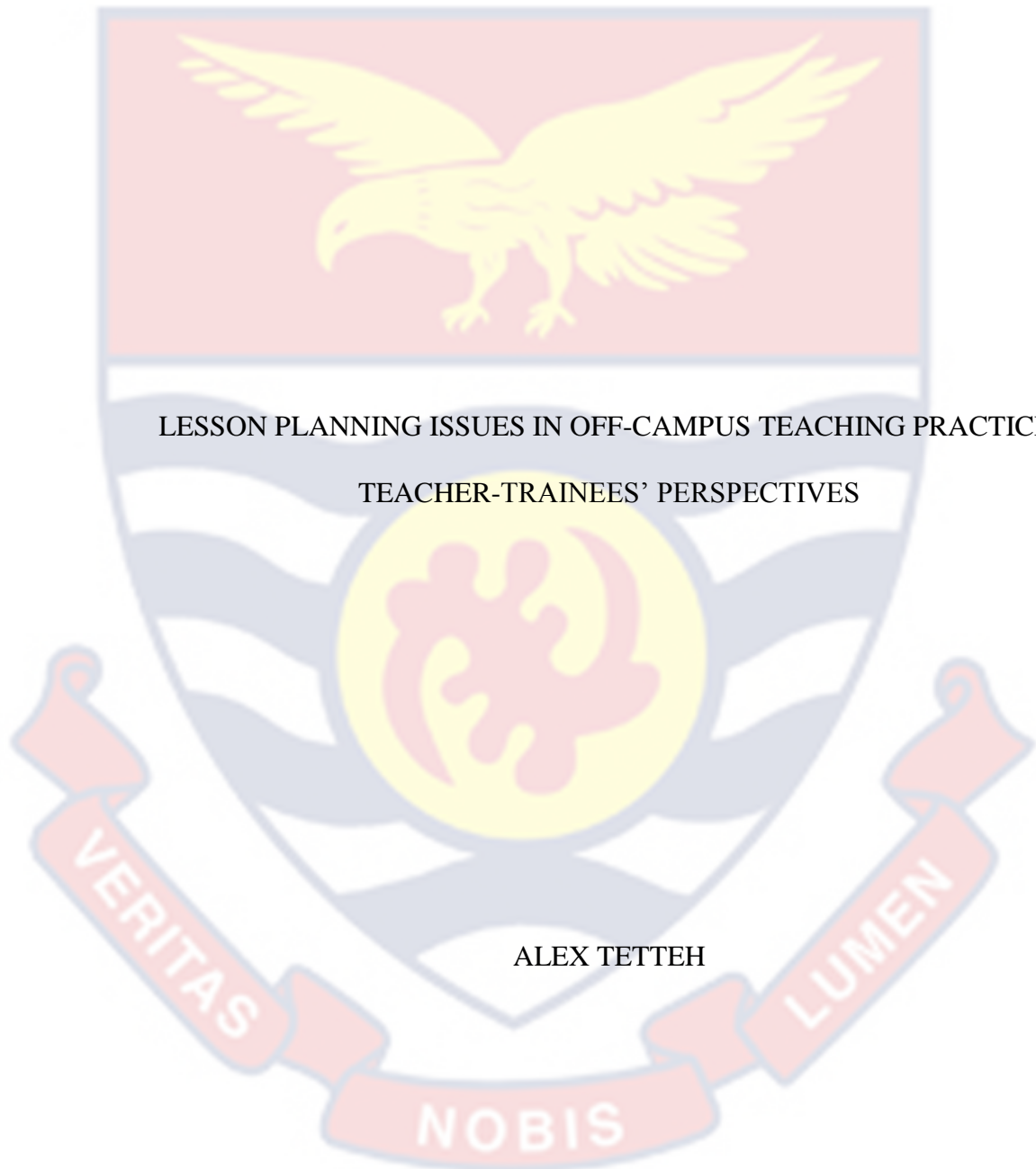UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

LESSON PLANNING ISSUES IN OFF-CAMPUS TEACHING PRACTICE:

TEACHER-TRAINEES' PERSPECTIVES

ALEX TETTEH

2014

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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BY

ALEX TETTEH

Thesis submitted to the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education of the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Curriculum Studies

JULY 2014

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: …………………...   Date: ………………

Name: Alex Tetteh

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: ……………………   Date: ………………...

Name: Dr. Albert L. Dare

Co-supervisor's Signature: …………………………..   Date: ………………...
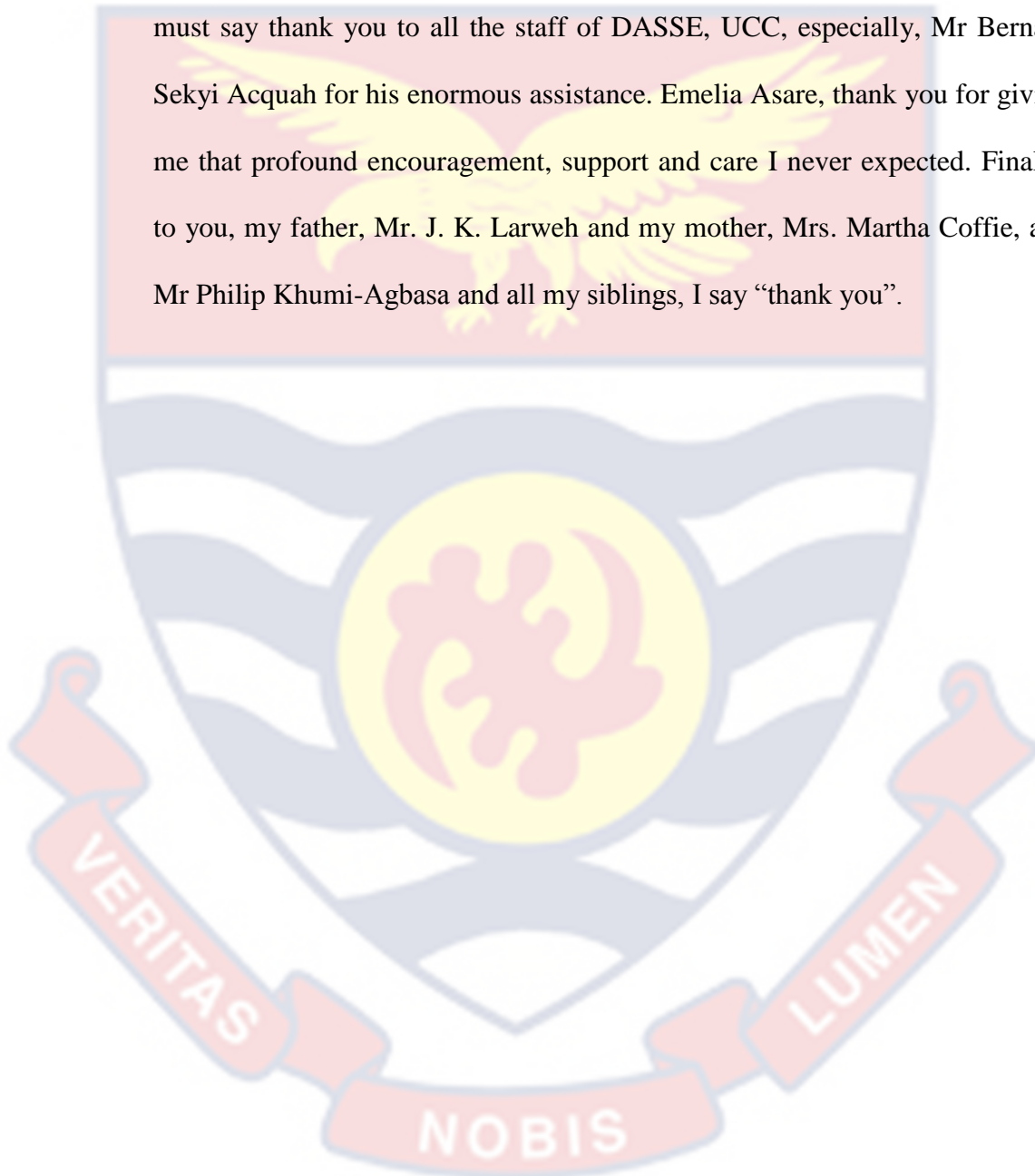
Name: Prof. Kankam Boadu

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores teacher-trainees' opinions about the issues of lesson planning and lesson supervision in OFCTP. The study is a descriptive survey that employed the mixed methods approach and collected data through document analysis and the use of a questionnaire. Through quota sampling technique, a sample size of 285 was selected from 449 UCC Level-400 teacher-trainees who engaged in the 2013 OFCTP in Zone 1[A].

The study showed that teacher-trainees were most confident of their ability to prepare most of the aspects of the lesson plan except in some few but very essential areas. Despite the multiple lesson planning and supervision challenges that trainees faced, they held in high esteem, the importance of lesson planning. Among the misgivings that teacher-trainees had about OFCTP lesson assessment and supervision were the contradictory suggestions from supervisors and the subjectivity associated with lesson assessment and the grades awarded.

It is concluded that though trainees had high confidence in lesson planning, the challenges they faced did not allow them to demonstrate their high-rated confidence in lesson plan preparation; OFCTP stifled the teacher-trainees' sovereignty, ingenuity and professionalism in lesson planning and teaching; trainees have mixed feelings about the worth of supervisors' directives on lesson planning. In view of these, methods lecturers are encouraged to hammer the essential areas of lesson planning this study found to be challenging for trainees. The TPU should engage only dedicated supervisors in the OFCTP supervision. Supervisors should be entreated to adhere to the guidelines meant to streamline the OFCTP lesson assessment and supervision as proposed by the TPU prior to every OFCTP supervision.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincerest gratitude goes to Dr. Albert L. Dare and Prof. Kankam Boadu, my Principal Supervisor and Co-supervisor, respectively. They scholarly guided me through this work and offered me the best assistance. I must say thank you to all the staff of DASSE, UCC, especially, Mr Bernard Sekyi Acquah for his enormous assistance. Emelia Asare, thank you for giving me that profound encouragement, support and care I never expected. Finally, to you, my father, Mr. J. K. Larweh and my mother, Mrs. Martha Coffie, and Mr Philip Khumi-Agbasa and all my siblings, I say "thank you".

DEDICATION

To Miss Emelia Asare and My Family

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Teaching is an activity intended to promote learning. Quality teaching is nursed through proper training, proper planning and professional dedication. Aggarwal (2003) sees teacher education as a means to kindle the teacher's initiative to keep it alive, to minimize the evils of the 'hit and miss' process in teaching, and to save time, energy, money and trouble of the teacher and the taught. In this regard, Aggarwal believes that teacher education is not about teaching the teacher how to teach. Proper teacher education is the one that helps teachers to perceive that the course would help them minimize their future teaching troubles and appreciate how that would help save the children from much of the painful process through which they themselves had passed as students.

Since the attainment of independence, Ghana has valued quality teaching and learning. As a result, two public universities (The University of Cape Coast, and The University of Education, Winneba) were established to be fully responsible for training qualified teachers to meet the nation's needed manpower for the primary, junior and senior high school levels, and even the tertiary level too (Acquah & Anti, 2013). Apart from these teaching-related public universities, there are over 38 colleges of education mandated to train teachers mostly for the primary and junior high schools.

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The University of Cape Coast (UCC) which was established in October 1962 as a college in special relationship with University of Ghana, became a full University in October 1971. At its inception, the college had two academic departments—Arts and Science— which were re-designed as faculties a year later. In 1964-1965, Education, which had previously formed part of the Arts, was established as a separate faculty in view of the crucial role which it had assumed within the re-organised degree structure. Thereafter, Education became a compulsory component of the three-subject course leading to the B.A and B.Sc (General) Education degrees offered by the college. In October, 1971, two-subject and single-subject honours degree courses were instituted in Arts, Sciences and Education and from 1975/76, the range and scope of study was widened to include courses in the social sciences and the length of period for the courses increased from 3-4 years (University of Cape Coast, Principal's Annual Report, 1970-1971).

Teaching Practice (TP), a teacher training technique which helps the teacher-trainee to master the teaching skills by practising teaching rudiments in terms of definable, observable, measurable and controllable real classroom situation had become a notable teacher-training technique all over the world. In the early 1960s, microteaching was invented at Stanford University by Dr. Dwight Allen (Cruickshank, 1996). Microteaching was a rather scaled-down teaching situation in which a teacher teaches a brief lesson to fellow trainees.

In UCC, TP is organised in two phases: On-Campus Teaching Practice (ONCTP) and Off-Campus Teaching Practice (OFCTP). The OFCTP was first introduced in UCC in the early to mid-1960s while the ONCTP was introduced later in the 1980s. Initially, the ONCTP was held in October and

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the OFCTP was in January. It involved the whole then Faculty of Education and came under the Dean's Office and organisation was done by a member of the Department of Education (University of Cape Coast Principal's Annual Report, 1970-1971). Along the line, the ONCTP became a two-semester course designated EMT 390^A and 390^B (Micro-teaching) until the 2012 academic year where the ONCTP was made a one-semester course (EMT 390) held in the second semester of the third year. This was due to the changing of the OFCTP period in 2011/2012 academic year from one month to a full semester programme in level 400 first semester.

During the ONCTP, students are given the opportunity to put into practice the knowledge and skills gained during the previous semesters, especially, from their methods and curriculum studies courses. Students practise specific teaching skills in a non-threatening environment, getting feedback from peers and supervisors in a stimulated setting full of cooperative activities. Each student-teacher teaches for at most thirty minutes. Colleague students (posing as pupils) and lecturers (as supervisors) present in the class, jointly discuss the teaching skills displayed both in the lesson plan and in the teaching process with a concentration on the improvement and perfection of the requisite skills rather than on the deficiencies of the individual teacher-trainee. Also, opportunities are provided for students to observe good models of teaching through video presentations and demonstration of specific teaching techniques. The ONCTP ultimately aims at helping students to gain much confidence and experience towards the relatively more demanding OFCTP. It serves as an antecedent to the OFCTP.

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The OFCTP (also known variously as professional attachment, professional orientation, professional experience, internship, field experience in teaching) is a capstone experience in which the student spends the whole of the first semester of the final year (instead of four weeks which was the previous requirement) in a school appropriate to his/her professional career goals. The student interns teaches assigned classes and subject(s) under the guidance of school-based mentors. Supervisors from the University of Cape Coast visit the schools regularly to monitor the teacher-trainees' progress and offer counselling and professional support. Thus, after each observation session, the supervisor discusses with the student his/her strengths and weakness and makes suggestions for improvement. The supervisor's observations using a rating scale (called Teaching Practice Assessment Form A, see Appendix G), serve as the main means of assessment for this 12 credit-hour course. During the practice period, the teacher trainee is required to adhere to established policies and procedures of the school of practice in addition to those policies and procedures established by the University. The clinical experience is designed to enable the teacher-trainee engage in competent reflective decision-making while teaching, demonstrating professionalism, scholarship and sensitivity to individual and communal interests. Standards of good practice, ethical and professional behaviour as laid down by the Ghana Education Service's (GES') code of ethics are supposed to be maintained and respected by the teacher-trainee.

In both ONCTP and OFCTP, one of the major endeavours for assessment is the lesson plan. There is no way one can complete these two activities without preparation of effective lesson plan that reflect the student

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teacher's pedagogical content knowledge. Lesson planning is a pro-active decision making that takes place before the lesson is implemented (Panasuk, Stone & Todd, 2002). A lesson plan is a practical outline of the topic to be taught in a period of time. It is a teacher's detailed description of the course of instruction for a class. Lesson planning is a special skill that is learned in much the same way as other skills (Maheshwari, 2011). When the teacher is able to create his own lesson plan, it means he/she has taken some steps toward studying who is to be taught, the content to be taught and the methods and materials to be used in the teaching. And so, acquiring the skill of lesson planning is far more valuable than being able to use lesson plans developed by others. In other words, knowing "how to" is far more important than knowing "about" when it comes to lesson planning (Singh, 2008). It takes thinking and practice to hone this skill, unfortunately, it does not happen overnight; yet, it is a skill that helps define one as a teacher.

