to control the menace. It has been the fervent desire of the Polytechnic as it were to record incidence-free examinations in the very near future; even though the problem is very human. From this background, the research was carried out with the object finding out which measures best work for the Institution in controlling the menace, so that other Tertiary Institutions in Ghana and elsewhere can benefit from the experience of the Institution.

Research Questions

1. What is the rate of examination malpractice at Takoradi Polytechnic?

2. What factors are mostly responsible for examination malpractices?

3. What preventive measures are working for the Polytechnic?

Literature Review

What Is Examination Malpractice?
Examination malpractice is any act of omission or commission, which compromises the validity and integrity of any examination (Ministry of Education, Benue State, 2001). Malpractice refers to counter practice that is against ethics of examination. Such practices also include illegality, that is, an act or any act(s) of misconduct such as leakage, impersonation, writing on hidden part(s) of wares, encoding/decoding of

the fingers for objectives tests, exchanges of question papers and answer booklets; committed before, during or after the examination by either the students taking the examination or by officials assigned to administer, evaluate or measure students' performance.

The NAPTEX Student Guide (1994) lists among other things the following forms of examination malpractices: Copying during examinations; writing on thighs, handkerchiefs, calculators, socks and desks; illegal prior possession, knowledge or use of examination papers; leakage of examination papers; Impersonation; communication verbally or in writing; insulting/assaulting examination officials before, during and after examinations; fraudulently replacing the original script of a candidate; and making unlawful changes on the original script of any candidate.

Takoradi Polytechnic also indicates the following as forms of examination malpractices; in addition to the rules and regulations from NAPTEX: possession of foreign material (books, paper, sketches, programmable calculator, etc); substituting worked scripts during/after examination; refusing to submit worked scripts; tearing part of question paper/answer booklet; taking question/answer booklet outside the examination hall; collusion (Unauthorized passing of information between candidates, usually by exchanging notes or scripts/colluding with teachers or invigilators for assistance in answering questions); putting on of attire that gives room for suspicion (caps, hat etc.); Giraffing; bringing mobile phones to the examination hall; Communicating (verbally or by

the use of gestures) with other candidates; and the use of tip-ex.

The NABPTEX Student Guide (1994) stipulates the following punishments for culprits:

disqualification from taking the examination and the cancellation of results; prohibition from taking any examination conducted by the Board for a period not less than two years immediately following the breach; liability on conviction to a fine not less than fifty thousand old Ghana Cedis and not exceeding one million old Ghana Cedis or imprisonment for a term not more than one year or may be liable to both. The Takoradi Polytechnic Students' Handbook (2006) further stated that a student found to be involved in examination malpractice shall be dismissed from the Polytechnic. In addition, the offense may be communicated to other Tertiary Institutions and relevant bodies and agencies. However, the final decision to dismiss a student rests on the Rector of the Polytechnic (Statutes of Takoradi Polytechnic, 1995).

Examination malpractice has grave consequences on both individuals and Institutions of learning, communities and the country as a whole. Dismissal, rustication, loss of position and self confidence as a result of examination malpractice has brought much embarrassment and suffering to individuals, families and communities (Okwu, 2006). Those who are not caught and punished may be expelled after gaining admission for further studies. If employed, they may not be able to perform to set out standards hence may eventually lose their jobs.

How Can the Menace be Curbed/Managed

Okwu, (2006) recommended that in order to curb the problem of examination malpractice in Tertiary Institutions, the admission of students should not be based only on previous results or certificates but also on performance in entrance examinations. Also those found guilty of examination malpractice should be punished severely. Culprits of examination malpractice should not just be expelled from the institutions but should be tried and jailed to serve as deterrent to others.

Methodology

The research sought to investigate the rate and types/forms of examination malpractices, in addition to what control measures are working for the Takoradi Polytechnic. The data collected concentrated on the above mentioned issues. Basically, data was taken through the use of the five point (Likert scale) semi-structured questionnaires and an interview guide. Student's records and administrative documents were also studied to obtain information on rate, forms and consequences of examination malpractices at the polytechnic. The interview guide was used to obtain information on the rate, reasons, and consequences of examination malpractices in the polytechnic and how management is dealing with the problem. The semi-structured questionnaires sought information on similar issues but from students and staff.

Selection of Respondents

The research involved a sample size of 468: 3 Disciplinary Committee (DC) Members (Vice Rector, Registrar and the President of the Student' Representative Council (SRC); 108 Lecturers; and 357 students from the four School of the Polytechnic: Applied Art, Applied Science, Business and Management Studies, and Engineering. There were 159 females and 309 males. The case study was conducted at Takoradi Polytechnic because examination malpractice occurs regularly at the Polytechnic. Also from the DC's reports on examination malpractices (2005-2007), examination malpractice occur in all the four Schools, hence the selection of respondents from all the Schools of the Polytechnic. The DC Members were chosen purposively because of the role they play in dealing with cases of alleged examination malpractice in the Polytechnic. The sample size was based on Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) recommendation on sample size selection under a confidence interval of 95% for a specified population size (students and staff strength). The data was analysed using the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS).

Results

The demographics of the respondents are presented on Table 1 below:

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Respondent	Female	Male	Total
Students	122	235	357
Staff	37	71	108
Vice Rector	0	1	1
Registrar	0	1	1
SRC President	0	1	1
Total	**159**	**309**	**468**

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

The results of the study are presented according to the three main aspects of the research questions as set out as below:

- The rate of examination malpractices;
- Causes of examination malpractice;
- Control/prevention measures that have worked.

A. The Rate/Problem of Examination Malpractice at Takoradi Polytechnic:

Many techniques have been employed by students to cheat in examinations at the Polytechnic. On record however, the following forms were known: possession of foreign materials (54%) - writings on papers, calculators, belts, edges of shirt sleeves, handkerchiefs, thighs, palms etc; exchange of answer booklets (11%); possession and copying from slabs (9% each) among others (Table 2).

Table 2: Techniques Employed By Students to Cheat (2004/5-2007/8)

Malpractice	Percentage
Possession of foreign material (on e.g. calculators, papers, shoes.)	54.3
Exchange of examination papers/scripts	11.2
Possession of slabs with written information	8.6
Copying from foreign material	8.6
Possession of unanswered answer booklets	8.6
Possession of already answered answer booklet	2.9
Insubordination	2.9
Use of mobile phone during the examination	2.9
Total	**100.0**

Source: DC file, 2005/6 -2007/2008 academic year, with the exception of the 2004/2005

From the interviews however, it became clear that there were other forms of examination malpractices off record. For instance, some Lecturers set the same examination questions for different groups of students writing the same paper at different times. Also, some students manage to have prior knowledge of examination questions either by buying, inducing staff with either money/materials/ kindness or by colluding with staff who are directly/indirectly involved with examinations. It was interesting to note that some students make nonsense of the vigilance of the Invigilator by using gestures that were meaningful only to the parties involved. There were few cases of impersonation; due to improper identification of students and insults/ threats on staff.

The Rate According to School, Sex and Year Group

According to reports of the Disciplinary Committee (DC) on examination malpractices (2005/6 - 2007/2008 academic years) the menace occurs regularly at the Polytechnic. The School of Business and Management Studies was the most hit for all the selected academic years (54%). The School of Engineering (25%), Applied Arts (16%) and Applied Science (16%) followed respectively with significant percen- tages.

Table 3: Rate of Examination Malpractice at the School Level

School	2003/2004		2005/2006		2006/2007		2007/2008			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Total	%
Business	10	66.7	11	73.3	13	44.8	13	46.4	47	54.1
Engineering	5	33.3	1	6.7	7	24.1	9	32.1	22	25.1
Applied Art	0	0	2	13.3	8	27.6	4	14.3	14	16.1
Applied Science	0	0	1	6.7	1	3.4	2	7.1	4	4.7
Total	15	100.0	15	100.0	29	100.0	28	100.0	87	100.0

Source: DC file, 2005/6 -2007/2008 academic year, with the exception of the 2004/2005.

The School of Engineering had the second highest number of students for 2003/2004 (33%), and 2007/2008 academic years (32%) respectively. The School of Applied Arts had the second highest number of students alleged to have engaged in the menace for 2005/2006 (13%) and 2006 /2007 (27 %) academic years respectively (Table 3).