For a level 300 education student in the University of Cape Coast, one of the major issues of concern is the TP that she/he will embark upon in the following academic year. Among the factors that seem to threaten them include lesson planning, lesson supervision and the teaching of students in a real classroom situation. The OFCTP is an activity that takes much attention of the trainees themselves, the supervisors and the schools involved. The following is an excerpt of a report by a lecturer who took part in the supervision of teacher-trainees in the OFCTP in the year 2011:

> This year's off-campus teaching practice commenced on October 10 and ended on December 5, 2011. I participated as a supervisor in zone 1[A] in the Central Region. I was able to

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conduct a total number of 64 supervisions. On the first day of the exercise, most of the students I visited in the schools were then organising themselves. Even though some of them had their timetables ready, others were yet to obtain the rest of their credit hours because the SHS One students had not reported yet. On the subsequent days, most of the students had comfortably settled and were at post. The rest of the exercise was without much incidence as most of the students conducted themselves as professionally as possible. The exercise was generally successful. However, I made the following observations during the exercise:

1. There seemed to be some disparities in the manner lesson plans were written. Some students presented very sketchy lesson plans with the excuse that other supervisors had complained that their previous lesson plans were too detailed.

2. Even though most of the students seemed to be well versed in content, they appeared to have some difficulty in the employment of appropriate pedagogy. Either students failed to apply what they were taught in their methods class or they did not grasp certain basic skills like questioning techniques and the choice of appropriate method of teaching.

Based on the above, I suggest that in-service training should be organised for all supervisors prior to the commencement of the exercise to ensure that there is harmonisation in the suggestions and direction given by supervisors to students. Again, periodic

workshops on pedagogy should be organised to help supervisors update their knowledge in pedagogy (Anonymous Supervisor, OFCTP, 2011).

From this supervisor's report, after the teacher trainee has struggled to get a school to practise in, four main issues may still linger:

1. Getting the required number of credit hours or teaching time (Pre-practice issues).

2. Issues of lesson planning

3. Employment of appropriate pedagogy (Teaching methodology) and,

4. Lesson supervision and assessment

However, among these four issues mentioned above, several informal comments as well as my personal experience as a teacher-trainee on OFCTP in the year 2010 show that issues on lesson planning, lesson supervision and assessment are the most important concerns for novice teachers on OFCTP. It was as a result of this that this research, entitled, "Lesson Planning Issues in Off-Campus Teaching Practice: Teacher-trainees' Perspectives" was conducted.

Statement of the Problem

The following is an extract from the report that the headmistress of one senior high school in the study area wrote about students who did their TP in her school in the year 2012. It states:

The number of students who reported for teaching practice from the University of Cape Coast was 18. They all reported the day school commenced on the 10th of September, 2012. Generally, their work was satisfactory. Some were involved in extra-

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curricular activities like cadet corp. and in invigilation of internal examination. Attendance to class was satisfactory. However, there were few hitches in their delivery of lessons taught. Quite a number of them repeated lessons unnecessarily thereby wasting the time of students. Some were absent from school without permission. Lesson delivery was a problem to some. They were not prepared for the lesson. One came to class without lesson notes, and hardly do some use TLMs. Some brought TLMs to class but would not use them because they change the lesson to teach an already taught one when a supervisor appeared. The two science teachers in chemistry and physics needed to improve a lot on lesson planning and lesson delivery. A little more than half did well (Anonymous Headmistress, OFCTP, 2012).

This extract shows that most teacher-trainees appear to struggle with lesson-related issues. This report is in congruence with the comments and suggestions made by supervisors on a sample of Form B's belonging to teacher-trainees who participated in the previous years' OFCTP.

On the Form "A", 20% of the total marks is assigned to only the lesson plan (named as "Objectives and Core Points in Lesson Plan") (see Appendix G). The achievement of this mark is not as important as its reflection in the competence and professionalism of the teacher-trainee who is "…learning to teach and teaching to learn" (University of Cape Coast, 2013, p. 2). Some studies conducted outside this country show that teacher-trainees face a lot of challenges in lesson planning during OFCTP. For example, a study by Faizah and Amir-Bin (2008) found that a typical problem that was faced by some

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teacher-trainees was the difficulty in constructing effective lessons to be used in the classroom. This appears to be the cause of worry for many trainees who seem to feel unprepared for the act of teaching. Faizah and Amir-Bin realised that the lack of understanding of certain components of the lesson plan drove some teacher trainees not to prepare lesson plan at all during OFCTP. They found that the number of trainees who were confident that their lessons were effective was far less than those who felt that their lessons were sometimes effective.

In Ghana, apparently, the issue is not about the lesson preparation alone; it also includes its delivery, supervision and assessment. However, my search through the available literature points out that, in the area of OFCTP lesson planning specifically, there is virtually dearth of research on it in Ghana. Consequently, this research was conducted so as to reveal what teacher trainees themselves perceive as the issues of lesson planning in the OFCTP programme that require more attention before, during and after the OFCTP.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore teacher trainees' perspectives on lesson planning issues in OFCTP. Specifically, it sought to:

1. Examine the aspects of lesson plan preparation that teacher trainees in the University of Cape Coast are most confident about in their ability.

2. Explain the lesson planning format that teacher-trainees prefer to use most.

3. Discuss the challenges of lesson plan preparation facing teacher trainees during OFCTP.

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4. Establish the level of importance teacher trainees place on lesson plan preparation.

5. Ascertain the opinions of teacher-trainees about OFCTP lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision.

Research Questions

In view of the purpose of the study, the following questions guided the study:

1. In what aspects of lesson plan preparation are teacher-trainees in the University of Cape Coast are most confident about in their ability?

2. Which lesson planning format do teacher-trainees mostly prefer to use?

3. What challenges of lesson plan preparation do teacher-trainees face during OFCTP?

4. What level of importance do teacher-trainees place on lesson plan preparation?

5. What are the opinions of teacher-trainees about OFCTP lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision?

Significance of the Study

Generally, the result of this study will contribute to knowledge by giving detailed on-the-field issues of lesson plan preparation faced by teacher trainees and the remedies thereto. Thus, specifically, the result will bring to the fore aspects of lesson plan preparation that teacher trainees are most confident of in their ability. This will give an idea about teacher trainees' preparedness to face the challenges of OFCTP lesson plan preparation in subsequent years. The Teaching Practice Unit (TPU) will find this information

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important in terms of whether to improve or maintain the current status (quality) of the microteaching.

Further, it will provide useful information to the TPU, supervisors, future teacher-trainees, the general public and other stakeholders on the kind of lesson planning challenges facing teacher trainees when they embark on the OCTP. The results will also show the level of importance that teacher-trainees place on lesson planning even with the challenges facing its preparation and also put the voices of the teacher-trainees in the public domain for their own professional development and the improvement of the practice of off-campus teaching in the University of Cape Coast.

Finally, this study gathered the opinions of teacher trainees about OFCTP lesson supervision and assessment. Such vital perceptions of the teacher-trainees could be factored into the orientation programme for supervisors and subsequent teacher-trainees prior to the commencement of the exercise.

Delimitation of the Study

It would have been most appropriate to conduct the research on a broader spectrum such as "The challenges faced by teacher-trainees on off-campus teaching practice in Ghana." However, the importance and the perceived problems associated with the pre-engagement phase of the teaching process, inspired me to consider only lesson plan preparation which is a major component of teacher pre-engagement preparation during the OFCTP and thereafter. Lesson planning is delineated to comprise the preparation of objective and time-specific plan to guide class activity and the delivery of the content of a lesson. Specific issues of interest on lesson planning to the study

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include: carving out a teachable topic or subtopic from a unit or chapter in the syllabus; stating instructional objectives in taxonomic categories and behavioural terms; introducing the topic and linking relevant previous knowledge to the new topic. The rest include choosing the right teaching method (logical teacher-learner activities) in relation to the content and objectives; stating the core points to clarify the main ideas/concepts/skills/knowledge; summarising the lesson; assessing student learning; evaluating the lesson and writing references for the lesson.

Only teacher-trainees on OFCTP from the University of Cape Coast in the study area were sampled for the study. The study area was Zone 1[A] which comprised Cape Coast Central, Elmina and its surroundings.

Limitations of the Study

Due to the way trainees were sparsely dispersed across the country, it made sense to choose Zone 1[A] where the trainees' number was quite high (449). As a result, it is difficult to generalise the results of the study to the whole 2013 OFCTP cohort.

The nature of the closed-ended questionnaire could make it possible for the teacher-trainees to respond to the items without understanding or even reading them (because they were to respond to the closed-ended items by just ticking). However, the effect of this factor might have been partly toned down by the use of the document analysis which enabled me to get first hand information from their lesson note books and the Form Bs.

Additionally, the questionnaire did not have any place for the respondents to indicate their programmes of study or subjects taught. This

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made it impossible to examine the trainees' responses to the lesson planning issues based on subject areas.

Finally, it may be possible that the descriptive research design employed allowed my personal feelings and subjectivity to influence (without my notice) the reporting of the issues as they existed. But, I am confident that these limitations did not affect (to a large extent) the validity and reliability of the results obtained because the results were discussed with people familiar with what happens in the schools where students practised.

Definition of Terms and Abbreviations

Supervisor/Faculty Supervisor: Usually, a lecturer from the UCC who supervises the work of the teacher-trainee

Co-operating supervisor: one chosen by the TP coordinator to supervise the work of a teacher-trainee in the absence of the Supervisor/Faculty Supervisor

Mentor/Teacher mentor: a longstanding teacher (experienced teacher) in the practising school to whom the teacher-trainee is assigned for guidance/induction

Form A: A standard assessment form that carries the specific areas of development that must be supervised and awarded marks.

Form B: Supervisors' observation remarks or commentary form that is given to the teacher-trainee after lesson supervision.

Teacher-trainee: this is a student in teacher training institution who is on teaching practice in a school to learn to be a professional teacher.

TLRs—Teaching Learning Resources (extra human effort or materials needed or used in the teaching-learning process.

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OFCTP— Off-Campus Teaching Practice

ONCTP— On-Campus Teaching Practice

TLA— Teaching-Learning Activities/Teacher-Learner Activities

TP— Teaching Practice

RPK—Relevant Previous Knowledge

ESL—English as a Second Language

Organisation of the Rest of the Study

The thesis is organised into five chapters. The first Chapter, i.e. the introduction, is made up of background to the study, statement of problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study and organization of the study. Review of related literature on the study is in Chapter Two with appropriate sub-headings based on the research objectives. Chapter Three is about the methodology employed in the study. It explains how this study was conducted. The sub-topics under this chapter include the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis. Chapter Four presents the results and discusses them. A summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter Five. Suggestions for further research are also provided.

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CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Overview

Quality teacher education is a great concern to educational authorities worldwide. In Ghana and elsewhere in the world, authors, authorities, educationists, researchers and institutions concerned with teacher education have documented several issues that needed to be revisited for the purpose of this work. This chapter, therefore, reviews literature related to lesson planning and dwelt much on the period of OFCTP. The review comprises the conceptual framework and the empirical review. The following sub-headings are discussed under the conceptual framework:

1. The Concept of Off-Campus Teaching Practice (OFCTP)

2. University of Cape Coast's Philosophy of Teaching Practice

3. Rules and Regulations Guiding OFCTP in the University of Cape Coast

4. The Concept of Lesson Planning

5. Importance of lesson planning

6. Lesson Planning Approach Adopted by the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast

7. Formats of Lesson planning (based on design or structure);

     i.   Tabular format (Vertical form/Horizontal form)

     ii.   Prose format

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The empirical review concisely touched on three main thematic areas outlined in the following sub-headings:

1. Competency and ability requirements for lesson plan preparation

2. Challenges of lesson plan preparation

3. Lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision

Conceptual Framework

The Concept of Off-Campus Teaching Practice (OFCTP)

The best place to learn to teach is in the classroom situation with real children, just as the best place to learn to swim is in the swimming pool (Chiromo, as cited in Ngara, Ngara & Ngwarai, 2013). There is no better way to gain confidence and competency in classroom teaching than to get in there and learn from doing. Wallace (1998) talks about two types of knowledge that teacher training programmes should offer: received knowledge and experiential knowledge. Received knowledge includes theoretical knowledge handed down from experts; and experiential knowledge comes through trainees' direct contact with the real context of teaching.

Teaching has become one of the several professions whose mission is to effect desirable changes in human learning abilities and behaviour in our societies (Afram, 2001). Members of the profession undergo both academic and professional training to learn the skills and techniques entailed in the work of teaching. The OFCTP is, therefore, a vital aspect of every teacher training programme.

OFCTP refers to the period of time in which a teacher-trainee gains first-hand experience in working with a particular group of students in a school (Perry, 2003). A number of terms such as 'the practicum', 'student

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teaching', 'field studies', 'infield experiences' or 'internships' are used to refer to this exercise.

According to Bourdillion (as cited in Zindi, Nyota & Batidzirai, 2003), TP goes beyond just knowing what to teach and knowing how to teach. The purpose of TP is to develop several competences in the teacher-trainee which include; interpersonal, pedagogical, intercultural and psychological competences. Students are prepared for TP through lectures, observations of competent qualified teachers teaching, micro and peer teaching (Ngara, Ngara & Ngwarai, 2013).

Field experiences, such as student teaching, are cooperative endeavours in which host schools work closely with the training institution to provide quality experiences for the teacher-trainees. The practice is usually structured for final year students but the time span within which OFCTP take place depends on every training institution. In UCC, OFCTP is a full-semester, full-time, full-day, clinical component of the teacher preparation programme for final year teacher-trainees. Every teacher training university has a Department of TP responsible for the TP courses in each programme. Such departments administer all the placement, supervision and assessment of students on TP in the practising schools. Hosting a student teacher is a major professional commitment by teachers, administrators, and school boards (Pennsylvania State University, 2013). Trainees receive guidance and assistance from their professors, supervisors and cooperating school teachers (Al-Mahrooqi, 2011).

According to Ligadu (2004), the purpose of the teaching practicum is to integrate educational theory with practice. It is assumed that the teaching

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practicum will provide student teacher trainees (mentees) the opportunity to develop a professional identity, teach and participate in multiple complex and concrete experiences essential for meaningful learning and teaching

Student teaching has been called the most challenging, rewarding, and critical stage of teacher education (Goethals & Howard, 2000) and it is generally agreed that the student teaching experience is the key for teacher preparation programmes (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). It is often a stressful experience for teacher-trainees.

For many (e.g. Farrell, 2008; Chiang, 2008; Wallace, 1998), TP is always of the essence since it provides intense training and socialization into all aspects of the teaching profession inside and outside the real classroom. It serves as an opportunity to be exposed to the realities of teaching and performance of professional activities.

The positive side of this whole exercise of TP is that it gives some sense of accomplishment to students teachers. They learn to take responsibility, gain confidence and improve upon their classroom management skills. Above all the communication skills get improved (Bhargava, 2009). Bhargava found out that most student teachers report that after TP they feel a lot more confident in speaking before a gathering than before. TP serves as a firm base for carefully mentored experience to help them develop and enhance the knowledge, skills and the disposition for effective teaching. Implying that the teacher training programme should not be about giving theoretical knowledge of various theories of teaching and learning or skills used in the classroom teaching only; rather it should serve as a worthwhile experience in making of an inspiring teacher.

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Research indicates that trainees value the TP component the most in their teacher education programmes (Chiang, 2008) but if initial training is not intensive, many trainees will have difficulty in translating theoretical ideas into practical shape (Bhargava, 2009). Every institution has its own consideration of what should constitute TP. Whatever an institution accepts as part of TP constitutes the institution's philosophy of TP.

University of Cape Coast's Philosophy of Teaching Practice (TP)

In training high calibre teachers, the university recognises the major role that TP plays. It, therefore, creates the environment vital for student teachers to develop professional skills. The student undergoes both ONCTP (microteaching) and OFCTP. The ONCTP entails training students to learn how to teach by exposing them (in the third year) to peer teaching to enable them practice classroom skills. In the first semester of the final year, students are exposed to extended period of school teaching experience under the guidance of experienced mentors and university supervisors—this is the OFCTP.

Every teacher-training institution has its own philosophy of TP. For the University of Cape Coast, according to the *Teaching Practice Handbook* (UCC, 2013), the College of Education Studies believes that teaching is an activity intended to promote learning, and that there is no one best approach for achieving this. The Faculty sees TP as an opportunity to share knowledge, experience, skills with students in a conducive environment that values and celebrates diversity. That environment should provide opportunities for problem solving, experimentation and discovery of proper teaching strategies. In addition, TP should provide an environment that encourages questioning

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and discussion in the construction of knowledge for both the learner and the teacher, as well as foster the reflective capacities of observation, analysis, critical thinking and decision making for the teacher in particular (University of Cape Coast, 2013).

The university accepts the fact that effective teaching depends on good mastery of subject matter; demonstration of effective use of varied teaching techniques, strategies and resources; warm interpersonal relationships; and thoughtful reflection on practice. It further recognises the school and classroom settings where teaching and learning take place as uncertain, dynamic and problematic environment, and therefore, envision a teacher who is a reflective practitioner.

The quality of teacher development practices has become a major concern in recent educational discourse, with a growing emphasis on a reflective approach (Vieira & Marques, 2002) suggesting that quality should be assessed with reference to teacher empowerment through reflection. The reflective process involves continuous self-observation and evaluation of trainee to understand individual actions and reactions of learners (Brookfield, 1995 & Theil, 1999). The process was conceptualized as an action research model whereby people learn and create knowledge by critically reflecting upon their action and experiences, forming abstract concepts and testing the implications of these concepts in new situations. Since the ability to reflect is often regarded as an important attribute of effective teachers as propagated by Posner (1996); O` Donoghue and Booker (1996); Borko, Michalee, Timmons and Siddle (1997), the University has integrated and embedded in the training

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programme opportunities for teacher-trainees to acquire this skills before and during the OFCTP.

It is expected that by the end of the OFCTP, the teacher-trainee will be able to combine his/her knowledge of subject matter, knowledge of students, knowledge of the broad aims of education and of the political and social contexts of schools with reflective thinking. Secondly, the teacher-trainee should be able to make prudent professional decisions in the performance of his/her duties and also be able to create an environment that maximizes learning for all students (University of Cape Coast, 2013). What these imply is that a teacher who is not able to exhibit reflective ability after the OFCTP is not professionally empowered in terms of the development of "content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, 'artistry' ability to act, ability to self-regulate, ability to communicate and negotiate and lacks critical stance towards contexts" (Vieira & Marques, 2002, p. 18).

Given what reflection entails, it is not easy to assess reflective ability (O`Donoghue & Brooker, 1996). Kemmis (also cited in Vieira & Marques, 2002), presented some five propositions about the critical, political nature of reflection that not only clarify what it entails but also indicate that reflective teacher education can be a far-reaching, complex approach, not easy to put into practice and, probably, even less easy to evaluate. This is because reflection is not biologically or psychologically determined; nor is it 'pure thought'; reflection expresses an orientation towards action and is about the relation between thought and action. Likewise, reflection is not a mechanical process or a purely creative exercise to construct new ideas; it is a practice that expresses our power to reconstitute social life through participation in

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communication, decision making, and social action (cited in Vieira & Marques, 2002, p. 2).

The University of Cape Coast (2013) again, holds that TP is a process of learning to teach and teaching to learn. To facilitate this process, the student teacher must experience an extended period of school placement under the guidance of experienced mentors and university supervisors. Also, the student teacher must be prepared not only for work in classrooms but also in schools and communities. Finally, the school experience must begin with the student teacher initially observing a group of mentors, and then taking on some teaching responsibilities under the guidance of mentors before taking charge of a full class in independent teaching. This implies that the TP is there to develop the aspiring teacher in totality for personal, community and national development. For the teachers' personal development, the College of Education Studies of the University of Cape Coast has it that TP should be meant to provide three main opportunities for the teacher-trainee: these are professional knowledge, professional skills and professional attributes—the constituents of TP. These are supposed to be demonstrated by the teacher-trainee and confirmed by the supervisors during the OFCTP.

The supervisor and the teacher-trainee are the two main people of concern during the practice. Each of them has a responsibility. Some of the duties of the teacher-trainee according to the *Teaching Practice Handbook* (UCC, 2013) are that, they are expected to:

1. Complete a minimum of 14 periods per week of practical teaching as well as participate in all relevant teaching-related events, in his/her school of practice throughout the TP period

2. Be observed formally on at least six occasions by at least two Faculty Supervisors.

3. Demonstrate advance preparation of lesson plan and resources.

4. Communicate appropriately and effectively with learners

5. Establish and maintain an inclusive learning environment

6. Use a range of teaching and learning approaches and resources which are appropriate for learners and which are effective in engaging and motivating and meeting the needs of individual learners.

Some of these responsibilities are very important, for instance, being observed formally on at least six occasions by at least two Faculty Supervisors means the trainee will be well groomed for the teaching job, all other things being equal. Meanwhile, some of the responsibilities spelt out are practically too challenging for the teacher-trainee. For example, the completion of a minimum of 14 periods per week of practical teaching as well as participation in all relevant extra and co-curricular activities throughout the TP period is too heavy a load for a teacher-trainee who is an "apprentice" of the teaching profession. Secondly, for the teacher to use a range of teaching and learning approaches which are appropriate for learners and which are effective in engaging and motivating learners, he/she has to engage in some trial-and-error in the teaching process. This, however, will not augur well for a trainee who is eager to earn higher marks in the exercise since supervisors may not accept any excuse on the basis of using trial-and-error to get the best approach. In the same vein, usually, it is difficult to obtain the range of resources that can meet the needs of individual learners so as to promote inclusive teaching and learning. The responsibilities of supervisors and co-operating supervisors have

been outlined in the *Teaching Practice Handbook* (University of Cape Coast, 2013, p. 6).

Rules and Regulations Governing TP in the University of Cape Coast

The College of Education Studies has documented in the *Teaching Practice Handbook* (University of Cape Coast, 2013), rules and regulations that teacher-trainees especially, are requested to bear in mind and strictly adhere to. For instance, students are to teach throughout the period of supervised teaching. The minimum number of periods students are expected to teach is 14 and maximum is 18. Detailed notes are to be prepared in a bound notebook. These lesson notes are to be made available to all supervisors. Teacher-trainees are expected to remain in the school whether or not they have lesson. If for any reason a teacher-trainee has to leave the school before the normal daily session is over, a written request for permission is to be lodged with the Head of the School. After every visit by a supervisor, the teacher-trainees are to request a copy of the supervisor's report (Form B), which enables them to know their performance (this report is to be given after the trainee has been carefully counselled by the supervisor). It is categorically stated that in the trainee's own interest he/she should welcome advice and criticism from experienced staff and feel free to present problems in connection with their teaching to their supervisors.

These and other regulations documented in that Teaching Practice Handbook are to ensure that the teacher-trainee is well-groomed for the teaching profession. Though these policies, rules and regulations are in place, issues of lesson planning, lesson supervision and assessment are the major concerns for the teacher-trainees. The command that teacher-trainees are to

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welcome advice and criticism from experienced staff is good but this appears to be at the risk of accepting, sometimes, contradictory suggestions when it comes to lesson planning and lesson delivery. In a similar vein, Tamakloe (1999) maintained that the student's knowledge of the rules and regulations governing the TP equips him/her with facts about what to demand and from where or whom. It also provides caution as to what the student is not expected to demand or do and saves time and money. To him, knowledge of the rules and regulation saves the trainee from certain embarrassing situations, and equips him/her with the wherewithal of the practice.

The Concept of Lesson Planning

An effective curriculum and effective instruction require effective planning (Henson, 2006). Planning in the teaching-learning context includes everything the teacher does prior to the actual class teaching. Teachers plan the lesson that they expect their students to learn. A lesson plan shows how a teacher puts the curriculum into practice (Duncan & Met, 2010). Lesson planning is a cognitively demanding task in which teachers bring to bear their expertise and experience to make good instructional decisions. It is curriculum planning at the classroom level.

In this research, "lesson plan" and "lesson notes" were used interchangeably though, essentially, the lesson plan is not the same as the lesson note. Lesson plan is the *organisation of activities* to be carried out in a class (Adu, 2006) while the lesson notes concern, fundamentally, the *materials (i.e. the subject matter) to be delivered* in a class. It is made up of the important things the teacher wants the class to know.

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The concept of lesson planning originates from the Gestalt psychology (Singh, 2008). Gestalt psychology is a branch of psychology that treats behaviour and perception as an integrated whole and not simply the sum of individual stimuli and responses (Microsoft Encarta, 2009). This has a great influence on human learning. In the school, the whole is perceived by a part. This is the foundation of the concept of unit planning. Most learners understand whole concepts by first grasping the unit because meaningful activities are related to one another within a unit (Mishra, 2008). B. F. Skinner provided an approach to a unit plan. The focus of his unit plan is the modification of behaviour. His major assumption about learning is that the student learns better if the content is presented in small units. The lesson plan is developed with the purpose of presenting the content in bits suitable for specific circumstances or situations.

Usually, teachers plan lessons without considering the type that can suit the situation at hand (Keene, 2010). Koomson, Frimpong, Amuah, Anyagre, and Brown (2002) and Maheshwari (2011) state the different kinds of lessons. For example, they mentioned *developmental lesson* that is used when the aim is to teach a new thing to students. In this case the teacher wants to develop a new idea or new knowledge in the students. This means that the kind of lesson a teacher should prepare when starting a new topic is the developmental lesson plan. There is also an *inductive or deductive lesson* which is a special form of developmental lesson. It is inductive when used to develop a formula, law, rule or a principle. For example, the area of a circle, A= πr^2. It is deductive when it is used to apply general knowledge of principles to specific cases.

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An *appreciation lesson* has the aim of capturing the feeling and attitude of students. There is a saying that feelings are caught not taught. When a teacher wants his students to appreciate a clean environment or an aspect of their culture, the lesson plan that is prepared is an appreciation lesson. We also have a *skill lesson* that involves the learning of a practical performance or mechanical act. It could be serving or washing or even a more mental activity such as computation. Writing and spelling are other skills that can be taught. Skill lessons require the learner to practice the activities or skill long enough so as to be perfect in it. Lastly, if a teacher intends to review something that was learned previously so as to understand it better, then the kind of lesson that needs to be planned is a *revision lesson*. It is important for the teacher to be aware of the different kinds of lesson plans and the formats and use each one for his convenience and most importantly, to the benefit of the learner.

Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005) mention that preparation for any sustained teaching-learning interaction over a considerable period of time has, in its process, three important aspects. These aspects are the designing of an instructional programme (syllabus), the preparation of scheme of work; and the writing of a lesson plan. A syllabus is a subject-based curriculum guide that specifies what is to be taught in a period of time. A scheme of work (teaching plan) consists of units, topics, concepts and themes to be covered in a specific period of time. It is drawn from the syllabus and it shows an overview of the course content for the year, a term or week by listing in sequence the units and topics to be covered. It is from this scheme that the

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classroom teacher prepares the Daily Lesson Plans to be taught within particular period(s).

In Ghana, because the educational system is centralised, the teacher does not concern himself with the drawing up of a syllabus; rather, his main concern is to draw up a scheme of work from the syllabus and also prepare the lesson plan from that. The apportioning of what should be done, term by term, is partly what the scheme of work does. A scheme of work is more detailed than a syllabus but the syllabus is more extensive. The scheme of work is prepared with the knowledge of where students are now and where they need to be (i.e. what do the students need to know and be able to do that they do not know and are not able to do now?). Koomson et al. (2002) opined that the information that might be contained in a scheme of work includes "what is to be taught (topics and subtopics); a description of how teaching should take place; activities students could be made to engage in; number and type of materials that would be needed; exercises to be completed and textbooks to use" (p. 254).

Koomson et al. (2002) further explained that there is no common structure for a scheme of work. However, given the content of a good scheme of work based on the aforementioned components, a standard one should be structured as follows:

Table 1: A Typical Structure of a Scheme of Work

Term/Week/Evalua-tion/Reference	Topic	Objectives	Activities/materials	Remarks

(Adopted from Koomson et al., 2002)

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Duncan and Met (2010) advised that after thinking ahead and mapping out what should be covered by the class, the teacher preparing to write a good lesson plan for a particular class has to ask himself/herself series of questions such as:

1. What do I know about the content/subject matter to be taught?

2. What student characteristics (age, needs, abilities, and interests) should I keep in mind as I plan the lesson?

3. What options or choices do I have to make about teaching methods, TLRs, the time allocation, learning experiences and activities?

To this end, it must be said that before embarking on the OFCTP, teacher-trainees from the University of Cape Coast are trained to be equipped with the concepts of lesson planning discussed so far. It is therefore, expected that the trainee will be able to practically demonstrate, to a large extent, the knowledge and skills of the concepts of lesson planning. The value that teacher-trainees place on lesson planning as an essential tool for teaching (but not just a major precondition for passing the OFCTP) must be in the known.

(A) Importance of Lesson Planning

Any debate on improving classroom teaching and other pedagogical practices and the achievement of learning outcomes revolve around lesson planning and preparation (Lieberman & Miller, 2008). In planning, the teacher prepares and equips him/herself for teaching. Sukran, Turkay, and Sevda (2013) summarised the importance of lesson planning in this way:

A good planning gives the opportunity to run the teaching activities in a smooth and regular way. A teacher who plans his works in advance does not face any difficulties in the

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classroom; he works with confidence and complacence, reaches

his goals via the shortest way by achieving a productive work

(p. 159).

Indeed, lesson planning is very important but this statement appears like lesson planning is the answer to all problems in the classroom. Sukran, et al. are only elaborating the fact that if lessons are planned, all problems in the classroom that arise solely as a result of failure to plan lessons will be zero. The responses of teachers involved in the research conducted by Sukran, et al. showed that they valued lesson planning. Writing the lesson plan, provides the teacher with the opportunity to determine which activity should come first and which should follow. Well-written lesson plans are valuable tools in the hand of every teacher. It has been found that good and effective teachers are those who take time to prepare their lesson notes in writing and use them in teaching (Adu, 2006).

Koomson et al. (2002) have eulogised lesson planning in the following four ways: first, lesson plans enable the teacher to identify and gather materials required for teaching. This is because you have the opportunity to think of what you are going to do and therefore what materials you would use to do it. You would then find out where to get such material in advance. Preparing appropriate course content to be delivered, appropriate activities the student will be involved in, appropriate teaching aids necessary to illustrate the points to be discussed helps the teacher not begin the lesson and wish he/she had some material or information in the middle of the lesson. In the same vein, lesson presentation also becomes precise, as irrelevant information is avoided.

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Once you have the planned lesson, your presentation becomes more focussed and therefore, unnecessary issues are reduced.

Secondly, it makes the teacher read and consult some important sources of information. Once you have to write down a lesson plan, you would find out more about the topic and prepare a comprehensive lesson especially, when you know the headteacher or any other person may have the opportunity to look at it. In the end, both teacher and students benefit from more interesting and content-relevant lessons.

Thirdly, having a carefully constructed lesson plan in hand allows the teacher to enter the classroom with considerably more confidence. The teacher becomes confident in presenting the lesson. You can only be confident when you know very well what you want to teach and are sure of a source that you can quickly fall on when the need arises.

Lastly, a well-prepared lesson plan enables another teacher to take over the class in the absence of the regular teacher. Also, when students go on to the next class, the lesson plan of the previous class can tell where they reached so that the new teacher would know where to continue from. Sometimes a teacher is even changed in the middle of the year but a new teacher can easily continue with the class since the lesson plan is available.

In addition, lesson plans also serve as a written record of work done by the teacher (Singh, 2008). Lesson plans serve as records of teaching triumphs and challenges. Old lesson plans can serve as a history of teaching, and are an invaluable tool for self-reflective, self-assessment and self-evaluative purposes (Kizlik, 2010). This is why it is preferred that teachers reserve a space (remarks section) on the lesson plan in which to document the successful and

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unsuccessful techniques to serve as guidelines to later preparations. It is for this and other reasons that teachers in Malawi are by policy required to have a written lesson plan that they must follow for every lesson that they teach (Susuwele-Banda, 2005).

Lesson plan shapes what students learn. In the long run, apart from the informal curriculum, it is the planned lesson that students experience directly and not the official curriculum. Lesson planning therefore, helps ensure that classroom instructions align with the curriculum goals and objectives (Duncan & Met, 2010). Also, the classroom is not the place to begin thinking of why, where, what, and how to teach. It is the time the teacher gets busy with teaching alongside managing classroom environment. For this reason some decisions for effective delivery of a lesson require teachers to pull together TLRs and an array of knowledge and understanding from the curriculum which may not be easily accessible during the classroom interaction. Planning a lesson well in advance of the actual class meeting allows for the luxury of time (Duncan & Met, 2010).

Adu (2006) listed some advantages of writing and using lesson notes as a teacher. He believes that a well prepared lesson does the following;

1. Assists both supervisors and principals in evaluating a teacher's performance.

2. Helps the teacher to have a record of student difficult areas and therefore able to predict areas that must be given extra attention.

3. Enables the teacher to command more respect from the students due to the confidence, zeal and the smooth way that the lesson is presented.