The study indicated that generally males engage in examination malpractice more than females. For instance, for the 2003/2004 academic year, eleven out of the total number (15) of students alleged to have engaged in examination malpractice were males. During the 2005/2006 academic year, a total of 15 students were reported to have engaged in the menace. Out of this number, only one was a female. Considering the 2006/2007 academic year, 27 out of the 29 students involved in examination malpractice were males. The situation was not different for the 2007/2008 academic year. Twenty-four out of the total number of students (28) were males with only 4 females from the Department of Catering and

Hospitality Management (mostly students from the department are females). Table 4.

Table 4: The Trend among Sexes and Year Group

Consideration was further given to the occurrence of the menace with respect to each year group. In general terms, the first years were more prone to the canker (80%, 80%, 27% and 43%) more than their other counterparts. The

Year	03/04 %	M	F	05/06 %	M	F	06/07 %	M	F	07/08 %	M	F
First	80.0	6	2	80.0	8	0	27.6	15	2	42.9	13	1
Second	13.3	3	1	13.3	5	1	20.7	7	0	32.1	6	2
Third	6.7	2	1	6.7	1	0	51.7	5	0	25.0	5	1
Total	100.0	11	4	100.0	14	1	100.0	27	2	100.0	24	4

F= female, M =male

Source: DC file, 2005/6 -2007/2008 academic years, with the exception of the 2004/2005

second years also fell victims but, second to the first years. For almost all the selected academic years, the second years had the second largest percentage of students (13%, 13% and 32%) with the exception of the 2006/2007 academic year (21%). The final year students were not free from the offence. For instance, for the 2006/2007 academic years, most of the students involved in examination malpractices were final year students

(52%). The specifics can be found on Table 4 above.

Consequences of Examination Malpractices at the Polytechnic

Records on the consequences of the menace at the polytechnic are shown on Table 5.

Table 5: Punishment for victims (2003/4 – 2007/8 academic years)

Punishment	Percentage %
Rustication	37
Dismissal of students	32
Cancellation of results	17
Warning	10
Bond of good behaviour	4
Withholding of certificate	1
Total	**100.0**

Source: DC file, 2005/6 -2007/2008 academic year, with the exception of the 2004/2005

Almost all coded offences go with one punishment or the other Available records indicated that 37% of those

who fell victim to the menace during the selected years have been rusticated for one or more years; 32% have been dismissed; 17% have had their results cancelled; 4% have been warned or have signed a bond of good behaviour

and 1% has had their certificated withheld. Imprisonment of staff, withdrawal of certificates and payment of a fine did not usually happen at the Polytechnic.

Examination malpractice may have heinous effects on the individual, family, educational Institution or Country. Examination malpractice tarnishes the image of an Institution (28%) and questions the quality of education offered by the Institution and the entire Nation as a whole (15%). It can also significantly reduce the academic standing of an Institution and society's respect for the Institution at large. It is worth mentioning that the menace makes one incompetent on the job (15%). In

such instances, individuals who are very competent on paper exhibit below standard competencies and low self confidence when it comes to the performance of a given job. In addition, when an individual passes well because of examination malpractice it becomes easy to reason that one does not need to learn hard to pass. Unfortunately, if this not checked may result in the habit of cheating (10%). In cases of dismissal, the future of the culprit may be ruined (8%). Furthermore, examination malpractice makes it difficult for assessors to realistically interpret feedback from students (7%).

Table 6: Effects of Examination Malpractice on Manpower Development

Effects	Percentage
Defames the image of the Institution	28.0
Makes one incompetent on the job	14.8
Creates a dent on the quality of the certificate	14.8
May become a habit	10.3
May ruin the future prospects of the culprit	7.7
Makes deductions from assessment unrealistic	7.2
Brings disgrace to the individual and family	6.5
Undermines the integrity of the one concerned	3.9
Depression/anxiety	1.9
Total	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2008

It was also indicated that the menace occurs with much disgrace and disappointment to the individual, family and other acquaintances (7%). There is not doubt that individuals involved in examination malpractices would have their integrity brought into question (4%). Stress/depression (2%) was normally experience by culprits. Usually, the culprit's heart begins to beat fast, anxiety and stress

set in; and for those who can not stand the stress, depression or worse still, mental disturbances may occur. The details can be found on Table 6.

From the interviews, it became clear that the menace has serious economic consequences. For instance in cases of dismissal, all monies and resources spent become an economic waste. The individual's future may be ruined in the sense that any future prospect of further education or employment may

be diminished and this is of course, an economic cost to both family and the country. Another economic consequence mentioned was that, it is at a great opportunity cost that the DC Members meet on cases of examination malpractice. Of course, the Polytechnic pays the Committee members and time spent could have been invested in other profitable endeavors. Further, it was mentioned that in instances of rustication, extra fees (paid by guardians and tax payers) and time are spent in completing the programme.

B. Causes of Examination Malpractice

It was obvious from the interviews that examination malpractice is a desperate measure taken by students. It was argued that the roots of the menace can be traced to pre-tertiary education where, students are classified and placed according to their performance in examination. At the tertiary level, only students with relatively best results are picked because of constraints on admission space. Further, academic progression and sometimes employment depend on performance in examinations. From this background, cheating in examinations seems very attractive to many. Furthermore, society (e.g. parents, teachers, etc.) places undue pressure on students to excel. Also space during examinations is a cause. Most classrooms at the Polytechnic double as examination halls. These classrooms are limited in space and so during examinations; students are crowded in the examination hall with few invigilators (some invigilators do not turn up) thereby creating a conducive environment for cheating.

The problem is further compounded by the fact that most of these rooms have no locks hence, students make use of the rooms even before examinations start.

Another cause mentioned was that, stated penalties for examination malpractices were not always adhered to. In addition, if students are not intentionally guided and counseled on issues such as choice of academic programmes/courses, good study habits, how to conduct themselves during examinations, the consequences of examination malpractice among others; they are likely to engage in examination malpractice. Also lack of research into the problem and how the problem can be curbed contributes to the occurrence of menace. The quality of the students admitted was also an important factor. Unqualified students tended to cheat more than their qualified counterparts since they may lack the academic strength needed to withstand the numerous academic exercises.

Many of the respondents indicated that generally, the break down of our moral values has resulted in various forms of corruption including examination malpractice (inducing/accepting money, kindness, bribe for undue help either by students/staff). It was also significant to note that some Lecturers do not follow the academic calendar for the semester. As a result, such Lecturers tend to load students with many learning materials at the end of the semester (sometimes two weeks to examinations), thereby providing only a short period of time for students to assimilate academic materials supposed to be learnt within a whole semester. Such attitudes on the part of

Lecturers act as a motivating factor for slow learners to engage in examination malpractice.

These notwithstanding, the general trend in most Polytechnics where questions are set at the beginning/ middle of the semester irrespective of its coverage were another contributing factor. Also some students do not adequately prepare for examinations. Others bet their hopes on alleged receipt of examination questions; are just lazy; or are unable to properly manage their time especially due to engagement in leisure. Mass failure, threats of failure and discouraging comments by Lecturers (e.g. I will fail you, insults etc.) instigate students to cheat in order to 'put Lecturers to shame'. Surprisingly, some students/ staff attempt to help others by engaging in examination malpractice. It is also very important to note that some cases of the menace may occur accidentally or may be the result of wrong accusations.

Many of the respondents agreed that lack of self confidence, inadequate teaching and learning materials, stress/anxiety are contributing factors. Of much concern was the alleged

existence of improper relationships between staff and students. Also existing rules and regulations were seen not to be deterrent enough to prevent staff and students from engaging in the menace. From the foregoing, it is clear that many factors are responsible for examination malpractice at the **Polytechnic.**

The research further deemed it important to find out the most influential factors and their effect on the sexes. The research revealed that self confidence, determination to pass, social activities, poor preparation by students, stress and anxiety among others were the most influential factors. However, the effect of these factors on the sexes was not the same. For instance, males and females differed when it came to factors such as: self confidence, determination to pass, social activities, preparation for examinations and laziness. Despite these differences, stress and anxiety, inadequate teaching and learning materials and the short period for revision, had the same effect on both males and females (Table 7).

Table 7: Most Significant Causes of Examination Malpractice Among the Sexes

Factor	t-value at 95% (2-tail)	Implication
Self confidence	0.920	Significant difference
Determination to pass	0.098	Significant difference
Social activities	0.601	Significant difference
Inadequate preparation by students	0.601	Significant difference
Stress/anxiety	0.044	No significant difference
Inadequate T/L materials	0.049	No significant difference
Short period of revision	0.049	No significant difference
Laziness	0.848	Significant difference

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

C. Control/Prevention – Things That Work

There are various measures that have been used to control examination malpractice at the Polytechnic. Guidance and Counselling services are provided for both student and staff but most importantly to students (29%). Such services emphasize good study habits, preparations towards examinations and how to get the best out of the Polytechnic etc. Further, instances of examination malpractices (leakages) are promptly and properly investigated to the root of the problem (13%).