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4. Guides the beginning teacher and assists those who are asked to handle a class in the absence of the class/subject teacher.

5. Enables the teacher to manage the teaching time very well. It prepares the teacher ahead of time for the appropriate teaching methods, and materials/teaching aids needed for the class.

6. Helps the teacher to update his knowledge on current issues in his/her subject area(s) as he/she prepares for the lesson

The *Student Teaching Handbook for 2013/14 academic year* (Pennsylvania State University, 2013) reiterates that the development of written lesson plan serves three main purposes tor teacher-trainees: first, it enlightens, stimulates and strengthens the trainees' zeal to teach a particular topic—gives confidence. Second, it provides concrete evidence that the trainee has considered important decisions and factors in planning—gives focus. This then fulfils the third purpose: the detailed planning makes the teachers' thought process explicit so that (as a teacher-trainee) his/her mentor teacher or university supervisor can evaluate and help him/her plan more effectively. The general importance of the lesson plan, no matter the approach used in its preparation, can never be overemphasised.

Lesson Planning Approach Adopted by the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast

There are many approaches to lesson plan preparation. These include Gagné's Nine Events of Instruction, Herbartian approach (traditional approach), Bloom's approach, Madeline Hunter's Approach, Slavin's Lesson Structure, among others. What teacher-trainees in the University of Cape Coast are taught to use is more of an eclectic approach. It takes into

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consideration the essential components of all the approaches mentioned above. The preamble of the lesson plan begins with some background characteristics or information about the class and the lesson (Tamakloe, 1999; Tamakloe, Amedahe & Atta, 2005; Koomson, Frimpong, Amuah, Anyagre & Brown, 2002). These are sometimes referred to as the mechanical part of the lesson plan (Koomson, et al., 2002). They include class, average age of students, number on roll, day, time, duration of lesson, reference books and sometimes, the topic or sub-topic. These are easily completed in a mechanical way without much reflection. Tamakloe, et al. (2005) hints that the most important components of many lesson plans are the topic, objective(s), previous knowledge, teaching/learning resources, introduction, presentation, closure, evaluation, pre-lesson preparation and a remarks column. These parts appear in that order in the lesson plan. Each has been discussed in the paragraphs that follow:

The Topic: The first essential component of the lesson plan is the topic. Tamakloe, et al. (2005) stressed that the topic should be worded in such a way that it will be self-explanatory and comprehended easily by the students for whom it is intended. For example, topics such as "Democracy", "Supply", and "Self-esteem" are not helpful. They do not provide the specific aspect meant to be studied for that short period. For the topics or sub-topics to make proper and specific meaning and prepare the students to get an insight into what the lesson is about such topics must be expanded. They will better make much meaning if for example, instead of "Democracy", it is written as "The Meaning of Democracy", and instead of "Supply" it is written as "The Law of Supply". "Self-esteem" could be "Self-esteem: why it is important".

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Nevertheless, Tamakloe, et al. contend that if teachers make the students aware of the objectives of the lesson, then the topics could stay as they are ("Democracy", "Supply", "Self-esteem") but since mostly teachers do not do that, it is better to have the topics or subtopics expanded.

References: The teacher has to indicate in the plan where information or further information on the topic is or could be obtained. This is the reference section under the topic and is to ensure, among other things, that whoever needs further information on the lesson is given accurate information and not misled. The statement of the reference should follow the American Psychological Association (APA) format. UCC students are taught this format in the first year and they use it to provide references in their assignments and in their project works (UCC Faculty of Education Academic Programmes, 2005-2010).

Objectives: An objective is a description of a student learning outcome (Price, 1999). This component of the lesson clearly defines the purpose or the aim or the rationale for teaching the lesson. It could be one statement or a series of statements all of which culminate in the clarification of the goals of the lesson. The objectives are what the teacher hopes his students will have been able to do by the time the lesson comes to an end. For most lessons, the objectives are stated in behavioural terms. This follows the tradition of the behavioural psychologists notably Thorndike (1913), Watson (1930), Guthrie (1935), and Skinner (1954) (Tamakloe, et al., 2005). The implication of their findings and conclusions are that, if the objectives are stated in behavioural terms, then the expected learning outcomes can manifest explicitly for the teacher to assess and evaluate by the end of the lesson. The

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advantage of a behavioural objective is its specificity which gives the teacher a definite target to aim and a definite criterion for measuring or evaluating student learning (Tamakloe, 1999). Kizlik (2010) reiterates that since most learning cannot be seen directly, behavioural objectives provide a basis for making the best possible inferences about whether learning has occurred. It helps teacher-trainees make self-evaluations of their teaching-learning methods as well as design lessons that theoretically make it easier for learners to comprehend (Vogler, 1991).

The phrase, "by the end of the lesson" is preferred to "at the end of the lesson" because the intended learning does not take place only at the end of the lesson but at any moment or stage as the lesson progresses. The individual "student" is also preferred to the group, "students" (Tamakloe, et al., 2005). A very good lesson objective, therefore, has to be specific, measurable, accurate, relevant, and time bound/achievable within the duration of the lesson (UCC Teaching Practice Assessment Form "A", 2013). The following instructional objectives on the topic "Introduction to Economics" illustrate what has been explained:

By the end of the lesson the student *should* be able to:

1. *explain* the meaning of economics in his/her own words.

2. *select* the best definition of economics from a list of definitions of economics.

3. *describe* the three basic economic problems that economics is concerned with.

4. *determine* two important reasons for studying economics.

5. *state* three reasons why people feel economics is about miserliness.

6. *construct* a scale of preference.

From the objectives above, the words that are italicized are action verbs which make the student's performance overt (observable) for assessment and evaluation. This shows that the objectives are all stated in behavioural terms. It can also be observed that each statement has only one task in it (specific) and could be measured as well. In place of the word *should*, other people use *will*. The difference is that, the use of *should* pushes the responsibility largely to the student while the use of *will* connotes shared responsibility between the student and the teacher.

Apart from stating the specific objectives in behavioural terms, it is expedient to have the objectives for a particular lesson cover all the domains of learning, namely, cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains (Bloom, 1956). The cognitive domain is about knowledge and the development of intellectual skills. This includes the recall or recognition of specific facts, procedural patterns and concepts that serve in the development or intellectual abilities and skills. The affective domain includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings values, appreciation, enthusiasm, motivations and attitudes. The psychomotor domain includes physical movements (like running, jumping, speaking, typing, drilling,) co-ordination, and use of the motor skill areas.

The domains are very important because "from the time of ancient Greek education till today, it has been accepted that learning should develop the total person" (Koomson, et al., 2002, p. 205), i.e. the head, the heart and the hand. But, measurement and evaluation of the affective domain is quite difficult since the changes in behaviours are not as explicit as those of the

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cognitive and the psychomotor domains (Vogler, 1991; Boz & Boz, 2006). Though Bloom (1956) enumerated major categories of the affective domain (namely, receiving, responding, valuing, organisation and characterisation by value or value complex), it is still very complex to generate a standard criterion to assess (measure) and evaluate objectives that are meant to achieve a change in behaviour on attributes such as interpersonal relations, emotions, attitudes, appreciations, values, and so forth. In the same vein, the psychomotor domain appears to have received the least attention (Vogler, 1991; Boz & Boz, 2006). Measurement and evaluation of psychomotor objectives are in terms of speed, precision, distance, procedures or techniques in execution. It is not surprising that Bloom and his associates did not do much research work on this domain (Onivehu & Amoah, 2002).

The objectives, (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) stated at page 36 are all in the cognitive domain (but at different levels of Bloom's taxonomy of learning: comprehension, evaluation, knowledge and application respectively), the (v) reflects the affective domain. The last one, (vi), cannot be said to be in the psychomotor domain because, the sense in which "construct" is used does not relate to physical movement and so does not refer to a combination of the hand and the brain.

Relevant Previous Knowledge (RPK): Here, the teacher states in the lesson plan, his students' experiences which he thinks or knows have bearing on or are related to the topic. The knowledge gained in the previous lesson may not necessarily be the previous knowledge of a new task. A related idea or experience could be considered as a previous knowledge (Kizlik, 2010).

Teaching/Learning Resources: Tamakloe, et al. (2005) contend that a teacher whose lesson plans often have the chalkboard only as his teaching-learning resource is not using fully the various channels of communication which make lesson come alive. The teacher, under this sub-heading, notes the materials or equipment or other resources which are to be used in the lesson. It is good for a teacher to always select a variety of resources which appeal to other senses than that of hearing alone. In selecting the resources, the teacher must make sure that they fulfil a function which is relevant. Adu (2004) observed that the use of relevant and appropriate teaching materials excites students and therefore, develop interest in the subject. So when the resources are being used, they must emphasize particular points raised in the lesson more effectively than can be emphasized without those resources (Tamakloe, et al, 2005).

Introduction: Actual classroom interaction begins from this stage. The first part of the introduction is often used by most teachers to review the previous lesson. Then with or without a linkage with the RPK, a series of questions are asked to lead to the introduction of the new topic. The topic could also be introduced through the telling of a story, the discussion of a current problem or issue relevant and related to the topic for the day. The introduction must be done in such a way that it arouses the curiosity of the students. Tamakloe, et al. (2005) state, "It must be interesting and should be capable of stimulating or exciting the students to a state of preparedness to participate in the lesson." (p. 37). As soon as the introduction is done, the topic is written legibly on the board, and is to remain on the board throughout the lesson.

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Presentation: According to Tamakloe et al. (2005), various names such as procedure, teaching and learning activities, presentation and development are given to this component of the lesson plan. Whatever the name, this is the stage where the teacher notes the learning experiences or activities of the students and his own teaching activities and how they will be carried out. The lesson is usually broken down into various steps, and the content discussed under each of these steps. One may have as many steps as the content permits. However these should not be too many.

It is in this stage also that the teacher specifies the methods of teaching to be employed (Koomson, et al., 2002). Choosing a particular method should depend on the age (maturity level) of the learner, the lesson objectives, time, TLRs, space, among others (Mishra, 2008). If the teacher intends to use discussion, in the lesson plan, what will be discussed as well as the important issues that will be raised must be noted. The key questions which will elicit the discussion have to be written down in the lesson notes. If the teacher intends to use what is known as the question and answer strategy, the key questions and their possible answers must be noted. If it is problem-solving, the teacher should note the problems and their possible solutions. It is important to blend the activities and the strategies with the subject matter in a sequence or steps as the situation may demand; but, the underlining tenet is that the method should be able to meet the special needs of the students. Each step of the presentation should begin with a topical sentence, either neatly underlined or written in upper case.

Tamakloe (1999) advised that it is important for the inexperienced or novice teacher to have the details of the presentation in his/her lesson plan for

two reasons: First, to make him feel confident that he has a plan for the teaching. Secondly, to make him feel secure because the detailed plan provides something that can be referred to as the lesson proceeds. They, however, cautioned that it is more convenient to jot down the main points on a piece of paper for reference than constantly referring to the detailed lesson plan.

Closure: Closure is the component of the lesson plan where the teacher indicates a summary of the main points of the lesson and makes provision for the students to finally ask him/her questions on the lesson for clarification. Students generally feel better about ending an activity if it is somehow wrapped up and concluded rather than simply stopping (Coletta & Norris-Bauer, 2008). So the closure should be part of the lesson plan and should not be too long.

Evaluation: This is where the teacher tests students' understanding of the lesson delivered by asking a series of key questions which are directly related to the objective(s) stated in the lesson plan. The extent of change in the behaviour denotes the effectiveness of the objectives set and the accompanying learning experiences and resources (Cary, 2002). It is crucial that the teacher notes in the lesson plan the questions which he wants to use in the evaluation. The evaluation could be conducted orally or done in a written exercise or through observation. In any case, the teacher should indicate which one he intends to use if it is not obvious from the process outlined (Tamakloe, et al., 2005). By responding to the teacher's questions, DeBacker and Crowson (2009) argue that the learner portrays characteristics that enable the teacher to know whether the lesson's objectives are achieved or not. The result of the

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evaluation largely determines what goes into the remarks (McMillan, 2004) which the teacher writes concerning the success of the lesson and the necessary steps to take to that effect.

Application: This is a component that Tamakloe et al. (2005) admit is not easy or feasible to have along with evaluation as separate components in the same plan without coming up against the duplication of tasks in the lesson. Nevertheless, the teacher may decide to set the students to apply the knowledge or the skills acquired in solving a practical or real life situation problem. In this instance, the procedures in the closure and evaluation are combined and described under one heading, "Closure".

Pre-lesson Preparation: The teacher has to get the students prepared in advance for the next lesson. In view of this, the teacher uses this column to set out tasks which will help the students have an insight into the new area which will be taught later on. The content and book(s) in which the subject matter can be found are stated. This is to say that a complete reference is given to enable the learner have access to the content to be tackled in the next lesson.

Remarks: It is well worth the time to sit down and record thoughts and feelings about lesson plans immediately after using them. An analysis of lessons taught is critical to the development of teachers (Tamakloe, 1999). This last column in the lesson notes is a reflective activity done only after the lesson has been taught or after the time when it should have been taught. The teacher notes whether the lesson did take place or not. If it did not, the reason is stated and an indication of when it will be taught given. If it was taught, the teacher notes the strengths as well as the weaknesses in the presentation and indicates whether they were generated by the teacher or students. He/she then

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states how he/she intends to overcome similar difficulties and weaknesses when he/she teaches subsequent lessons.

In an effort to do this reflective analysis of the lesson effectively, the trainee may ask himself/herself series of questions such as:

1. What did I learn through the process of planning and implementing this lesson?

2. To what extent did I meet the needs of all of my learners? How do I know whether I have?

3. What did I learn about teaching and learning of this concept?

4. What did I really like about this lesson?

5. What went well? What were the surprises? What disappointed me about this lesson?

6. What alternative instructional and assessment strategies could I have used or, what should I do differently next time and why?

7. Would I rate this lesson as successful? Why or why not?

As the teacher reflects on the most and least effective aspects of the lesson and identifies alternatives, he/she develops the ability to inquire into his/her own practices that will foster continued professional growth and improvement.

From this approach to lesson plan preparation discussed so far, it can be conceptualised that generally, the lesson plan has three main parts: the beginning, the middle and the end (see Figure 1). However, in writing, essentially, it begins from setting of the objectives (i.e. the relevant and specific purposes of the lesson stated in behavioural terms capable to be measured and achieved within the specified time).

Beginning: this is the opening of the Lesson. Generally, this is where the teacher reviews RPK; focuses student's attention by sharing the purpose or objectives of the lesson with them amidst some motivations thereby, gaining their interest in what is going to be studied.

Middle: this stage is normally referred to as the heart of the lesson. Through the varied and appropriate teacher-learner activities (teaching methods) with suitable TLMs selected, the teacher mainly engages in the guidance of the learner to practice initially. Then the teacher allows the learner to do independent practice where he/she makes inputs, demonstrates or models when necessary for the learner to observe. He/she checks for understanding and provides feedback without any serious formative assessment, grading or evaluation.

End: after going through all the activities, the teacher summarises the lesson and invites questions for clarification (just to consolidate the major points). The teacher then tasks the learner to engage in specific activities alone (formative test) and measures (determines) the performance along the line of the requirement(s) of the objectives set. The teacher evaluates the student's outcome to know if the lesson objectives have been achieved or not. This is shown in Figure 1.

Lesson Objectives Achieved: if the objectives of the lesson under consideration are achieved, then the teacher prepares both him/herself and the students for the next lesson the next time. The teacher may give assignment on the current lesson or references for further reading or a preparatory reading assignment for the next lesson. The teacher prepares him/herself by preparing the lesson plan for the next lesson.