To combat instances of examination malpractices as a result of fear of staff or failure, the nurturing of a cordial relationship between the students and staff has been encouraged through open fora involving students and staff and departmental counselors who regularly meet students to address their concerns (12%). In addition to the provision of moderately adequate teaching and learning materials for hands on learning experiences for students (11%) the Polytechnic has reduced the number of hands that handle examination materials (11%). Also, examination materials are physically secured in a special room called 'strong room.' Of course, the enforcement of existing rules and regulations on examination malpractices to the latter irrespective of who is involved has gone a long way to reduce the menace (6%). Another measure that has been very effective is the change from the lecture method of teaching employed by most lecturers to a student centered approach (6%). Regular assessment of students was also one of the most effective ways of dealing with the problem (3%). These notwithstanding, ensuring proper sitting arrangements and the creation of an enabling environment for examinations in addition to proper invigilation during examinations were argued for. The specifics are on Table 8.

Table 8: Control and Prevention of Examination Malpractice

Control	Percentage
Guidance and Counselling services	28.7
Effective investigations into allegations	13.4
Good teacher/student relationship	11.9
Provision of adequate T/L materials	11.4
Proper security of examination materials	10.9
Implementation of existing rules	6.4
Good teaching methods	6.0
Fair assessment	5.5
Regular assessment of students	2.8
Proper sitting arrangement	2.0
Creation of enabling environment	1.0
Total	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Discussions

Even though the Polytechnic law (1992) from which Ghanaian Polytechnics derive their mission emphasizes the acquisition of practical knowledge and skills, almost all Polytechnic examinations have a high predominance of theory. The practical aspect constitutes only 30% of the total marks of the continuous assessment (theory 70%). This undue emphasis on theory causes students who might be more practically oriented to experience inadequacies in themselves, leading them to engage in examination malpractice.

Almost every semester, there are rumors that examination questions have leaked. This is what Sahman et al., (1990) called examination leakage. According to the results of the study, a major cause of these leakages is improper security of examination materials. In fact, the questions pass through too many hands: Head of Department, Vice Rector and external examiners outside the Polytechnic for modulation before finally getting to students on the examination day. After modulation, the reserve is done. As such, tracing the source of an examination leakage has always been a challenge. Another challenge in this direction is that even though the Institution is willing to investigate such cases; getting the concerned people to testify with concrete evidence has always been a problem. Hence the sources of such alleged leakages have mostly remained in the bud. In addition some staff members connected with examinations out of selfish motives (money, gift, kindness) give out questions to students. This is not strange because, according to Akinyode (2004) poverty has injected into almost all civil servants the virus called bribery.

Currently, the Polytechnic has problems with space during examination (most classrooms double as examination halls) as a result, during examinations students are crowded in the examination halls. Denga (1993) argued that examination malpractice is partly an environmental problem (crowded nature of the examination hall). Also according to Ward (1981); Murphy (1988) and Lamm, (1984) poor preparation for examination(s) often leads to examination malpractice. This view was shared by most of the respondents. It was asserted that some students bet their hopes on alleged receipt of examination questions; others out of poor time management due to social activities on campus; and sheer laziness do not adequately prepare for examinations. Under such circumstances, resorting to cheating becomes easier.

Sometimes students who engage in examination malpractices get away with it. To a very large extent, the social systems in Ghana coupled with political-undertones are partly responsible for this. In Ghana, the external family system encircles the Head of an Educational Institution too many relatives, many of whom 'should not be offendered' Hence, in instances of examination malpractices; relatives, together with superiors and Politicians pressurize responsible ones to dilute punishments for culprits. The leader, not wanting to incur the displeasure of others and especially those in higher authority, may give in to such demands. Such happenings are what

Olaniyan, (2002) and Peter, 2002) called partly as political undertones. In the same line of thought but at a lower level, some colleagues come in strongly to plead for students who have wronged. Some even refuse to report students because of fear of displeasing others or because of social relationships.

Conclusion

The research showed that examination malpractice occurs regularly at Takoradi Polytechnic; in almost all examinations. The general trend is that, the menace is on the increase considering the selected academic years. Generally, the first years engaged in examination malpractice more than the second and third years. Further, males engaged in examination malpractice more than their female counterparts. On record the following forms of examination malpractices were known: possession of foreign material, exchange of examination scripts/papers, possession of slabs with written information, copying from a foreign material, possession of unanswered answer booklet, possession of already answered answer booklets, insubordination, impersonation, use of mobile phones and use of gestures meaningful to only the parties involved. Off record however, there were allegations of examination leakages. Some Lecturers also set the same examination questions for the same group of students writing at different times.

The research revealed that lack of self confidence, determination to pass by all means; uncontrolled social activities, laziness and poor preparation were the responsible factors at the

Polytechnic. However, there were significant differences between males and females when it came to how these factors influence examination malpractice. Other factors identified were stress and anxiety, short period of revision and inadequate teaching and learning materials. It is important to note that with the latter factors, there were no significant difference between males and females.

Examination malpractice at Takoradi Polytechnic and other Tertiary Institutions in Ghana and elsewhere can be controlled or prevented by providing Guidance and Counseling Services to both student and staff. The need to provide adequate teaching and learning materials, ensure proper invigilation, the existence of a cordial relationship between internal stakeholders, proper handling of examination materials and investigations into examination malpractices can not be over emphasized. There is also the need for regularly assessment of students. In a similar vein the proper sitting arrangement of students during examinations should be ensured. Regular research is also needed if the Polytechnic is to solve its own internal problems.

Implications

The results of the research have the following implications:

Policy
The Polytechnic should put in place policies aimed at detecting and discouraging the menace. The following can be done:

- Guidance and Counseling Services should be made part

of the School Curriculum (probably as part of the academic calendar/ time-table);

- Takoradi Polytechnic must insist on the admission of only qualified students (by adhering to set standards);
- The mode of examinations should be reviewed to give attention to more practical work than theory (70% practical and 30% theory);
- The Polytechnic should come up with a policy on the proper security of exami-nation materials.

Polytechnic
- Regular research into lurking problem of the Institution including examination malp-ractices should be institutio-nalized;
- All stakeholders within the Polytechnic must uphold the sanctity of examinations;
- Management must check and ensure that all regulations and instructions concerning the conduct of examinations (e.g. Creating a conducive envir-onment, writing of index numbers, proper identifica-tion of students and proper sitting arrangement) are carefully followed;
- There should be regular supervision of the teaching/ learning process (E.g. regular monitoring of the work schedule of Lecturers, absenteeism, late teaching, and discussion of examina-tion questions with students etc.) by the existing chain of

authority (Heads of Depart-ments, Dean of Schools, Vice Rector among others);

Research
The study showed that factors responsible for examination malp-ractice significantly differed among the sexes. The research however, failed to determine the extent to which these factors differ among males and females. Further, research could be done in this area to find out the extent of influence on each sex. tly further research could be conducted into the problem of examination malpractice at other Polytechnics or Tertiary Institutions. It would be interesting to find out the degree of variance among the Institutions and how they are handled.

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"Academic 419": Locating Computer Crimes in the use of ICT For The Management of Educational Systems in Ghana- The Case of University of Cape Coast

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Abstract

The rapid evolution of information technology, the proliferation of computer and media devices and the rapid growth in the use ICT and the internet for organisational management have spawned new forms of crimes and made old crimes easier to commit. References to news in Ghanaian newspapers confirm the rising incidence of these crimes.A review of available literature, however, portrays a paucity of research that explores such crimes in African and for that matter, Ghanaian settings. In this position paper, we use "Academic 419" as a metaphor to describe computer crimes, highlighting some of such crimes from the international literature with a major focus on the types that can potentially occur in the University of Cape Coast.For us, it is imperative for leadership and management in their utilisation of ICT to be more vigilant in security issues and accept the need to safeguard their ICT systems to achieve maximal efficiency and effectiveness in their institutions. This objective can positively be attained when directed research,such as we advocate for are conducted to explore all related facilitating factors in order to align the design and change in direction for the secure and effective implementation of the University of Cape Coast ICT policy.