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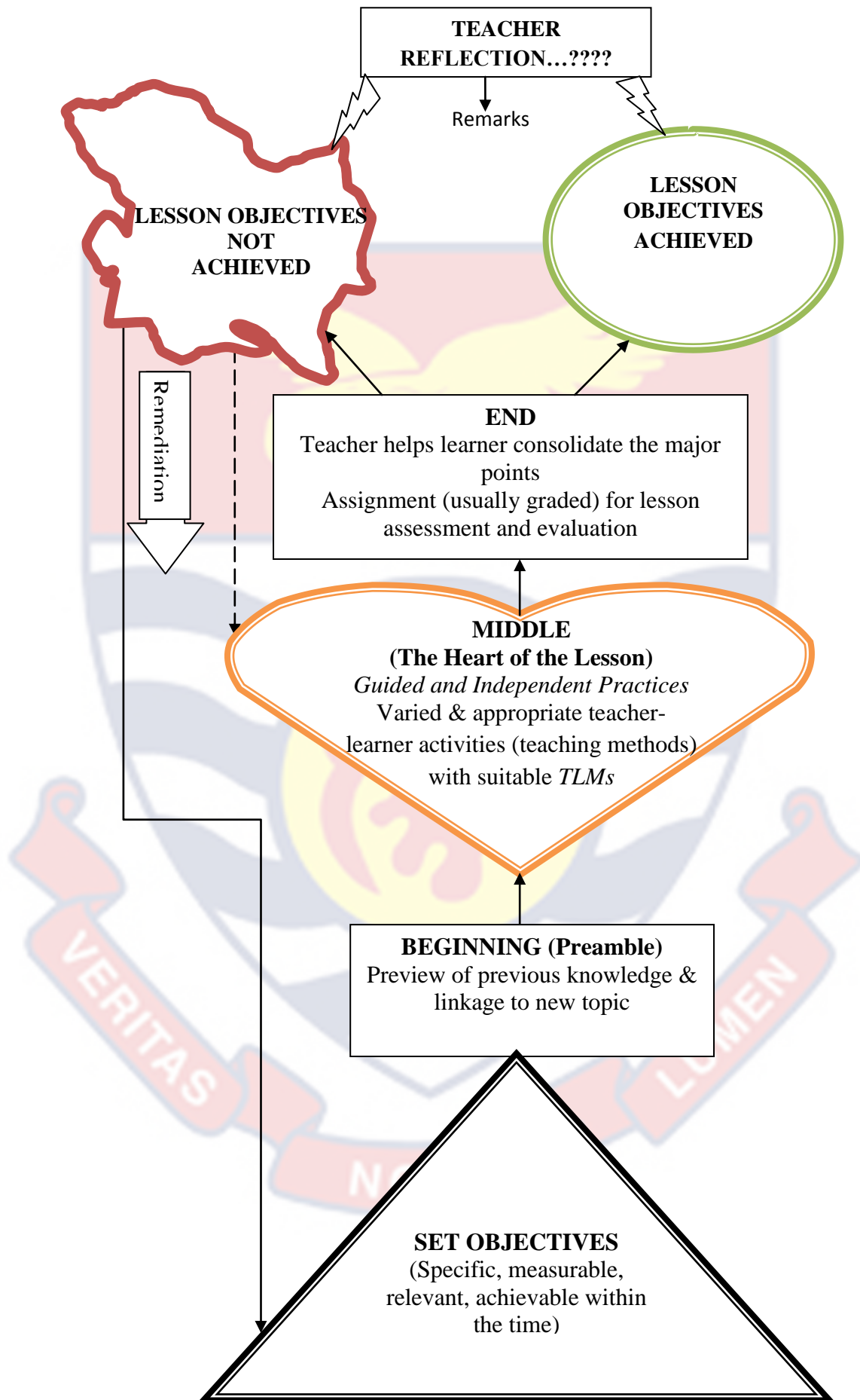
Figure 1: General Nature of a Lesson: A Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's construct.

Lesson Objectives Not achieved: if the lesson objectives are not achieved, the lesson is revisited with some sort of remediation strategy (with same or different procedure). But, immediately after determining whether the lesson objectives have been achieved or not, the teacher has to do critical reflection on the lesson, the learners and himself before an intervention or no intervention is made. That is, the teacher asks him/herself some thought-provoking questions that led to the success or failure of the lesson and tries to provide answers to enable him/her take decision(s) for the next line of action. If the lesson objectives were not achieved, then, depending on the extent to which the objectives were not achieved and on the result of the teacher's reflection, the remediation of the lesson may start by re-setting new objectives or from the heart of the lesson.

It is this process that supervisors have different opinions about how it should be written (approach/organisation/format) and what the nitty-gritties of these components should be, considering the nature (e.g. content and objectives) of each subject. In UCC, before the ONCTP, students are taught instructional strategies in their methods and curriculum studies courses. The lectures are organised such that one lecturer takes a group of students through the "best" rubrics of lesson planning and other pedagogical skills according to the standards of the College of Education Studies. But mostly, the so-called best methods are influenced by the lecturer's opinion and the dictates of the subject taught. As the authority for that subject area, his/her opinion, consequently, becomes the norm for his/her students. This appears to be the source of the individualisation of ideas on lesson planning (from the onset). During the microteaching (ONCTP), at least, two lecturers are assigned to a

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group of students who may not have been taught by the same methods lecturer. Ideas on lesson planning become relatively more differentiated and directives begin to appear divergent. Confusion begins to set in as the two supervisors may disagree or pass different comments on the same issue in the lesson plan. Usually, students are engulfed in this confusion and embark on the OFCTP where the confusion appears to aggravate.

Formats of Lesson Planning

The layout, organisation or outlining of the essential components in the lesson notebook to ensure effective delivery of what is to be taught is what is referred to as the format of the lesson plan. The format a teacher employs in planning his/her lesson depends on the philosophical and psychological orientation/approach to lesson planning that the teacher or institution prefers and on what is known about promoting student learning. For more than three decades, Nacino-Brown, Oke and Brown (1982) maintained that whatever format a lesson plan takes, it should adequately describe (1) the objectives (2) the topic or subject matter (3) the lesson materials (4) the lesson procedure (introduction, development of the lesson, generalisation, application, conclusion) and (5) student evaluation (student assignment). Based on this, Lynn (2009) divided the lesson plan format into objectives setting, exposition and plenary (i.e. introduction, main activity, review and plenary) to reflect the constituents that every lesson planning format should have. Coletta and Norris-Bauer (2008) distinguished two main lesson plan formats. These are the prose form and the tabular form (Vertical/Horizontal). The distinction of these formats is merely based on design or structure.

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(a) The Tabular Format (Horizontal form/Vertical form). Coletta and Norris-Bauer (2008) described this format as a shorter planbook-style lesson. It is also for writing weekly lesson notes, though, it is purposely meant for individual days' lesson plan preparation (Mishra, 2008). Remarks are written at the bottom of the lesson plan. The mechanical part of this format is either placed inside the table or outside it and they may include Subject, Date, Time, Class and class size, Week-ending, and the References. Basically, there are two forms of this tabular format—the horizontal tabular and the vertical tabular. These are shown in Appendix E as (a) and (b) respectively.

The horizontal tabular format is quite detailed as it contains some other relevant information. It has an advantage of being also used in teaching science-related topics that take place outside the classroom, e.g. school farm, laboratory (Mishra, 2008). The vertical tabular format on the other hand is the lesson format used currently in our schools in Ghana, approved by GES. It has very simple mechanical part and requires brief or straight-forward description or representation of what is to take place during the lesson presentation. In the GES lesson notebook, the template has already been provided and the teacher's duty is to complete it with what he/she wants to do in class. This lesson notebook supplied to all teachers does not give the teacher the choice to select a format. The implication is that, as a teacher employed by GES, the tabular format is what is supposed to be used. Meanwhile, according to Singh (2008), a lot of teachers like this format very much. Among the reasons why most teachers seem to hold high this format is that it encourages orderliness and logical sequence of what is taught from day to day within the week. It is simple thus, reduces details (wordy/lengthy notes)—since detail makes

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teachers "fear" to write the lesson plan (Koomson, et al., 2002). Do teacher-trainees on OFCTP also prefer this lesson plan format most? The present study sought to answer this question.

(b) The Prose Format: This is a longer or detailed description of a lesson (Coletta and Norris-Bauer, 2008). This format has the same major component (or themes) with a simpler mechanical part. It is called "prose" due to the way the details are presented or appear on the paper like a poetic speech in its normal continuous form, without the rhythmic or visual line structure. It normally has the theme written on the right hand side followed by the details of it (Price, 1999). This is shown in Appendix F. It is this format that teacher-trainees from the Department of Arts and Social Sciences, UCC, are taught to use. It is easy to use, as virtually, everything that must be done in the class is put down systematically in complete sentences and in themes. Due to this, anybody who can read and understand can follow the steps gradually and teach the subject with ease if the planner (i.e. the actual teacher) is not available. The disadvantage is that it takes a lot of time (Lynn, 2009) and mental effort and imagination of the real classroom when preparing it. It is, therefore, cumbersome for a teacher who teaches two or more subjects a day to prepare all his/her lessons in this format.

Lesson planning and lesson plan formats come in various forms and structures as discussed so far. And none has been found to be more important than the other (Kagan & Tippins, 1992). However, when it comes to teacher training, mostly, it seems the trainee has no choice over the approach and format that are to be used (It is what the training institution chooses that binds). In UCC, under the College of Education Studies, the departments in

conjunction with the TPU seem to have some sort of agreement on the two main afore-mentioned formats, namely, the tabular form (vertical form/horizontal form) and the prose form. The departments decide to teach either the two formats or concentrate on one. This is perhaps, due to the fact that, during TP, teacher-trainees are supposed to stick to one particular format, mostly, the one the student was taught or the one mostly preferred by the department.

During the OFCTP orientation organised for UCC teacher-trainees by the TPU on 16th September, 2013, at auditorium 900 (which I attended), the trainee-teachers were advised by the TP Coordinator to use lesson plans based on the format prescribed by their respective departments. For example, trainees from the Department of Maths and Science Education normally use the Tabular form while those from the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education mostly use the prose format. Even in one department, there may be differences in terms of how unit lessons should be planned. The *Teaching Practice Handbook* (UCC, 2013) which provides notes and guidelines for student teachers, supervisors and examiners is completely silent on the formats of lesson plan preparation that trainee-teachers are supposed to go by. This implies that trainees, to some extent, have the liberty to choose any format that is suitable. But, this appears not to be the reality.

Empirical Literature Review

In the year 2013, Ngara, Ngara and Ngwarai, conducted a survey in Masvingo urban schools (Zimbabwe) to determine views of prospective teachers and supervisors on the effectiveness of TP supervision as a tool in quality assurance. Despite their findings of the fact that participants regarded

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supervision and assessment as an indispensable tool in assuring quality in teacher training, some variables were viewed as affecting the effectiveness of supervision. Among them were delays in supervision, supervision being far-spaced from each other, little or no dialogue between supervisors and school teacher mentors and lack of consensus on the part of supervisors in dealing with similar issues. Among other things, the study recommended the running of workshops on TP supervision by training colleges for TP supervisors at all levels. Ngara, et al did not include in their objectives, specifically, issues of lesson plan preparation during TP.

Afram (2001) investigated the effectiveness of TP in preparing teacher-trainees in training colleges in Ghana. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative designs. Using 200 respondents drawn from the staff and students of three colleges of education in the Central Region, the result showed that teacher-trainees acquired enough methodology and pedagogical skills before they embarked on TP. However, supervision and assessment of teacher-trainees on practice seemed to be bedevilled with some problems which tend to denigrate their quality. Afram's study found inadequate funding and transportation which are concomitant with TP organisation as very problematic. Such problems which have become perennial in nature are affecting the effectiveness of TP at that level. Afram, however, did not find out the aspects of lesson plan preparation that teacher-trainees are most confident of their ability. He did not include in his objectives the importance that teacher-trainees place on lesson plan preparation. And also, there was nothing found about the perception of teacher-trainees about OFCTP lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision.

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The purpose of Owusu-Mensah's (2002) study was to evaluate the TP component of teacher preparation in Ghana using UCC as a case study. The study used the entire 2000/2001 level 400 education students of UCC, TP supervisors, principals/headmasters/headteachers and mentors in Cape Coast and Kumasi. The result of the study indicates that the duration of OFCTP is long enough to equip trainees with necessary skills in teaching. It also shows that the timing of TP (Sept/Oct) is conducive to the exercise. The overall implication was that TP is generally effective in preparing trainees to become professional teachers. It was suggested that trainees' involvement in co-curricular activities should also be assessed. In all these, the study did not indicate the importance teacher trainees place on lesson planning and the opinions of teacher-trainees about OFCTP lesson plan assessment and supervision.

Acquah and Anti (2013) focused their study on how trainee-teachers of Economics perceived OFCTP in terms of the challenges they faced during the exercise, and the measures they expected authorities to put in place to ensure the effectiveness of the exercise. The study employed a qualitative design with the use of interview and focus group discussion as the main instruments for collecting data. A total number of 101 trainee-teachers of Economics, purposively selected, were involved in the focus group discussion. Data obtained was analysed using thematic analysis and emerging themes discussed. The study found pertinent issues such as inadequate administrative support in the schools of practice, problems with external supervision, communication gaps, problems with mentors and resource challenges. But because the study was not specifically poised towards issues in lesson

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planning during this period, certain things such as aspects of lesson plan preparation that teacher-trainees in the University of Cape Coast are most confident of their ability as well as the level of importance that teacher-trainees place on lesson plan preparation were all ignored. The gaps in the studies of Ngara, Ngara and Ngwarai (2013); Afram (2001); Owusu-Mensah (2002) and Acquah and Anti (2013) were the areas of concern for this study.

(A) Competency and Ability Requirements for Lesson Plan Preparation.

In the words of Koomson, et al. (2002), ''When you have planned well and written down your plan for the lesson, half of your work has been done'' (p. 240). But coming as far as this ideal half way, is not as easy as one may think of. It requires sufficient knowledge and understanding of subject matter and the ability to show an awareness of recent ideas or skills in the subject area or topic and its lesson preparation. The guiding principle on professional conduct for lesson preparation and delivery prepared by the Teacher Education Division of GES, spells out the activities required by the teacher as well as the competency areas under consideration. The competency areas include scheme of work, lesson plan preparation, lesson presentation (lesson development), and conducting a lesson (Koomson, et al., 2002). Under the lesson plan preparation, it is explicitly stated that the teacher should be confident and competent in all aspects. On the UCC TP Assessment Form A, it is quite clear that for a teacher-trainee to be able to obtain an outstanding performance on the section labelled *Objectives and Core Points in Lesson Plan*, he/she must be able to;

1. State objectives that are specific, measurable, relevant and achievable within the duration of the lesson.

2. State core points which clarify main skills/concepts and are related to lesson objectives

3. Provide varied teacher-learner activities that are logical, timely, and direct student learning

4. Use TLMs appropriately and relate them to students' experiences. These must be indicated in suitable stages in the lesson plan.

5. Demonstrate relevant subject knowledge linked to objectives; use a variety of techniques to ensure active student participation.

There is an opinion that, among the variables for improving student achievement, the teacher matters more than any other single factor (Rowan, Correnti & Miller, 2002). Several researches have indicated that most teacher-trainees believe that they are competently trained to plan effective lessons. One of such studies is Ligadu's (2004) research entitled *Mentoring during university practicum: Perceptions of teacher mentors and student teacher trainees.* He found that the overall perception of the teacher-trainees (mentees) was that they were well prepared in terms of lesson planning among other things.

Bhargava (2009) made an observation that the batch of students which had more practice in microteaching performed confidently and in better way in comparison to group which had less preparatory time. Similarly, Al-Mahrooqi (2011) found in his study that students, who often practiced lesson planning during the micro-teaching (ONCTP), felt that they were adequately prepared to write effective lesson plans without any assistance. After the OFCTP, when they were asked to evaluate their skills in lesson planning, materials development, test writing and classroom management, their answers varied.

Almost all felt adequately prepared to write effective lesson plans, but only about half felt suitably trained to improvise learning materials

Tasdemir (2006) had also observed that the primary school teachers in his study rated their lesson planning ability/efficiency as "partly efficient". It was realised that some of the teachers found lesson planning very difficult and time consuming, and they therefore, proposed that lesson plans be prepared by people other than teachers. They found already planned lesson plans to be more useful and standardised than what they would have individually prepared. In a more recent study by Oguz (2009) in Turkey, a significant part of the primary school teachers do not think it is necessary to do a lesson plan because they feel that they are not efficient in lesson planning.

In the exigencies of all these nagging issues, the quality of the lesson plan that a teacher uses to teach a class contributes to the understanding, achievement or performance of the students in that class (Koomson, et al., 2002). Tamakloe, et al. (2005) affirmed this fact by stating that "in most cases, the success of any lesson depends upon the quality of its plan and the expertise with which it is carried out" (p. 30). This explains the reason why a teacher's own perceived ability in lesson plan preparation has to be given a very serious attention. It has been proved through research that there is a correlation between teachers' beliefs about their own level of competence and their sense of self-efficacy and their practice and students' performance (e.g. Guarino, Hamilton, Lockwood, and Rathbun, 2006: Guo, Connor, Yang, Roehrig, and Frederick, 2012). Self-efficacy is a belief about the level of competence a person might display in a given situation (Bandura, 1997). Since a teacher's perception of his or her sense of self-efficacy can influence students' learning

and motivation (Guskey & Passaro, 1994), it was very beneficial to ascertain the aspects of lesson plan preparation that teacher trainees in the University of Cape Coast are most confident of their ability.