Background

Globally, cases of computer crimes date back to the early 1960s when the first case of computer crime was reported. Since then, there have been countless reports of computer crimes being made on a daily basis (Kabay, 2008). These early attacks often used unauthorised access to telecommunications systems to subvert long-distance phone systems which modified or destroyed data for financial gain, revenge, amusement and theft of services. Additionally, programmers in the 1980s began writing malicious software, including self-replicating programs, to interfere with personal computers.

With increased Internet access to increasing numbers of systems worldwide, criminals used unauthorized access to poorly protected systems for vandalism, political action and financial gain (Kabay, 2008). As the 1990s progressed, financial crime using penetration and subversion of computer systems increased (Rollins & Wyler, 2010). The types of malware shifted during the 1990s, taking advantage of new vulnerabilities. Illegitimate applications of e-mail grew rapidly from the mid-1990s onward, generating torrents of unsolicited commercial and fraudulent e-mail (Rollins & Wyler, 2010).

Locally, in Ghana, stories of computer crimes have become newspaper front page captions (Ghana Business News, 2009, Citifmonline, 2011). Prior to this time, computer crimes were not an issue that could be discussed because it seemed trivial and unimportant. For us in the second decade of the 2000s, however, computer crimes have become an issue of national concern because of their effects on the economy and their ability to sabotage the reputation of the country.

Combating computer crimes have earned global attention due to a number of reasons including that of relevant legislation. One of the major flaws of cyber laws is that there are no universal laws so it is very difficult to prosecute offenders across borders and in some cases, laws do not exist probably because the government and security agencies do not see the need for it. The President of the Accra Chapter of Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA) commented at Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA) IT Governance Summit 2011 in Accra that Ghana was failing woefully in its bid to also regulate its Information Technology environment. He stated that: "even though the Data Protection Bill was recently read in Parliament, it is just one aspect of the bigger picture, since there's no regulation or legislation that ensures the protection of government or listed company's data" (BiztechAfrica, 2011). For example, absence of a cyber-law in Ghana is frustrating the efforts of the Vetting Crime Intelligence Analysis (VCIA) unit of the Ghana Police Service in fighting computer fraud and also to prosecute

perpetrators of Internet fraud (Telecoms, Internet and Broadcast in Africa, 2007).

A review of the literature portrays a paucity of research that explores such crimes in African and for that matter, Ghanaian settings. This position paper highlights some of such computer crimes from the international literature with a major focus on the types that can potentially occur in the University of Cape Coast. The awareness of such potential crimes and how they can be perpetrated can inform management decision making in strategies that can be adopted to mitigate the potential incidences of such computer crimes. This paper focuses on the importance of security and security controls as the tools to tackle this low awareness because in most cases, computer crimes are usually facilitated by insiders who divulge password or confidential information that aid criminals in carrying out their activities. It is our opinion that it is important for computer crimes to be properly investigated as history resonates with evidence that criminals will frequently abuse new technologies to benefit themselves or injure others (Charney, and Alexander, 2001).

We argue that as a university positioned as the "university of choice" within the West African sub-region, there is the need for the prompting of constituents to this upsurge in cyber crimes, as the very nature of academic activity promotes ICT utilisation and subsequently, opportunities for such crimes. We posit that "academic 419" has a high propensity to occur on the university campus, calling for heightened vigilance to avoid negative

consequences. Why "Academic 419"? "419", as a term, is borrowed from Nigeria and refers to the number "419" of an article of the Nigerian Criminal Code 38 which states: "Obtaining Property by false pretenses; Cheating" dealing with fraud. This term as popularly used in Ghana refers to Nigerian Email Scam, a form of advance-fee fraud. An advance-fee fraud is a confidence trick in which the target is persuaded to advance sums of money in the hope of realizing a significantly larger gain. Overtime, "419" has come to be synonymous with fraud facilitated through computers. We use the term "Academic 419" as a heuristic to refer to fraudulent academic practices that can be committed with the use of ICT.

Defining computer crimes

What then are computer crimes? Computer crime denotes the use of computers by individuals in one of three ways. Firstly, a computer may be the target of the offence. In these cases, the criminal's goal is to steal information from, or cause damage to, a computer. Secondly, the computer may be a tool of the offence. This occurs when an individual uses a computer to facilitate some traditional offence such as fraud or theft (for example, a bank employee may use a computer program to skim small amounts of money from a large number of bank accounts, thus generating a significant sum for personal use). Thirdly, computers are sometimes incidental to the offence, but significant to law enforcement because they contain evidence of a crime. An example is students stealing/copying other students'

assignments (a form of plagiarism). In a nutshell,we can say that computer crime is the use of a computer to extract or alter data, or to gain unlawful use of the computer for unlawful activities.

Management of most organisations do not realize the value of prevention in the area of computer security, but wait in ignorance until an incident occurs or is detected. An example of such crimes being people masquerading as celebrities in social networking sites e.g. Facebook to cause harm especially minors. In other instances, most computer crime perpetrators have been successful when the security infrastructure of the host organisation is not robust, hence can easily be compromised if persistent attacks are launched at it.

We propose that a thorough understanding of how these crimes can be perpetrated can enable informed management decisions. In future research, we hope to locate counter measures with which to manage the incidence of computer crimes in institutions of higher learning like the University of Cape Coast. Improved vigilance in the management in the use of ICT will improve on data protection and general university management. Anecdotal evidence gleaned from informal conversations with members of the university community suggests that the degree of awareness pertaining to aspects of computer security is very low. This paper argues the importance of creating awareness on security and security controls as well as tools to tackle computer crimes.

Typology of Computer Crimes

Computer crimes can be categorised into the following models:

Plagiarism: According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2010), to "plagiarize" means to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own; to use (another's production) without crediting the source; to commit literary theft; to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source. In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward. The expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property, and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some way (such as a book or a computer file).

All of the following are considered plagiarism: turning in someone else's work as your own; copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit; failing to put a quotation in quotation marks; giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation; changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit; copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not (Plagiarism.org, 2009).

Hacking: The act of defeating the security capabilities of a computer system in order to obtain illegal access to the information stored on the computer system is called hacking (Oak, 2009). The act of defeating the security capabilities of a computer system in order to obtain illegal access to the information stored on the computer system is called hacking. To illustrate the hacking concept; Kernell, 22, was convicted in 2009 of a misdemeanor involving computer intrusion and a felony count of obstruction of justice (Zetter, 2010). The unauthorized revelation of passwords with intent to gain an unauthorized access to the private communication of an organization of a user is one of the widely known computer crimes. Another form of this crime is the hacking of Internet Protocol addresses in order to transact an activity with a false identity, thus remaining anonymous while carrying out the criminal activities.

Phishing: Phishing is the act of attempting to acquire sensitive information like usernames, passwords and credit card details by the perpetrator disguising as a trustworthy source (Oak, 2009). Phishing is carried out through emails or by luring the users to enter personal information through fake websites. Criminals often use websites that have a look and feel of some popular website, which makes the users feel safe to enter their details there.

Computer Viruses: Computer viruses are computer programs that can replicate themselves and harm the computer systems on a network without the knowledge of the system users (Oak, 2009). Viruses spread to other computers through network file system, through the network, Internet or by the means of removable devices

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like flash drives and compact disks (CDs). Computer viruses are after all, forms of malicious codes written with an aim to harm a computer system and destroy information. Writing computer viruses is a criminal activity as virus infections can crash computer systems, thereby destroying great amounts of critical data.

Cyber-stalking: The use of communication technology, mainly the Internet, to torture other individuals is known as cyber-stalking (Oak, 2009). False accusations, transmission of threats and damage to data and equipment fall under the class of cyber-stalking activities. Cyber-stalkers often target the users by means of chat rooms, online forums and social networking websites to gather user information and harass the users on the basis of the information gathered. Obscene emails, abusive phone calls and other such serious effects of cyber-stalking have made it a type of computer crime.

Identity Theft: This is one of the most serious frauds as it involves stealing money and obtaining other benefits through the use of a false identity. It is the act of pretending to be someone else by using someone else's identity as one's own (Oak, 2009). Financial identity theft involves the use of a false identity to obtain goods and services and a commercial identity theft is the using of someone else's business name or credit card details for commercial purposes. Identity cloning is the use of another user's information to pose as a false user. Illegal migration, terrorism and blackmail are often made possible by means of identity theft.

Datadiddling: This is the illegal or unauthorized data alteration (Oak, 2009). These changes can occur before and during data input or before output.