(A) **Challenges of Lesson Plan Preparation**

Good teaching just like any other human endeavour requires a thorough preparation. But this preparation, usually, is associated with some challenges. Tashevska (2010) has said that many novice teachers encounter difficulties when planning their lessons. For example, an earlier study by Boz and Boz (2006) based on school placements in Turkey revealed that nearly half of the prospective teachers mentioned that they could not link what they learned in method classes to the school practice.

According to John (2006), novice teachers find it difficult to practically prepare effective lesson plans as there are parts that always perplex them. This confirmed some earlier studies (Joice & Harootunian, 1964; John, 1991) that found out that many teachers, particularly those in their early practices, do not fully understand the conceptual distinctions between aims, goals and objectives and so have difficulty matching goals, objectives, instructional activities and evaluation procedures. Again, most newly trained teachers find it puzzling to state instructional objectives in behavioural terms. According to Lampert (1985), Kagan and Tippins (1992), and Calderhead and Shorrock (1997), many teachers especially, the neophytes, have difficulty integrating subject topics, understanding the concepts or tasks embedded in curriculum materials and manipulating conflicting goals when there is uncertainty about how to achieve multiple desired outcomes.

O'Bannon (2008) posits that in any learning environment, it is important to highlight the criteria and conditions of performance and the degree of accuracy that the learner has to achieve in order that his/her performance can be judged proficient or not. But generally, most teachers do not provide the extent to which the student should perform the outcome of the lesson correctly. Boz and Boz (2006) found that teacher-trainees had poor articulation of instructional objectives; they relied heavily on traditional didactic teaching-learning approaches; most of them failed to specify conditions under which learning is ultimately evaluated and; others also failed to determine the degree of mastery required of learners to establish whether or not the intended learning outcomes have indeed been accomplished at the end of instruction.

Writing the lesson formally and then proceeding in the classroom accordingly is a big bother to student teachers (Bhargava, 2009). For novice teachers, what is planned in the lesson notebook, usually fails to match proceedings in the classroom for the first few days. Students either know more or less than what has been prepared by teacher-trainee. This according to Bhargava, occurs in most of the schools where student teachers are asked to take the same topics which have been already covered by their teachers. This is enough to make the young teacher nervous as he/she has to mentally readjust or re-plan the written lesson plan to still meet the interest of the learners to avoid boredom and other apparent consequences. Introductory questions or lesson developing questions usually are not answered as anticipated by the teacher-trainee, sometimes, intentionally or unintentionally by the students.

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Lesson planning is a process composed of many decisions. All teachers spend time thinking about a series of important instructional decisions before their lessons begin. One of such decisions is about the timing for each activity, project or playtime (Kyriacou & Stephens, 1999; Tamakloe, et al., 2005; Duncan & Met, 2010). But it is hard for beginning teachers (and even some experienced ones) to accurately predict how long any particular activity will take. Duncan and Met (2010) agree that although this may be difficult for new teachers, estimating time for each classroom occurrence is a skill that develops quickly. Kyriacou and Stephens (1999) sees this to be one of the main determinants of the difference between the novice teacher and the veteran teacher who has learned from hard experience that the unexpected will happen and that things rarely go entirely as planned. For the novice teacher it is wise to be prepared to make quick changes to the lesson by having a contingency plan such as noting what parts of the lesson to discard if things start running overtime and additional material to throw into the breach if the lesson does not last as long as planned (Keene, 2010).

Kyriacou and Stephens (1999) contend that most student teachers spend too much time on lesson planning and preparation of TLRs. This is because the minimum teaching periods assigned to them in general is too high for effective reflective teaching. Teaching is multitasking when it comes to OFCTP. Apart from taking active part in extra-curricular activities teacher-trainees have to spare time for other activities like preparing lesson plan and teaching aids, marking, etc. For Bhargava (2009), if this happens, the students tend to focus too much on completion of task rather than on reflecting on classroom activities and teacher-professionalism. She insisted that some

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teacher-trainees report of sleepless nights during TP, as they had to prepare lesson plans and teaching aids for three/four periods next morning. She further noticed that mostly, some of the teacher-trainees who are not able to take the mental stress often think to the extent of giving up the training. She stated that "…mental and emotional stress is also felt when not very favorable comments are written on their record books by supervisors" (Bhargava, p. 2).

Every institution has its own way of supervising the prepared lesson plan. For example, in Pennsylvania State University, written plans are required for all lessons and learning activities that the trainee expects to implement (Pennsylvania State University, 2013). The mentoring teacher must approve the mentee's lesson plans at least 24 hours in advance of teaching. This provides a point of discussion that can facilitate cooperative planning, clarification and trouble-shooting. If the mentee's written lesson plans are not submitted at least 24 hours in advance, the supervisor may recommend that the mentee does not teach the lesson. This is a great challenge to trainees who teach three or more different lessons a day.

Research has consistently shown that teachers most often present new knowledge through a linguistic mode. They either read or talk to students about new content (Adu, 2002). Yet, other scholars have proved that when teachers help students create visual impressions (nonlinguistic representations), the effects on understanding and achievement are strong (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). But this is usually hard to do during TP and even afterwards. Getting access to these resources is not an easy task for teachers (Coletta & Norris-Bauer, 2008). OFCTP is usually characterized by many inadequacies in TLMs. Adu (2002) holds that audio-visual aids for

teaching are either not available in sufficient quantity or that what is available is usually inappropriate. Some schools do not have reliable electricity and therefore are not able to use computers and projectors. Apart from the syllabi, there are some subjects (like economics) that do not have government-published or government-approved textbooks written purposely for Ghanaian schools. Mostly, it is pamphlets that are used but these are often than not, badly written, sketchy, contradictory and lacking in-depth explanations (Adu, 2006). Adu claims that teachers' handbook and subject dictionaries are virtually scarce in most schools that accept teacher-trainees.

People think that because all teacher-trainees begin the OFCTP with some background knowledge in lesson planning it will be an easy skill or task in the real classroom situation. But this appears not to be so. Ross, Vescio, Tricarico, and Short (2011) stressed that lesson planning involves judgment that novices are still developing. Teacher trainees require experienced teachers to share their lesson plans and lessons with them to practically appreciate how a planned lesson and its delivery proceed logically through an instructional sequence and how the various elements of the lesson are "in sync" or aligned with one another. Ross, et al. suggest that mentors should always be around their mentees and make inquiries such as "how is it going?", "what do you need help on?", "is there anything I can do", "do you need to come and observe me?", "will you like for me to observe you?" and so forth. Boikhutso (2010) found that the school-based supervisors (teachers) with whom they spend considerable time and act as their mentors, are not compelled to use lesson plans in their own teaching. Teachers stopped going to class as soon as their classes were taken over by teacher-trainees (Acquah & Anti, 2013).

Some actions and inactions of mentors occasionally pose problems to trainees' planning of lessons. Some teachers actually serve as bad role models because they discourage teacher-trainees from doing what they had been taught to be right during their methods of teaching class (Acquah & Anti, 2013). In Acquah and Anti's study, one student interviewed had this to say: "on one occasion, I was preparing some teaching and learning materials to use for my class and the economics teacher whose class I had taken told me it was all a waste of time and that nobody does that anymore." This implies that teacher-trainees are not given the necessary monitoring and mentoring to help them both in lesson planning and its delivery in class.

A survey data on student teachers' ratings of their relationships with school-based mentors collected by Hobson, Malderez, Tracey, Giannakaki, Pell, Kerr, Chambers, Tomlinson, and Roper (2006) show that half of all the respondents rated such relationships as "very good", whilst half of the respondents rated these relationships as either "poor" or "very poor". This situation normally makes most of the trainees find it difficult to seek for assistance when preparing lessons. In the same study, it was found that aspects of school-based experiences that teacher-trainees yearned to have was free and easy communication with their mentors or another colleague who would be concerned with their well-being and progress. That is, someone who would give them the opportunity to be engaged in professional dialogues which could help them think about their lesson planning and lesson delivery as teachers. Oguz (2009) believes that the problems faced by most teacher-trainees in lesson planning have resulted in failure to comply with the principles of efficient lesson planning. For example, a worrying trend that Boikhutso (2010)

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found was a situation where teacher-trainees merely recycled previous lesson plans by altering the dates or making minor changes on the content column of the lesson plans.

If individuals believe that they will be successful on a given task, they are more likely to be so if they put in substantial effort, persist in their efforts, and manage any negative events (Bandura, 1997). In OFCTP, while some teacher-trainees struggle to learn lesson preparation and how to proceed in the classroom, others use dubious means to overcome lesson planning challenges. In Acquah and Anti's (2013) study, a female student admitted that her mentor allowed her on several occasions to repeat lessons that she had already taught when supervisors came around. Such teacher-trainees at the end of the day remain short in creativity, experimentation and initiatives (Bhargava, 2009). For the teacher-trainee to consistently plan his/her lesson and do the right thing all the time as a professional teacher, his/her work must be supervised properly.

(B) **Lesson Plan Assessment and Lesson Supervision**

An integral part of TP is teacher-trainee supervision and assessment (Ngara, Ngara, & Ngwarai, 2013). In most cases, the work of the teacher-trainee that is supervised has four dimensions, namely:

Dimension 1—Evidence of Planning

Dimension 2—Evidence of Instructional Competence

Dimension 3—Evidence of Classroom Management

Dimension 4—Evidence of Reflection

In some other institutions, these dimensions are slightly different. For instance, in Nigeria, the areas of interest supervised are broadly three in

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number, namely; Personal Qualities, the Lesson, and the Class Activities (Adu, 2006). For UCC, the TP Assessment Form "A" contains three main areas of development that reflect the four dimensions aforementioned. These areas of development that must be supervised, assessed and evaluated are (1) Objectives and core points in the lesson plan (2) Classroom organisation and management, and lastly (3) Teaching methodology and delivery. These "macro" areas of development have specific items under each (Appendix G).

According to Ngara, Ngara and Ngwarai (2013), TP supervision is a coordinated partnership between school personnel and college/university lecturers. The school personnel include headmasters, head of departments and experienced teachers mostly referred to as cooperating supervisors. The experienced teachers serve as mentors. Wallace (1998) sees mentoring as a one-on-one relationship between a new teacher and a more experienced teacher. Mentoring is part of a successful induction system. Wallace described induction as a rather systematic process that includes mentoring, collaborative work, professional development, observations of teaching, and formative assessment, among others. Duncan and Met (2010) state that it appears that from time immemorial, teachers who could serve as mentors are still not sure of the roles of mentoring due to lack of mentoring training.

Ensuring support for novice teachers requires selecting mentor teachers who not only have the necessary skills and content knowledge but also have the desire and commitment to work with a novice. Duncan & Met (2010) noted that effective mentoring requires that the mentor works with the novice on an on-going basis. Moving from novice teacher to highly effective teacher takes time, so the support given to novice teachers needs to be more than a

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sporadic effort; it must occur on a consistent and persistent basis (Boreen and Niday, 2000; Evertson and Smithey, 2000; Athanases, et al., 2008; Dana and Yendol-Hoppey, 2008; Ross, Vescio, Tricarico, & Short, 2011). An ideal mentoring programme pairs novice teachers with highly effective, experienced mentors who teach related content and who have a desire to help others learn to be effective teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Katkus, 2007; Street, 2004). Successful mentors commit the time necessary to be accessible so they can address the many questions novices have right away as they learn their craft and help their mentees find the basic materials they might need for lesson preparation (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Cherubini, 2007; Algozzine, Gretes, Queen & Cowen-Hathcock, 2007). The mentoring relationship is enhanced when mentors and novice teachers are given dedicated time to work together Additionally, mentors provide emotional support by acting as sounding boards for novice teachers to discuss the issues they are experiencing in their classrooms in an effort to find ways to address such issues (Street, 2004). Also, mentors serve as a safety net as novice teachers try out what they already have or are currently learning. Novice teachers also benefit from becoming a part of a community of learners in which more experienced teachers may model effective teaching behaviours as the novice teacher observes or even co-teaches with such teachers in order to gain valuable teaching experience (Lieberman & Miller, 2008).

Lesson planning is about an instructional flow. It is not just about the lesson plan, but about being able to deliver it too (Ross, Vescio, Tricarico, & Short, 2011). The delivery has to be supervised, assessed and evaluated. This is a major issue which causes discomfort to student teachers. Bhargava (2009)

calls it 'evaluation anxiety'. This refers to anxiety induced by being observed by one's lecturer or any supervisor. A study conducted in South England using a group of teacher-trainees (as cited in Bhargava, 2009) reported that the main cause of anxiety for student teachers was to be observed, evaluated and assessed. In that study, it was realized that student teachers often complained that they forgot the content matter and felt nervous when a mentor or supervisor sat in class and observed. Capel observed that anytime a teacher-trainee is supervised in the classroom, the following occurs: The behavior of the students being taught changes, comfort level becomes low and they find themselves in artificial situation where their main consideration remains to get good remarks in record files. Pressure of doing things correctly and managing classroom activities properly make them tense or apprehensive while teaching. Bhargava believes that some of the student teachers are able to overcome this within a day or two but for others it acts as a barrier to gain full confidence.

i.   Issues in Lesson Supervision and Lesson Assessment

In the study conducted by Acquah and Anti (2013) in UCC, it was found that a lot of issues emerged from the focused group discussion. Key among these included: inadequate supervision, some supervisors marking only the lesson notes; some supervisors not sitting through the lesson, yet managing to find faults with students' teaching; some supervisors delegating their responsibilities to others who appeared not to know what they were doing; and some supervisors not scoring trainee-teachers while they were teaching.

A lot of issues like the above occur in the supervision of lesson plan and the delivery of planned lessons that seriously affect subsequent lesson plan preparations by teacher-trainees. And it appears not to be peculiar to any

single institution or location in the world. In the United States of America, Brooks (2006) documented that during TP "it was still the university tutor who would 'arrive, observe, feedback and depart' …who remained the linchpin in the training and assessment of student teachers" (p. 380). In other words, the collaboration and partnership between the schools and tertiary training institutions responsible for teacher preparation is generally weak. Earlier, a study conducted by Ligadu (2004) revealed that the poor social interactions and lack of communications between university supervisors and teachers serving as mentors; university supervisors and mentees; teacher mentors and mentees, contribute immensely to the confusion in lesson plan preparation during OFCTP in New South Wales, Australia.

According to Al-Mahrooqi (2011), in Oman, the poor cooperation and liaison among the supervisors themselves and between the supervisors and mentees, have led to contradictory directives or suggestions on lesson planning and lesson delivery which mostly confuses the trainees. Bhargava (2009) observed that some student teachers in Turkey start teaching in practice schools as instructed by supervisors and not as they have learnt due to difference of opinion between the two. Some internal supervisors, administrators, proprietors, head of departments and mentors mostly prefer that lessons for teaching their students and the procedure employed meets their own standards which in most cases contradicts what the teacher-trainee was taught in the university. When this happens, usually, the trainees find themselves in a serious dilemma as to the kind of lesson that must be planned to satisfy both internal and external supervisors so that they do not lose some

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marks. Most teacher-trainees complete the TP without being certain of the right thing to do in lesson planning and in lesson delivery.

Al-Mahrooqi (2011) and Acquah and Anti (2013) found that typically, both positive and negative comments were noted by most supervisors, but others seemed to dwell more on the negative comments, which greatly discouraged the trainees. Bhargava (2009) also observed that comments of most supervisors remained limited to the use of various skills like blackboard writing, way of introducing the lesson, the general behavior of students in the class, whether teaching aid is used or not and less emphasis is laid on gradual improvement of student teachers, new approaches adopted and stimulus variation whether being effectively used in class or not and how all these have been planned in the lesson notebook. According to Acquah and Anti (2013) there are also situations where external supervisors mark only lesson notes and fail to sit in the classrooms to observe as trainee teachers teach.

Azeem (2011) found out that 20% of the 200 participants did not have their lessons being checked regularly by concerned supervisors while the rest were of the mind that their lessons were being checked regularly. In addition, 23% of the participants expressed the view that the class teachers were often present in their classes during TP while the other 77% opined that class teachers or mentors were often not present in their classes during the TP of the prospective teachers. In that study, the trainees stated that the college supervisors did not visit them timeously and frequently and did not like the situation where supervisors awarded scores before discussion of the lesson with them. The trainees therefore had the opinion that awarding grades in the TP was too subjective.

Some students Al-Mahrooqi (2011) used in his study were of the mind that most supervisors were unfriendly and so they could not seek for help when it comes to lesson planning. Also, they complained that a lot of the supervisors` reports were illegible and so were of little help to them since they could not seek for clarification. The trainees said that they just accepted what they were told about their lessons. They remained silent and attempted no negotiation of any kind. These findings show a degree of hesitation on the part of trainees to discuss their concerns because they think that supervisor power is absolute, which indeed is usually the case.

Others also pointed out that supervisors' bias compromised the quality of TP supervision. As a student reported during the interview in Acquah and Anti's (2013) study, "one supervisor told me he already knew the score I would get so there was no need for him to score while I was teaching" (p. 8). One student also reported that a supervisor commented that some supervisors just go to give students low grades, so he also goes about giving students higher marks to equalize what his colleagues are doing. In that same study, some of the students indicated that some supervisors make demands on students to refresh them, and that appears to be like a form of bribery. Meanwhile, my interaction with some teacher-trainees who have already participated in the OCTP revealed that they have not come into terms with the fact that all that is assessed is based on what has been provided on the TP Assessment Form "A". They think there are other factors that are considered apart from what has been provided on the Form "A". One teacher trainee lamented, "Upon all that I did in class, I was given Grade B; I don't know what the assessment is based on, the supervisors commended me anytime I

finished teaching too though they usually had problems with my lesson plan". Perhaps, this teacher trainee did not know that whatever and however a lesson is taught, it is closely linked up with what the teacher has planned for in the lesson plan.

A closer look at the Form "A" (both old and new) shows that 70% of the areas of development supervised and assessed have to be planned and provision made for it in the lesson plan. The rest, including class control (class management); handling of students' questions or contributions; communication (correct use of language, clear and audible voice, mannerism); use of chalkboard; professional commitment, are all not given any place in the lesson note but contribute to about 30% of the lesson assessment. Obviously, a perception of what is to be supervised and assessed in their lessons and how (criteria) the assessment is conducted by the supervisors can influence the nature (quality) of the lesson plan a teacher trainee prepares. These views given by the prospective teachers agree with Eya and Chukwu (cited in Ngara, Ngara, & Ngwarai, 2013) that some impediments to effective supervision include favouritism, lack of professional qualities, and lack of motivation. Ngara, Ngara and Ngwarai noted that lack of motivation could be attributed to lack of or inadequate incentives or allowances which may trigger a range of negative emotions and attitudes towards the supervision.

Nevertheless, other studies conducted in other jurisdictions show otherwise. For example, in the UK, Hobson, Malderez, Tracey, Giannakaki, Pell, Kerr, Chambers, Tomlinson, and Roper (2006) conducted a survey on the support student teachers received during their Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and the findings suggest that the majority of trainees felt positive about the

support they received during their training, rating it as either "very good" or "good" (79% actual, 78% weighted). Eighty-five per cent indicated that having university/college tutors observe and give feedback on lessons was "fairly" or "very important"

In a study conducted by Wambugu, Barmao and Joel (2013) to investigate student teachers' perceptions of TP assessment, the results show that the student teachers' perceptions towards TP assessment were favourable (positive). The findings also indicate that there were no statistically significant differences in their perceptions by area of specialization. However, there was a statistically significant difference in perceptions of TP between male and female teacher-trainees at an alpha level of .05.

In Al-Mahrooqi's (2011) study, although feedback focused mainly on negative points in the trainee's lesson (as indicated by some trainees), all trainees felt that feedback was necessary for their growth and development as teachers. The participants in Ngara, Ngara and Ngwarai's (2013) research indicated that their TP was effective in pointing out their strengths and weaknesses and believed that the thorough checking of documents (especially, the lesson plan) rendered their TP supervision of good quality. But the participants suggested that supervisors should be friendly and should not make teacher-trainees fear them. Ligadu (2004) and Wambugu, Barmao and Joel (2013) suggest that scoring should not only be done during the teaching period, it should also cover the oral discussion between the supervisor and the supervisee. Ross, Vescio, Tricarico, and Short (2011) suggest that there should be lightening of the teaching workload and co-curricular responsibilities of teacher-trainees.

Thus, to this end, the specific issues that this study sought to deal with had to do with teacher-trainees' confidence in their ability to prepare lesson plan effectively in the OFCTP, issues about the choice of lesson planning format and the lesson planning format mostly used by trainees. The extent to which teacher-trainees value lesson planning in the mist of the challenges was also of interest to this study. The opinion that University of Cape Coast teacher-trainees hold about OFCTP lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision was not left out. Thus, in the following paragraphs, the University of Cape Coast's guidelines put in place to direct supervision and assessment of OFCTP lesson plans and lesson delivery have been discussed.

ii. Supervision and Assessment of TP —UCC's Approach

According to the *Teaching Practice Handbook* (UCC, 2013), the main purpose of all kinds of assessment of teaching during the OFCTP is to provide the data on which the teacher can build his/her plans for the modification and change in the planning, preparation and delivery of his/her future lessons. In addition to this, the data can also be used to discriminate between trainees. The data in the form of a record of both formative and summative assessments of the trainee's performance reflects the level of the trainee's development. There are three parts of each formal observation during the OFCTP: they are Pre-observation discussion, the observation itself, and Post-observation counselling.

Pre-observation discussion: The Teaching observations are part of a developmental process in which the trainee has the opportunity to reflect on their professional practice with the supervisor, cooperating supervisors or mentors. In OFCTP, it is important that discussions about the proposed lesson

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take place before the observation. Before each observation, the trainee needs to provide the observer with a Teaching Portfolio (TP), a Scheme of Work (SOW) and a competed lesson plan, and allocate sometime to discuss these. The pre-observation meeting offers a lot of advantages to both the supervisor and the supervisee. As stated by the *Teaching Practice Handbook* (UCC, 2013), the supervisor gains a clear idea of trainees' intentions for the lesson and recognizes the background to the lesson that the trainee is going to teach and how it fits in with previous teaching and learning with the group of students. Through this, the supervisor is able to gain an understanding of any particular concerns that the trainee might have and why; and even comment on any potential problems with the lesson plan, for instance, in relation to the timing of the lessons. The Trainee too has an opportunity to reflect on the lesson plan before delivering it. He/she is able to discuss any potential problems with his/her supervisor and have the opportunity to make changes to his/she lesson plan before the observation. Again, the teacher-trainee uses the occasion to reflect on the planned lesson and considers any changes that need to be made.

The observation itself: The observer has no role to play in the lesson; he/she is there to look at the trainee's teaching and learning with the group of students. However, he/she may take the opportunity of talking to the teacher-trainee where necessary (University of Cape Coast, 2013). It is mainly at this time that the supervisor assigns marks to the teaching done by the teacher-trainee.

Post-observation Discussion: After the observation, the supervisor arranges a specific time and place for a feedback discussion of the observed

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lesson. The purpose of discussion is to enable the trainee to critically reflect on the lesson in relation to his/her professional practice. The *Teaching Practice Handbook* (UCC, 2013) summarises the responsibilities of supervisors: Every supervisor is supposed to have a pre-observation meeting with the teacher-trainee to enable the latter to know the background of the students and the lesson to be observed. They have to discuss any potential problem with the teacher-trainee before a lesson observation. It is the supervisors' responsibility to offer the required number of observations of teacher-trainees' practical teaching over the full period of the practice and make effective and fair assessment of the teacher-trainees' teaching. They are also expected to give timely and constructive feedback on the teacher-trainee's teaching. The most important of it all, to the trainees, is supervisors' responsibility to offer training support to the teacher-trainees.

UCC is an institution that does not compromise on quality. In order to support the student teacher to achieve high performance, supervision by co-operating supervisors (school-based mentors) and university supervisors must be of high quality. In the *Teaching Practice Handbook* (UCC, 2013), provisions have been made to assure quality. For example, only co-operative supervisors and university supervisors who have been trained in the College of Education Studies' philosophy of TP are assigned to student teachers. Also, arrangements are made with heads of schools to grant time release to mentors, where possible, so that they would devote more attention to their mentoring roles.

Summary of the Review of Related Literature

The review of related literature was on both conceptual and empirical literature. The conceptual framework began with the concept of Off-Campus Teaching Practice (OFCTP). The OFCTP was described to be the period of time in which a student teacher gains first-hand experience in working with a particular group of students in a real school. A number of terms such as 'the practicum', 'student teaching', 'field studies', 'infield experiences' or 'internships' are used to refer to this exercise. It was discussed that TP goes beyond just knowing what to teach and knowing how to teach to ones' ability to prepare lesson plan and develop other several competences such as interpersonal, pedagogical, intercultural and psychological competences.

The University of Cape Coast's philosophy of TP was also discussed. The University believes that teaching is an activity intended to promote learning, and that there is no one best approach for achieving this. Hence, it holds that TP is a process of learning to teach and teaching to learn. The university shares the fact that effective teaching depends on good mastery of subject matter; demonstration of effective use of varied teaching techniques, strategies and resources; warm interpersonal relationships; and thoughtful reflection on practice. It further recognises the school and classroom settings as uncertain, dynamic and problematic environment, which needs a teacher who is a reflective practitioner. Additionally, to know how TP has been streamlined in UCC, the College of Education Studies' documented rules and regulations to govern TP in the University of Cape Coast was discussed.

The concept of lesson planning was also explored. It was said that lesson planning is a cognitively demanding task in which teachers bring to

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bear their expertise and experience to make good instructional decisions. It is about how a teacher puts the curriculum into practice. This led to the discussion of the eclectic lesson planning approach used by students under the College of Education Studies, UCC. The components considered very important (Tamakloe, et al., 2005) are the topic, objective(s), previous knowledge, teaching/learning resources, introduction, presentation, closure, evaluation, pre-lesson preparation and the remarks column. By these components, it was conceptualised that, generally, the lesson plan has three main parts: the beginning, middle and the end. However, due to differences in opinions and subject matter, there appears to be no clear cut for its preparation—the source of confusion for novice teachers. The tabular and prose formats for lesson planning were also looked at. The available literature shows that majority of teachers prefer the tabular format. Is this the case for OFCTP teacher-trainees?

The empirical review looked at three important issues namely; competency and ability requirements for lesson plan preparation, challenges of lesson plan preparation and finally, matters concerning lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision. In addition to lesson plan assessment and supervision, I touched on UCC's approach to lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision. All these were reviewed to provide an insight into what already existed concerning the specific issues of interest to this study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Overview

The areas considered under the methodology include the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis.

Research Design

Given that this research is aimed at "determining and reporting" (Amedahe & Gyimah, 2005, p. 136) and also interpreting the way the challenges of lesson plan preparation are, the descriptive survey was the most convenient research design to use. It facilitated my observation, description, interpretation and documentation of the issues of lesson plan preparation as they existed or occurred to the teacher-trainees. It was not my objective to find any causal relationship among the variables under study, rather, it was my objective to provide "accurate description and interpretation of the activities, objects, processes and persons" (Amedahe, 2002, as cited in Amedahe and Gyimah, 2005, p. 136) related to the issues of lesson plan preparation. The problem I encountered with this design was its susceptibility to distortions through biases associated with the two research instruments used.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods (Dominant-Less Dominant approach) were employed to provide a more comprehensive approach to the analyses of the issues. In addition, the quantitative and qualitative data

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collected required the use of both methods as propagated by Leedy and Ormrod (2010).

Population

The population for this study consisted of all teacher-trainees from the University of Cape Coast (UCC) who did their OFCTP in the year 2013 in Zone 1[A]. Zone 1[A] comprised Cape Coast Central, Elmina and its environs. This zone was purposely selected for this study because, per the statistics, out of the 1097 teacher-trainees who embarked on the year 2013's OFCTP, 449 (41%) of them were located in Zone 1[A] alone with the rest sparsely scattered across other parts of the whole country (see Appendix D).

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Based on Krejcie and Morgan's table (cited in Sarantakos, 1997) which suggests an appropriate sample size from a given population, 285 teacher-trainees were chosen from the study area (Zone 1[A]). This sample size (285) is above the minimum sample size (210 for a population of 449) specified by Krejcie and Morgan and therefore, was representative enough for the entire population.

The selection of the 285 teacher-trainees was done "…by means of sound methodological principles" (Sarantakos, 1997, p. 140). Therefore, quota sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique, was used to select the sample of 285 teacher-trainees. The quota was, however, given to only Senior High Schools (both public and private) in Zone 1[A]. Table 2 shows the Senior High Schools and their respective quotas. The pre-determined proportions were based on the number of teacher trainees in each school.

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Table 2: Distribution of Quota by Schools

	School	Population	Quota (%)	No.
1	University Practice SHS*	26	7	21
2	Little Lambs SHS	2	1	2
3	St. Augustine's College*	18	6	17
4	Sammo SHS*	7	2	7
5	Imfantsipim School*	16	5	15
6	Commercial Services Institute	4	1	4
7	Academy of Christ the King	10	4	10
8	Adisadel College	40	12	35
9	Cape Coast Tech. Institute*	13	5	11
10	Central Grammar SHS	3	1	3
11	Cape Coast International*	18	6	16
12	Wesley Girls	10	3	9
13	Holy Child*	16	5	15
14	Oguaa Sec. Tech	8	3	8
15	Ghana National College*	32	9	25
16	Wilbert SHS	2	1	2
17	Aggrey Memorial Zion SHS*	24	7	21
18	Moree Sec. Tech. High School	3	1	3
19	Peter B. A Holdbrook Smith Academic Complex*	9	3	8
20	Global Splendid Academy SHS	7	2	7
21	Edinaman SHS*	25	7	20
22	Pitmas Secondary	5	1	3
23	Eguafo Abrem SHS*	14	4	12
24	Komenda Senior High Technical	6	2	6
25	Church of Christ SHS	6	2	5
Total		**324**	**100**	**285**

*Schools randomly selected for the document analysis

For the purpose of the document analysis, in all, 24 trainees' lesson notebooks were used. The breakdown is as follows: Twelve schools (with asterisks in Table 2) in the study area were randomly selected. In each school, two trainees (also randomly selected) had their lesson notebooks selected. In each lesson notebook, four assessed/supervised lesson plans were scrutinised and analysed.

Instruments

Data were collected as the bases for making the inferences, interpretations, descriptions and explanations for the study. The instruments

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used were questionnaire (closed-ended and open-ended) and document analysis. They were designed in the light of the purpose of the study, conceptual framework and the empirical review.

Questionnaire

This was used to collect statistically quantifiable data on each of the research objectives. McMillan and Schumacher (2001) recommend a questionnaire if the researcher knows that the respondents will be able to read, understand and answer the questionnaire. Having teacher-trainees as my respondents, therefore, they were able to read, understand and answer the questionnaires on their own. The closed-ended items were structured on a Likert-type scale. The close-ended questionnaire facilitated responses and also enhanced categorization and analyses of the data in quantitative terms. The scaled items, as Macmillan and Schumacher (2001) admitted, helped me to obtain fairly accurate opinions of teacher-trainees on the issues of OFCTP lesson plan preparation.

I realised that the closed-ended questionnaire might not give the respondents the opportunity to make their own inputs. Hence, the open-ended questionnaire was used to capture the comments or contributions that the respondents wished to make about the issue under review. In order to reduce the challenge of participants' reluctance to respond to open-ended items on questionnaires, only one open-ended item was provided on each research question. It was, however, a surprise to me when I noted that trainees used the space provided to express their grievances.

In all, the questionnaire had the ability to solicit numerous information (as indicated by Trochim, 2001) from several respondents within the short

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period of time at my disposal. It is obvious that collecting data from teacher-trainees who were busy on the field was not going to be all that easy; nonetheless, because of my previous contact with most of them, every school I went, there was someone who knew me and so led me to gain the cooperation and assistance of the others in the data collection. This contributed to the high return rate of the questionnaire (close to 98% return rate)

Document Analysis

Creswell (1998) and Merriam (2001) contend that document analysis, as a data source, is as good as observation and interview. However, it could be argued that document analysis has an additional potential to reveal information that the interviewee is not ready to share. It has the ability to access information that may not be available during observation or cannot be obtained through questionnaire.