Doppelganger Domain Names: A doppelganger domain name is one that is spelled the same as the original, but missing the "." between the sub-domain name, the qualified domain and the extension (Gee and Kim, 2011). The strategy works on the premise that a small number of emails intended for a company will have a "to:" address incorrectly typed, or the doppelganger domain can be used in social engineering exploits to dupe workers at a company into thinking that an email requesting sensitive information comes from someone within the company, so is therefore safe to provide. A search for "University of Cape Coast" on the search engine www.google.com shows several links to the university such as "http://www.uccghanaportal.com", "http://www.ucclibrary.edu.gh/", "http://uccsrc.com/", "http://www.econsucc.edu.gh/index.html", "http://www.cds-ucc.edu.gh/" among others. One is left to wonder which of these URLs is the official webpage for the University of Cape Coast. It is very easy set up a doppelganger domain name of the University of Cape Coast and use it for malicious activities. In a quick search on the internet we noticed that the domain "universityof capecoast.com" was available for sale.

The different types of computer crimes involve an illegal exploitation of the computer and communication technology for criminal activities. While the advancing technology has served as a boon to modern day.

organisational management, the destructively directed human intellects are all set to turn technology into a curse.

The ICT for Management Profile of University of Cape Coast

The Computer Centre of University of Cape Coast provides network access for the University except for the School of Medical Sciences and the Centre for Continuing Education. Student Records and Management Information System (SRMIS) manage the information of senior and junior members; senior and junior staff including their bio-data and some other information concerning their activities on campus. The ICT Centre offers Internet facilities for members of the University community for teaching, learning and research. There could be a very high possibility of the incident of computer crime if there is a breach of confidentiality, loss of integrity and denial of service if data accessibility cannot be assured on the wide use of computers. With the ICT for management profile outlined, we move the discussion forward to the description of some of such computer crimes.

Computer Crimes in the use of ICT for Systems Management at University of Cape Coast: The Research Imperative

The University of Cape Coast is a tertiary institution and it consists of senior members; senior staff (research/administrative assistants), junior members (students) and junior staff. Databases are used to manage and monitor information concerning

the academic and non-academic staff thus; a lot of computers will be involved in running these processes. This large numbers of computers ultimately mean that computer crimes can occur hence the need to investigate into the phenomenon of computer crimes. The rapid evolution of information technology, the proliferation of computer and media devices and the rapid growth in the use ICT and the internet for organisational management has spawned new forms of crimes and made old crimes easier to commit. Crimes like cyber-stalking; identity theft; pornography; fraud; scams; copyright violations, hacking and creating malicious code are some of the incidences that have been triggered by this rapid growth. It is important that computer crimes should be properly investigated because history teaches that criminals will frequently abuse new technologies to benefit themselves or injure others.

Additionally, new technologies are being released into the market to frustrate the perpetrators of computer crime and new policies are being implemented to mitigate the activities of computer criminals. However, with this entire infrastructure in place, it is evident that little progress is being made because there are always counter-measures to frustrate these criminal efforts (The United Kingdom Threat Assessment, 2010). Furthermore, because University of Cape Coast is located in a third world country, the emphasis on security is not as high as compared to those in developed economies. Also, the kind of security measures available to those in the western world may not be available in Ghana. For example, most of the

antivirus software available in University of Cape Coast are either open source or trial versions probably because original software are too expensive. For two years now (2010-2011), the University has bought 1000 licenses for Kaspersky Antivirus (key informant). This purchase is however not enough for the number of computers being used by staff of the university. These are some of the security limitations that the university encounters.

Furthermore, incidences of computer hardware theft are either not reported to the authorities or are sometimes out-rightly ignored when they are reported (Standler, 2002). This is very discouraging hence most victims of computer theft do not see any reason to report to the authorities and this has encouraged the perpetrators of this crime to continue as they can always get away with it. In addition, victims of computer crimes are often not in a hurry to appeal to law enforcement bodies as it could result to bad publicity for the institution.

Many computer crimes can occur on our campuses on a daily basis because there have been reports of different kinds of computer crimes ranging from computer theft to violation of people's privacy by stealing personal information stored on their personal computers (Borhanuddin, 2010). An example of a possible computer crime that can occur in our tertiary institution may be hacking into a lecturer's email account in an attempt to steal quiz or examination questions. There have been reported incidences of intrusion into the computers of

SRMIS in purported attempts to alter students' grades.

Some other kinds of computer crimes that can occur in the University of Cape Coast are identity theft, computer hardware theft, plagiarism, computer software theft, privacy violation, trafficking in password and transmission of a virus. This paper calls for the profiling of types of computer crimes which have either occurred or can possible occur in the University Cape Coast; how such crimes are perpetrated, enabling conditions for crime perpetration as well as strategies that can be adopted to mitigate them. Intended studies could explore security gaps that could be exploited for computer crime. Additionally, strategies that can be harnessed to manage the identified gaps through which computer crimes can be perpetuated will be especially useful to improve on security in the management of the system.

The findings from such studies will provide insights into security areas that need to be addressed through policy. Such policy changes can then moderate practices to mitigate the potential occurrence of computer crimes and help the university achieve its ICT policy aims of setting up 'university databases that are reliable, secure, up-to-date and easily accessible (The University of Cape Coast ICT Policy, 2003).

For practice, an exploration of computer crimes can help the university locate security gaps and adopt relevant strategies to address the problem. The realisation of the aims set out in the ICT Policy of the

University in terms of timelines attests to the fact that there exists a gap between policy intentions and policy outcomes. The location of security gaps in ICT utilization can help to bridge the policy intentions and policy outcomes gap.

Concerning appropriate methodological planning, we suggest that, considering the nature of computer crimes it will be useful for researchers to adopt a combination of designs that employ quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods. We recommend that the use of qualitative measures can unravel deeper insights into the problem of computer crimes as the sensitive nature of these crimes can be better probed with one-on-one interactions between the researcher and respondents.

With a thorough understanding of how these crimes can be perpetrated, we hope to locate counter measures with which to manage the incidence of computer crimes in the University of Cape Coast. Improved vigilance in the management in the use of ICT will improve on data protection and general university management. Anecdotal evidence gleaned from informal conversations with members of the university community suggests that generally speaking, the degree of awareness pertaining to aspects of computer security is very low.

Implications of computer crimes for organisational management

Management of most organizations often do not realize the value of prevention in the area of computer security, but wait in ignorance until an incident occurs or is detected (Prasad, Kathawala, Bocker & Sprague, 2003). Wang and Huang (2011), report that concern about computer crime is being fuelled by increased media reports (such as the WikkiLeaks) that reveal the sheer number of intrusions and the damage being caused. Furthermore, the advent of the personal computer has greatly affected the outlook toward computer crimes. Aaland (as cited by Prasad, Kathawala, Bocker and Sprague, 2003) observed that Now with 35 to 40 million PCs in the work place, organisations large and small alike are vulnerable to computer crimes.

The rapid evolution of information technology, the proliferation of computer and media devices and the rapid growth in the use ICT and the internet for organisational management have spawned new forms of crimes and made old crimes easier to commit. Computer crimes like cyber-stalking; identity theft; pornography; fraud; scams; copyright violations, hacking and creating malicious code are some of the incidences that have been triggered by this rapid growth (Chawki, 2009). Other examples of computer crimes include people masquerading as celebrities in social networking sites, for example, Facebook to cause harm especially minors. In other instances, most computer crime perpetrators have been successful when the security infrastructure of the host organisation is not robust, hence can easily be compromised if persistent attacks are launched at it (Chawki, 2009). In view of the complexities in computer crimes that can occur, there is the need for awareness to be created about some of

the potential crimes that can be perpetrated in organisations such as the university.

Conclusion

The incidence of "Academic 419" describes computer crimes that can occur in educational systems such as the University of Cape Coast. References to news in Ghanaian newspapers confirm the rising incidence of these crimes. As such the import of the rising incidences in computer crimes cannot be disputed. It is therefore imperative for leadership and management in their utilisation of ICT to be more vigilant in security issues and accept the need to safeguard their ICT systems to achieve maximal efficiency and effectiveness in their institutions. This objective can positively be attained when directed research is conducted to explore all related factors, the design and change in direction for the implementation of the ICT policy.

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Managing Transitional Challenges for Quality Performance in Polytechnics in Ghana

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Abstract

This paper presents the findings of a study into transitional challenges facing polytechnic management in Ghana, effects of those challenges on the quality delivery of polytechnic education and how polytechnic management was managing such challenges. The research was a descriptive survey involving 340 respondents drawn from 6 polytechnics in Ghana. Respondents included both senior members and senior staff. Data were gathered through questionnaire and interviews. Informed by the study, the paper agues that the management of polytechnics encounter a number of challenges, some of which are easily manageable whilst others require strategic management skills to address. It further advocates a stronger collaboration between the polytechnics and industry as a way of promoting quality competency-based training in the country.

Introduction

The important role tertiary education and for that matter polytechnic plays in the life of individuals and nations, especially, countries within the developing context cannot be underestimated. It is noted that many industrialized countries recognize technical manpower development as a powerful agent for economic growth and so such countries have a well-developed polytechnic education to support the technical manpower for all sectors of the economy (Report of the Technical Committee on Polytechnic education in Ghana (2001).

In this era of globalization, characterized by rapid advancement of science and technology, there is the need for effective management of polytechnic education to enable the polytechnics meet the middle level manpower needs of the society. Indeed, as Afeti (1998) observes, any nation that fails to recognize the essential role Science and Technology and for that matter polytechnic plays in the era of globalization and socioeconomic transformation of nations cannot escape the clutch of poverty.

The Government of Ghana, realizing the socio-economic significance of polytechnic education in the country, made polytechnic education part of the tertiary education system and mandated polytechnics to train high-skilled manpower to support industrial development in the country. University Rationalization Committee, (1988), reviewed the then tertiary education system to include the polytechnics. Prior to1988, polytechnics were classified as Second cycle institutions. They operated as Technical Institutes which offered mostly technical level courses with an objective to train students in specific trades and vocation disciplines.

The laws establishing the polytechnics (PNDCL 321 of 1992) stipulated the aims and objectives of polytechnics in the country to include the provision of tertiary education through full time courses in manufacturing, science and technology, applied arts and sciences and other areas as would be determined from time to time. The law also gave legal backing to changes involving administration, the polytechnic structure, courses, and certificates and staffing and placed the polytechnics under the country's National Council for tertiary Education (NCTE) with some degree of autonomy. Within this context, the polytechnics were given the go-ahead for new set-ups to be put in place so that they could complete the cycle of capacity strengthening for higher level technician training and practical research which did not exist in the old system. Currently, with the enactment of the Polytechnic Act, 2007, (Act, 745) the polytechnics have the academic autonomy to among other things award their own Higher Diploma and other certificates.

The upgrading of some polytechnics from second cycle status to tertiary status signifies a change from one stage unto another. This type of change or transition, according to Jackson and Schuler (2001), refers to any transformation in the structure or functioning of an organization. Change begins with someone recognizing the need for it and is usually triggered by an external force, (Mcshane and Von Glinow (2000). In the case of the polytechnics, for example, change in their status as brought with it a number of management challenges relating to institutional and professional development, particularly staffing.

The change (upgrading) from secondary to tertiary status required that the polytechnics recruited individuals with relevant practical or professional experience to train students who could contribute to the development of the industrial and technological base of the economy. This confirms Kreitner and Kinicki's (2000) assertion that during change processes in institutions, people with outdated skills are often retrained, unemployed or underemployed to meet the challenges that go with it. To this end, the few Ghana Educations Service staff who initially handled the second cycle courses and opted to teach in the polytechnics were screened and retained. Since then, most of the polytechnics attempted to step up staff development which is in the right direction as part of the recruitment process. It is worthy to note that, the Polytechnics are now using the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) criteria as bases for recruiting and designating academic staff to beef up staff strength in the polytechnics. This criterion makes second degree (MSC or MPhil degree) the minimum qualification for recruiting a lecturer.

The transitional changes have affected the physical and academic infrastructure of the polytechnics (The Education Review Committee Report (2002), Technical Committees' Report on Polytechnic education, 2001), compelling some of them to run programmes late into evening hours especially for practical work. As a way of addressing these challenges, efforts have been made to improve the governance and management structures of the polytechnics through the appointment of qualified rectors and senior management staff (Afeti 2004).

With the enactment of the Polytechnic Act 2007, (Act, 745) polytechnics in Ghana now have academic autonomy to carry out their academic activities to the fullest. The polytechnics, over the past decade, endeavoured to meet transitional challenges which are attributed greatly to the way they were upgraded to the tertiary status without a thorough analysis of their capacity to fulfill their mandate as tertiary institution. It is observed that, within the relatively short period, of their upgrading modest achievement have been chalked in the areas of autonomy in management of the institution, strengthening of academic progra-mmes to include the Bachelor of Technology (degree programmes) and upgrading of teaching and learning facilities to some extent.

The Problem

There have been reports such as the (Report of the Technical Committee on Polytechnic education in Ghana (2001), and Educational Reform Review Report (2002) that because the polytechnics were upgraded without any endowment fund for their physical and academic infrastructure, they are faced with some challenges as far as delivery of quality polytechnic education is concerned. Afeti (2005) has also reiterated that the approaches to the upgrading exercise did not specify any criteria or qualifying benchmarks in terms of physical, human and academic resources. This is one of the flaws in the entire upgrading process which is posing a lot of challenges for the polytechnics today. Rectors of some polytechnics have been emphasizing in their ceremonial reports that they are faced with numerous challenges regarding the inadequacies in the provision of

resources which are impacting negatively on the effective delivery of polytechnic education.

Undoubtedly, for them to achieve the demand of their mandate as tertiary institutions, polytechnics had to grapple with management challenges relating to availability of how they are able to cope with the challenges. Available literature hardly, however, tells us how polytechnics effectively manage those challenges in order to achieve the objectives for which they were elevated to a tertiary status. It was as a result of this that this study was carried out to find out how the polytechnics in Ghana are managing their transitional challenges. The research was guided by the following three key questions:

1. What key management challenges have the polytech-nics in Ghana faced since their upgrading into tertiary status?

2. What are the views of respondents on the effects of those challenges on polytec-hnic education?

3. What strategies are being adopted to enable the polytechnics manage those challenges?

Methodology

The research was descriptive by nature. It involved three hundred and forty (340) respondents drawn from six (6) polytechnics in Ghana using mixed-sampling methods. The respondents were made-up of both senior members and senior staff (comprising the teaching and non-teaching staff). Other respondents were the then Principals and Vice-Principals. The main instruments used

were the questionnaire designed for the teaching and non teaching staff and interview guide for Rectors and the Vice Rectors. Both instruments were tested for validity and reliability prior to the actual data collection.

The major statistical tools employed for the interpretation of the data collected were frequencies and percentages using the SPSS soft ware packages. A non-parametric test Kendall's W' Test otherwise referred to as Co-efficient of Concordance was also used to test the level of agreement in ranking of the various challenges faced by polytechnics in Ghana. In addressing the objectives of the study, the following overarching questions informed the research.

Emerging Issues

A major finding of the study is that polytechnics in Ghana are confronted with myriads of management challenges. Among these are insufficient number of qualified staff, inadequate funding to support programme delivery, and inadequate physical and academic facilities which cut across in all polytechnics used for the study. Absence of distinct scheme and condition of service for staff, lack of active collaboration with industries and lack of regular review of the existing curriculum to reflect current demands of the job market were other challenges.

The issue of inadequate staff for instance, corroborates Aina's (2000) finding that one of the challenges facing all levels of education in the sub-Saharan Africa, especially the polytechnics is inadequate qualified staff which has negative implication on teaching and learning and quality

of polytechnic graduates. It is further explained that this problem could link up with the challenge of inadequate funding which inhibit the development of technical manpower as cited in Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh (2004) report. In the seventh matriculation report by the Rector of the Bolgatanga Polytechnic, he reiterated that inadequate funding is a challenge to the Polytechnic and that the policy of of allocating resources to the tertiary institution especially the polytechnics on the basis of student population was inimical to the growth of some institutions such as the Bolgatanga Polytechnic. Afeti (2005) supported the issue of under funding by indicating that no credible practically-oriented learning can take place if the polytechnics do not have adequate qualified teachers to handle the large number of learners in skills acquisition.

Polytechnics are again confronted with a challenge that is traceable to high ratios observed for training in management disciplines that has been the trend in most African countries including Nigeria and Ghana. Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh (2004) in their study identified a situation whereby most applicants to the Polytechnic prefer management disciplines so as to eventually work in the banks, insurance companies, oil companies which they pay better than most sectors. The Polytechnic thus admit student irrespective of the rules guiding admission and available resources including teachers. Afeti has confirmed that about 60% of Polytechnic students are enrolled in business oriented programmes, a situation that does not promote the development of skilled manpower for the country. He further added that in

contrast, government policy on admission requires that the Polytechnic enrollment should attain the ratio of 80 is to 20 in favour of science and technology.

Even though the polytechnics were upgraded to contribute immensely towards national development by providing career-focused education and skills training to the highest level possible, the polytechnics in their bid to generate additional income to supplement government subventions are concentrating on providing more non-tertiary programmes to the detriment of the HND programmes which they had been mandated to offer as tertiary institutions. This to the researcher is another challenge being faced by the polytechnics.

On the whole, workers in the polytechnics recognize the key challenges confronting polytechnics as they work towards providing quality education. The mean percentage ratings on the nature of the challenges revealed that, the most cross-cutting serious challenges confronting the polytechnics were *inadequate human* and *material resources, inadequate funding* and *inadequate physical* and *instructional facilities*. This Collaborates, Afeti's (2005) disclosure that, in Ghana, the rapid increase in student numbers without expansion in teaching and learning facilities in the polytechnics has led to unacceptably high student-lecturer ratio, in some cases, as high as 54.1. The mean of means ranking of the responses showed that while some of the challenges were considered most serious in some polytechnics, others were considered least serious. In Accra, Ho, and Kumasi Polytechnics for instance, absence of

distinct scheme and conditions of service was considered most serious; yet in the other polytechnics these challenges were considered least serious.

The challenges with which the polytechnics grapple, have adversely affected teaching and learning over the years. For instance, inadequate funding had stifled the development of some departments within the polytechnics. Views expressed by 60% of the staff suggest that inadequate provision of physical and academic facilities had impacted negatively on programme delivery and quality of polytechnic education. On a more positive note, the study revealed that strike action by the staff to press home their demand for better conditions of service had resulted in improved working conditions to some extent. This finding accords with what Adesina (1990) reported that persistent efforts by teachers to improve their working conditions often improve the conditions to some extent though there is room for more improvement.

Polytechnic education demands active collaboration with industry. Yet, the study showed lack of active collaboration between the poly-technics and industries in Ghana. This has indeed adversely affected the quality of polytechnic products over the years. Indeed the challenges enumerated above impact negatively on teaching and learning and the effective delivery of polytechnic education in the country.

Coping Strategies

In an attempt to address the challenges, some rectors have adopted varied management strategies. One strategy

that addressed the challenge of inadequate qualified staff and their retention was the *implementation of staff development policies* through granting study leave with pay to staff members to upgrade their skills and knowledge in relevant fields of study. Apart from that, the polytechnics are accessing scholarships from other sources to support further studies of, particularly teaching staff both locally and abroad. This strategy also aims at motivating existing staff and consequently attracting others into the polytechnics. The capacity strengthening strategies of management, however, have come with another dimension of challenge: how to retain trained staff in the polytechnic. Seventy five percent of respondents, for example, suggested that some polytechnics were faced with the challenge of losing their staff to the universities , which are comparably paid higher than the polytechnics, once they are sponsored by polytechnics to pursue and complete their studies.

Within the context of scarce resources, some polytechnics have adopted the strategy of granting concessionary loan facilities for the purchase of, for example, vehicle and paying rent advance as ways of retaining trained staff in the polytechnics. However, some staff have often been dissatisfied with the quantum of loans available for them. It is in this context that the Education Reform Review Committee (2002) recommended that by way of attracting and retaining highly qualified staff in the polytechnics, government, should assist polytechnics in granting such loan facilities to polytechnic staff. Further more, the polytechnics have been advised to take advantage of the financial provisions under the Ghana

Education Trust Fund (GETFund) to improve post graduate training by way of upgrading the existing staff and to attract more qualified ones. This strategy was to help the polytechnic to compete with the industry in recruiting qualified and experienced staff.

It has been observed that by means of addressing the challenge of under-funding, the polytechnics have embarked on income generating activities which include organizing non-tertiary programmes apart from the mandated HND programmes. Other incomes are accrued from fees paid by both foreign and local students in some polytechnics. Other departments in some polytechnics render aspects of commercial and consultancy services to generate income. Although such activities are geared toward generating additional income besides the government subsidies, on the whole, little had been done in the areas of consultancy services and soliciting financial assistance from donor and corporate agencies.

In terms of improving the physical infrastructure, it was observed that almost all the polytechnics had sought support from the GETfund. Visits to the polytechnics showed that there had been facelifts in the polytechnics in recent times in terms of lecture halls, laboratories, libraries among others.

As a strategy to develop active collaboration with the industries, the polytechnics engage their students in industrial attachment at the industries as part of their training. On the part of the teaching staff, only few of them encourage their staff to undergo the practical training in the industries. It is realized that collaboration with the

industries had not been fully explored though practical training is a prerequisite in the formation of polytechnic graduates. More so, no formal agreement exists between the polytechnics and industries to promote industrial component of the training.

Conclusion

So Far, The Discussion Has Focused on the important role played by polytechnic education toward technological development of the country. Achieving the goals of the polytechnics require a new style of management who can place staff welfare at the centre of all managerial activities. By so doing, they will be able to reduce the level of trained staff attrition at the polytechnic level. Such a strategy was crucial because without the retention of highly trained teaching staff, it will be very challenging for the polytechnics to carry out their mandate to train career-focused middle level personnel which are particularly critical for the effective implementation of decentralization policies and planning reforms.

Particular attention should be paid to the challenges confronting the management of polytechnics as they transit from secondary to tertiary education levels. Without efficient and effective management of such transitional challenges, polytechnics would be hindered from performing their roles as mandated. At the institutional level, rectors, deans and heads of department need to commit themselves to instituting strategies towards augmenting government efforts since single source of managing the challenges could be

frustrating, and perhaps, more difficult to achieve. Industrial liaison sections of the polytechnic should also be strengthened and empowered to function more effectively so that they could establish stronger links with industry to support their (polytechnics) development plans.

Implications for management practice

1. *Developing leadership and management capacity of Rectors, Deans and Heads of Department.*

The challenges facing polytechnics and the strategies needed to cope with such challenges have implications on the management and leadership capacity development of Rectors, Deans and Heads of department. Special attention should therefore be given to the training of such people in leadership and manage-ment to enable them understand the issues involved in transitional challenges and ways of managing them. It also has implications for the recruitment strategies and other related management–related practices in the polytechnics.

2. *Attracting and Retaining High Calibre Staff*

To attract more qualified staff to polytechnics, it is essential that management persistently dialogues and negotiates with the government to establish a more competitive salary structure as well as better conditions of service for staff. This would go a long way to boost their morale for work. Management of the polytechnics should recognize

that staff are the most important resource hence must adopt personnel policies which are geared towards recruiting workforce that have the requisite skills and knowledge to produce quality graduates. Above all, the staff must be supported to be abreast with new development and changes in their areas of expertise.

3.   Enhancing Institutional and Staff Capacity

In terms of enhancing the capacity of staff, the management of polytechnics should explore other avenues for funds to support staff training and development without relying solely on the Government's GETFund scholar-ship. They could   also think about ways of increasing internally generated funding sources to enable them augment what the government grants through the GETFUND. Such internally generated funds could also support the provision of infrastructure and maintaining existing ones to promote teaching and learning.

4.   Managing Curricular Activities

Considering the practical nature of polytechnic education, mana-gement has the task of providing effective leadership towards promoting competency-based teaching and learning in the polytechnics. Strategies should be adopted such as forging formal and mutual beneficial links with business and industry to support their programmes. Such initiative could come from the

Rectors, Deans and Heads of Academic Departments.

5.   Enhancing Industrial Attachment

Industrial attachment should not be only restricted to students but it is necessary for polytechnic teachers to also undergo practical training on holidays to update their knowledge and skills as well as acquaint themselves with new trends in industry. The various Liaison offices should be provided with the necessary logistics to ensure effective industrial attachment training and supervision. Management should ensure that well documented programme regarding students' attachment are forwarded to the industries for them to be abreast with polytechnic attachment procedures as away of establi-shing links with the industries.

6.   Improving Physical Infrastruc-ture

With regard to improving acade-mic and physical infrastructure, management of the polytechnics are to explore more avenues and above all impress upon the Government to ensure that those facilities are expanded so that the polytechnics could discharge their roles for which they were upgraded. Since not all polytec-hnics have the capacity to provide certain infrastructure using their internally generated funds, management could contact some institutions like the World Bank to recommend other means of soliciting for funds to provide physical and academic facilities.

6. *Enhancing Access to Financing Arrangement*

To improve upon access to funds in the polytechnics, management could task Head of Departments to come out with income generating proposals and other road maps to generate additional income apart from the existing ones, that is, running of more programmes. The Vocational/Technical depart-ments could use their expertise to engage in more consultancy services as well as render commercial services to the communities for more income. Management could liaise with industries and other organizations to solicit financial assistance.

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Book Review
Title Of Book: Critical Issues For Educational Leadership In Ghana
Anthony Afful-Broni,
Publishers: Type Company Limited, Accra, Ghana
Year Of Publication: June, 2005
Number Of Pages: 129
Reviewer: Prosper Kwamiga Nyatuame

Nadine Gordimer, a Nobel laureate in Literature declared that the education system in South Africa is a "wreck." Her reason is not about the fact that the essence of education is no longer seen or felt among the South African people. Today, with the numerous challenges confronting the African continent, for that matter Ghana, the question of whether our educational leadership is doing enough to improve the quality of education keep on recurring. The debate about education and in fact, educational leadership has graduated or shifted from the existence of theories and philosophy of education to the use of education in ameliorating the predicaments in our societies. The call in the pronouncement of Gordimer therefore is to challenge those engage in philosophical inquiry into education on the African continent to expend their energy in reviewing the relevance of their pursuit and rather roll their sleeves, get their acts together and solve the problems of education. This is where the book; *Critical Issues for Educational Leadership in Ghana* comes in handy as a veritable resource material for all those who are interested in solving the problems confronting education in Africa in general and Ghana in particular.

The book: *Critical Issues for Educational Leadership in Ghana*, though not a proposal to kick-start a reform in education across Ghana, it does present the reader with some challenges and dilemmas that confront leaders of educational administration in Ghana and to solve problems of education in Ghana. The book of 129 pages comprises nine chapters. Each chapter raises critical issues regarding education which should be of interest to parents, teachers, school administrators, policy makers, researchers and anybody who has a stake in improving the quality of education in Ghana. The critical issues raised by the author begin from the mission and vision of education to include teaching as a profession, the roles of parents, family, and the community. Apart from discussing the roles of each of these socializing agents in contributing to the growth and development of the child as a socially, economically and morally acceptable member of society through the school system, the author provides overview of perspectives and scholarly opinions concerning leadership in education for interrogation. He asserts from the very beginning of the book that for a school, for that matter, education in Ghana to achieve its purpose, there must of necessity be a visionary leadership with missionary zeal who is prepared to remain focus and also ready to bring all

stakeholders on board in fulfilling the mandate of producing a future generation in whom the older generation can confidently entrust our societies, institutions, and the country as a whole without trepidation.

Chapter one of the book strongly makes a case for leaders in educational administration to design and follow through with a mission statement that is: specific, reliable, realistic, achievable, motivational, acceptable to all, market-oriented and subject to review after a considerable period of time. In discussing leadership and mission statement, the author makes no presumptions about the challenges that a leader is likely to confront. Consequently in chapter two, the author presents to the reader, the maintenance and progress dilemma leaders in educational administration face for perusal. According to the author, the maintenance and progress dilemma is a balancing act that a good leader in education has to master very well in order to achieve the goals he/she sets him/herself. The author is careful to note that leadership in these matters is complex and so, it is, inappropriate to be judgemental when discussing them. He encourages educational leaders to endeavour to confront the status quo in a manner that is innovative and progressive. In his explanation of maintenance and progress, the author expends effort to make the reader appreciate the fact that though the two concepts may seem diametrically as opposing each other, it does not need to be so because, at times, "the process of maintenance could contain elements of progress"(p.27). It is within this context that he advised educational

leaders to master the act of balancing maintenance and progress judiciously.

Another critical issue that the author brings to the fore is couched in a form of a question; "Is the teaching profession the last resort?" (p32). In answering this question, the reader is led through the history of education. Also, the reader is made to differentiate between traditional/indigenous and formal/western form of education. According to the author, teaching as a profession, had enjoyed a place of honour, respect and prestige in days gone by. However, in recent times, many factors including; inadequate remuneration, immoral and scandalous behaviours, lack of seriousness towards work by most members of the profession, and the perception that teaching can be done by anybody and everybody at all have contributed to the fallen image and lack of recognition for people in the profession. The author asserts that research findings and literature abounds with information about the role of teaching in national development yet the profession is suffering serious attrition because the practitioners lack the motivation and the necessary impetus to remain in it. Thus, making teaching in the minds of many people, a profession of the last resort. Nonetheless, the author cautioned that this phenomenon is not exclusive to Ghana alone, many African countries and some European countries are also bending under the phenomenon.

As if to say that the predicaments of teachers, for that matter, leadership in education are not yet over, the author brings to the fore the crucial issue of examination malpractices that have

fraught the educational system at all levels in Ghana. He deals comprehensively with the importance of examinations, and the causes and effects of examination malpractices on the whole education system. The author minces no words in making the reader to understand the fact that examination malpractices poison the entire system of education in many ways and there is therefore the need for concerted efforts from teachers and other stakeholders in curbing the menace.

Given these challenges that have plagued education in Ghana, the author identifies ingredients in society, which when tapped, can bring about improvement and progress in the schools, and for the matter, education of the Ghanaian child – the roles of Parent-Teacher Associations, the Community, and the Family as a unit of society. The author discusses these critical issues in general sweep and in factual details from chapter 5 to 9. Finally, he provides illuminating roles that these socializing agents or stakeholders of the education enterprise can play in achieving quality education in Ghana. The author, for example, has demonstrated in the book that, being mindful of the benefit of education; Parent-Teacher Associations are collaborating and supporting local schools, heads of schools, teachers and communities. He strongly advocates the importance of parent-teacher associations in ensuring that there are mutual and collaborative efforts among parents and teachers aimed at continuous commitment towards the quality of their children's education. Also, realising that the school forms part of

the larger community and also knowing that the community does impact on the school, he recommends collaboration between the school and the community in order for the school to be relevant and successful in training "people to become more useful members of society who will better contribute to the survival, growth and progress of the nation" (p 82). The author also reminds leadership of education to be conscious that "the school exits, not on its own, but to meet, fulfil, or satisfy the social, moral, and economic needs of society such as producing a literate population, helping to produce the manpower needs of the society and transmitting the society's culture to the young" (p 85).

Afful-Broni recognizes in his book that the family is society's most basic unit; therefore its role in preparing/laying foundation for the child who is the future of society is very important. The author accordingly reasoned that educational leaders should effectively combine efforts with the immediate family of children in providing the necessary school environment, opportunities and training for children to develop and become useful members of society. Also, aware that broken homes impact negatively on the upbringing of children, Afful-Broni draws the attention of parents and educational leaders to the implications of broken homes on the education of the Ghanaian child. He advocates the following solutions to mitigate the menace of broke home – post-marriage counselling, strengthening of guidance and counselling units in schools, education through workshops/ seminars by PTA/ School Management

Committees/Department of Social Welfare and other organisations.

Two things make this book stand out. Firstly, while this book may appear as a course text for students or as introductory text to an in-depth understanding of the concept of educational leadership, its perspectives and theories are well grounded and practical. More than a scholarly work, *Critical Issues for Educational Leadership in Ghana*, brings out the crucial issues that are germane to quality education in Ghana. Afful-Broni through objective scrutiny, examines the facts about educational leadership in schools with the aim of improving it.

Secondly, the obvious utilitarian quality of discussions couple with the simplicity of style of presentation marks out *Critical Issues for Educational Leadership in Ghana* for commendation. The use of simple language and deliberate absence of complex analysis of issues makes the book easy to read and also easy to comprehend.

Afful-Broni, in this work, has given educational leaders: the school head teacher, the school administrator, the classroom teacher, the PTA chairman, the parent and any person who is interested in effective leadership in schools towards improvement in quality of education in Ghana, an invaluable resource material and companion.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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1. Manuscripts which should be 10 to 20 pages in length should be submitted in triplicate, typed double-spaced on one side only of A4 paper. Contributors are requested to submit a copy of their manuscript on a 3.5 high density computer disk, with file stored in word processing format. Report of original research should consist of distinct sections and should appear in the sequence of these stages: introduction, method, result, discussion.

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