As a result, a Document Analysis Guide (see Appendix C) was used to collect data on the topic that could only be gathered through perusing. The teacher-trainees' lesson notebook was inspected to personally ascertain their difficult (challenging) areas as observed and indicated both in their lesson note and on the Form "B" by their supervisors. The application of the document analysis was meant to make up for the deficiencies that might have occurred with the use of the questionnaire alone in collecting the data. Meanwhile, even though the use of document analysis in this context was time-consuming, it enabled me to collect some vital first-hand information in their lesson notebooks.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments: The instruments were subjected to a validity and reliability test. They were given to my two

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supervisors who ascertained that they meet face and content validity. The suggestions as given by the supervisors were used to effect the necessary changes to improve upon the instruments.

A pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted using 30 teacher-trainees drawn from University Practice SHS, Effutu SHS and Jukwa SHS. Choosing these schools was basically due to their proximity to the study area. It was discovered that trainees did not respond to a few statements, perhaps, they did not understand them because they felt they were slightly ambiguous and some sentences being quite long for them. Such statements were noted and later restructured.

The data gathered were coded into the Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS) and the reliability was tested and found to be reliable as maintained by Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) that if the co-efficient alpha value is .70 and above then the instrument is reliable and of good quality for collecting useful data for the study. The Cronbach's alpha was established for each of the sections that fell under the Likert-type scale and they were all above .70 (Section A=.798; Section B=.788; Section C=.761; Section D=.933 and Section E=.756). Thus, the questionnaire was of good quality for collecting useful data for the study.

Data Collection Procedure

The data were collected within one month (from the last week of November to the first three weeks in December, 2013). An introductory letter (see Appendix B) taken from the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education (DASSE) was presented to the heads of the Senior High Schools and also to participants who inquired for it. The purpose of this introductory

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letter was to solicit for cooperation and assistance. For the purposes of achieving accurate data and ensuring a high return rate, the data was collected by me and in each school one teacher-trainee volunteered to assist me in that respect.

In the schools which were selected for the document analysis, while the participants responded to the questionnaires, I took the lesson note books of two randomly selected trainees and in each lesson note book, four supervised/assessed lesson plans were randomly selected and perused. I then took their respective Form Bs and after obtaining the aspect of the lesson plan indicated on the Document Analysis Guide, I assigned **+**, $\pm$, or **-** to represent what the supervisors evaluated as "Good", "Satisfactory" or "Needs improvement" respectively. It must be admitted that on both the Form B and in the lesson plan, it was not on all the aspects of lesson planning that the supervisors commented as "Good", "Satisfactory" or "Needs improvement". For such areas, I used the criteria stipulated on the Document Analysis Guide and those on the new Teaching Practice Assessment Form "A" to evaluate them in the same manner.

Data Analysis

The matrix labelled Table 3 indicates the research questions and the analytical methods/tools used to analyse the data to answer each research question. The data collected was grouped into quantitative and qualitative terms and analysed accordingly so as to appreciate the extent to which the issues under investigation were perceived by the teacher-trainees.

Table 3: Data Analysis Matrix

Research Question	Type of Data	Analytical Method or Tool
1. In what aspects of lesson plan preparation are teacher trainees in the University of Cape Coast most confident about their ability?	Quantitative	Frequency counts and percentages. Mean of means and Mean of standard deviations Document analysis
2. Which lesson planning format do teacher-trainees mostly prefer to use?	Quantitative:	Frequencies counts
3. What are the challenges of lesson plan preparation facing teacher trainees during OCTP?	Quantitative:	Close-ended: Percentages, means and standard deviations
	Qualitative:	Open-ended: I grouped the data collected into categories and then, transcribed and interpreted the emerging challenges.
4. What level of importance do teacher-trainees place on lesson plan preparation?	Quantitative	Percentages, means and standard deviations.
5. What are the opinions of teacher-trainees about OCTP lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision?	Quantitative:	Close-ended: Percentages, means and standard deviations.
	Qualitative:	Open-ended: I grouped the data collected into categories and then, transcribed and interpreted the emerging opinions.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview

One of the greatest activities in every teacher education course is the OFCTP that teacher-trainees encounter in real teaching situations (Farrell, 2008) with real students, teachers, and curriculum in natural settings. Among the diverse range of skills that are considered very important for the trainees to acquire is effective lesson plan preparation. However, preparing effective lesson plan during the OFCTP is not an easy task for trainees. This study was therefore, aimed at investigating issues of lesson plan preparation in OFCTP. For this reason, a self-developed questionnaire and Document Analysis Guide were validated and used to collect the data in order to answer the five research questions. Descriptive statistics (Frequencies (№), Percentages (%), Means (M), Mean of Means (MM), Standard Deviations (SD) and Mean of Standard Deviations (MSD)) were employed to analyse the data collected.

This chapter is devoted to the presentation and discussion of the results that emerged from the study; and is presented according to each of the five research questions posed in Chapter One.

Research Question 1: In what aspects of lesson plan preparation are teacher-trainees in the University of Cape Coast most confident about in their ability?

Ideally, teacher-trainees are to be able to prepare the whole lesson plan effectively. If the teacher-trainee can efficiently do this wholly, then his confidence in his ability to write-up each of the areas should be paramount. In view of this, trainees were required to rank their confidence beginning from Very High (VH) to Uncertain (U). Table 4 shows the percentage of trainees (out of the total of 279 respondents) who ranked their confidence in their ability to prepare each of the aspects of the lesson plan as Very High (VH), High (H), Moderate (M), Low (L) or Uncertain (U) and their respective means and standard deviations. The Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS) was used to run the mean and standard deviation of the overall responses to each item on the questionnaire, likewise the percentages.

Table 4: Aspects of Lesson Plan Preparation that Teacher-Trainees in the University of Cape Coast are Most Confident of their Ability

Statement	VH %	H %	M %	L %	U %	Total %	M	SD
Carving out a teachable topic or subtopic from a unit or chapter in the syllabus:	56	36	7	1	0	**100**	1.2	.68
Stating instructional objectives in taxonomic categories and behavioural terms:	52	23	23	1	1	**100**	1.4	.97

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Table 4 (continued)

Introducing the topic (linking previous knowledge to the new topic):	24	52	8	16	0	**100**	2.4	.65
Choosing the right teaching method (logical teacher-learner activities) in relation to the content and objectives:	37	31	30	1	1	**100**	2.0	.87
Stating the core points to clarify the main ideas, concepts, skills, knowledge:	51	41	8	0	0	**100**	1.0	.69
Summarising the lesson:	50	37	12	1	0	**100**	1.1	.73
Assessing student learning:	51	38	10	1	0	**100**	1.2	.71
Evaluating the lesson:	50	40	9	1	0	**100**	1.4	.70
Writing references for the lesson:	43	24	22	11	0	**100**	2.0	1.03

Source: Fieldwork, 2013. MM=1.52; MSD=.78; N=279; Very high (1), High (2), Moderate (3), LOW (4), Uncertain (5)

In all, the information in Table 4 shows that majority of the trainees, ranked their confidence in their ability to effectively prepare the whole lesson plan as "high" (MM= 1.52; MSD= .78). Thus, between 67%—92% of the 279 respondents gave "high" as the minimum rating for their confidence in their ability to prepare all the aspects of the lesson plan. This is very encouraging and confirms Ligadu's (2004) study that found that the overall perception of teacher-trainees (mentees) used in his research showed that they were well-

prepared in terms of lesson planning among other things. In Table 5, 50%—56% of the respondents rated "very high" their confidence in their ability to prepare the following aspects of the lesson plan: carving-out a teachable topic or subtopic from the syllabus; stating instructional objectives; stating the core points to clarify the main ideas (concepts, skills, knowledge); summarising the lesson; assessing student learning and evaluating the lesson. By this, it can be said that trainees are most confident of their ability to prepare the 6 aspects of lesson plan just listed.

Surprisingly, only 24% rated their ability to introduce the topic by linking students' previous knowledge to the new topic as "very high" (i.e. most confident of their ability) while 52% had theirs to be "high" with the rest of being medium or low in confidence. A whopping 23% gave "medium" as the rating for their confidence in their ability to state instructional objectives in taxonomic categories and behavioural terms though those who rated their ability as either "high" or "very high" summed up to 75%. Similarly, 30% of the respondents rated their confidence in their ability to choose the right teaching method as "medium". Writing references for the lesson was a low confidence area for 11% of the respondents who rated their confidence in their ability in that respect as "low" and 22% rated their ability in that same aspect as medium. This means that about 33% of the respondents believed that their ability to cite references in the APA format for their prepared lessons was less than "high" (not the best).

These ratings denote a lot. The fact that majority of the trainees ranked their confidence in their ability to prepare all the aspects of the lesson plan as "high" and "very high", implies that from their own perspectives, they taught

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with good quality lesson plans. This confidence has positive effects on the learners' understanding of the lesson and their achievement of the lesson objectives as maintained by Koomson, Frimpong, Amuah, Anyagre and Brown (2002) and Tamakloe, Amedahe and Atta (2005). These researchers contend that the quality of the lesson plan a teacher uses to teach a class contributes to the understanding, achievement or performance of the students in that class. Also, they assert that in most cases, the success of any lesson depends upon the quality of its plan and the expertise with which it is carried out. In the same vein, scholars such as Guskey and Passaro (1994); Guarino, Hamilton, Lockwood, and Rathbun (2006); Guo, Connor, Yang, Roehrig, and Frederick (2012) believe that there is a positive correlation between teachers' beliefs about their own level of competence, sense of self-efficacy and practice and their students' performance. Therefore, by the trainees' own ratings and the arguments by the scholars mentioned above, I could have concluded that their students generally performed well, but, to what extent did these self-rating of confidence in lesson planning reflects the true ability of the teacher-trainees? Thus, in order to appreciate the true ability of the respondents, I went further to find out what the supervisors wrote in the lesson notebooks and on the Form Bs to ascertain whether the trainees' ratings of their ability were endorsed by the comments of the supervisors. This was done using Document Analysis and the results have been presented below.

Results of the Document Analysis: In all, 96 assessed or supervised lesson plans and their respective Form Bs from 12 schools were examined. Table 5 shows the compilation of supervisors' comments in the form of ratings as "Good" [+], "Satisfactory" [±], and "Needs Improvement" [-] that the

supervisors used to either commend or query the teacher-trainees on their lesson plans or lessons delivery.

From Table 5, it can be seen that when it comes to stating the topic or subtopic, writing the core points, summarising the lesson and assessing students' learning, majority of the trainees were good in doing that. By the supervisors' commendation on the Form Bs, more than 70 lesson plans out of 96, I scrutinised, confirmed the trainees' claim of highest confidence in the above-mentioned areas. But on these same aspects, there were some adverse comments made by the supervisors in some few lesson notes and on the Form Bs. For example, they usually stated, "Lesson too loaded or too much for the time", "Learn how to assess students' learning", among others. My observation, however, was that some trainees frequently wrote single words as topics, e.g. budget, demand, supply, national income which are too vague and not self-explanatory as stressed by Tamakloe, et al. (2005). Tamakloe, et al. insist that for the learners to comprehend these topics easily, they should be stated, for example, as "The concept of budget", "The meaning of demand", "Measurement of national income", and so forth. Most supervisors did not comment on this, though.

Table 5: Analysis of Supervisors' Comments in Teacher-Trainees' Lesson Notebooks and on Form Bs

Aspect of the Lesson Plan	Comment		
	[+] No.	[±] No.	[-] No.
Statement of topic or subtopic (well-carved, well-worded, time):	72	20	4
Objectives (specific, measurable, relevant & achievable within the duration of the lesson):	26	37	33

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Table 5 (continued)

Topic introduction (preview of previous knowledge & linkage to new topic (interesting and captivating)):	30	27	39
Teaching methods (varied & appropriate teacher-learner activities showing student involvement):	42	28	26
TLMs (appropriate, time & stages of usage):	20	44	32
Core points (reflecting set objectives and logically presented):	91	5	0
Summary of the lesson (tidy and interesting based on the objectives and linked to the core points):	92	4	0
Assessment of student learning/Lesson evaluation (appropriate questions to depict the achievement of lesson objectives):	83	6	7
Writing references for the lesson (follow the APA format):	15	49	32

Source: Field data, 2013; Good [+], Satisfactory [±], Needs Improvement [-]
     N=96

In terms of topic introduction by linking previous knowledge to the new topic, 30 lesson plans were found to be good, 27 were satisfactory while the majority (39) needed improvement. These data show that in sum, majority of the trainees are not good at linking students' previous knowledge to new lessons. For example, the supervisors made comments such as "Learn how to link RPK to new lessons", "You did not introduce the lesson well", "Stop asking the students questions that appear to suggest that they already know what you are yet to teach", and so on. This confirms the information in Table 4 where about 24% rated below "high" and only 24% rated above "high" in terms of their confidence in linking previous knowledge to the new lesson.

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Indeed, this is an area that confronts a lot of teacher-trainees and supervisors frequently commented on it.

Twenty six of the lesson plans analysed had their objectives well stated (good), 37 were satisfactory and 33 were not well-stated and therefore, needed improvement). Most recurring supervisors' comments on this aspect of the lesson plan (especially, on those that were found to need improvement) include "These objectives are not easily measurable", "Lesson objectives not specific in terms of time and task", among others.

Out of the 96 lesson plans analysed, 42 were found to have appropriate (good) methods of teaching stated for each stage of the lesson, 28 were seen to be only satisfactory while the remaining 26 lesson plans needed improvement in terms of the selection of appropriate teaching methods. By this, it can be inferred that majority of the trainees were not good at deciding on which method(s) of teaching was (were) appropriate for each lesson and type of students in the class. Supervisors commented that some trainees usually stated appropriate methods of teaching in the lesson plan but tended to use different method(s), especially, the lecture method, when they get into the classroom. Some other comments include the following; "Each step or activity should have a time period and teaching methods(s) to be used", "Your lesson plan did not indicate how the learners would be involved", "Lesson plan depicted class involvement but that was lost during lesson delivery, why?"

On trainees' ability to select appropriate TLRs, 32 of the 96 lesson plans observed needed improvement, 44 were satisfactory, with only 20 being good. Comments of the supervisors show that some trainees did well by stating the TLRs in the lesson plan, but they never brought them into the

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classroom. Other trainees stated the TLRs alright but there was no indication of when to use them. By the comments of the supervisors, some even forgot to use the TLRs brought to the classroom. Others did not state or use TLRs at all. This implies that trainees do not only find it difficult accessing appropriate TLRs but also, they lacked the skill of choosing and using appropriate TLRs appropriately during the lesson delivery.

Majority (49 out of 96) of the lesson plans observed were only satisfactory in terms of writing references in the American Psychological Association (APA) format for the lesson; 32 of the lessons show that trainees needed improvement in their ability to cite references in the APA format. Nevertheless, 15 out of the 96 lesson plans indicated that trainees were good at references citation.

In some few cases, the following supervisors' comments were found in both the lesson notebooks and on the Form Bs gathered: "It is not what is in the lesson notebook that you have taught", "Be consistent in your choice of lesson preparation format", "You must improve upon your lesson planning in general". These comments show that all is not that well for some teacher-trainees in terms of lesson planning though majority rated their confidence as "high" in Table 4. As a matter of fact, my personal observations were that it seemed some supervisors had predetermined what to write about trainees' lessons in the Form B; this is because same comments were written on the Form B of all teacher-trainees' in some particular schools in the study area by some same supervisors. The other thing is that some supervisors' comments were not legible; trainees found it difficult to get what the supervisors wanted to put across. When I asked them to tell me what the supervisors meant there,

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they could not tell me anything other than that, some of the supervisors left before the lesson ended and so they could not have post-observation discussion.

As indicated by the supervisors on the Form B, the trainees generally wrote detailed lesson plans. It was also realised that certain things that clearly did not pertain to trainees' lessons, for example, RPK, TLMs, and even dates had to be corrected frequently by supervisors. Critical analyses of these "errors" did not give the impression of mere mistakes. But rather, an indication that some of the teacher-trainees resorted to copying copiously from old lesson notebooks gathered from their predecessors. Dates were usually cancelled and re-written several times; and these were normally circled with red ink by the supervisors in the lesson note. It appeared trainees merely recycled previous lesson plans by altering or making minor changes on the content column of the lesson plans to suit the current one. This situation, if unchecked has the likely impact of legitimating the 'use' of fraudulent lesson plans as maintained by Boikhutso (2010), and encouraging complacency on the part of the student-teachers thereby undermining the noble idea behind lesson planning in the OFCTP.

From the results shown in Tables 4 and 5, it could be recognised that there is more to be achieved. Having quite a number of the trainees rating their confidence in their ability to write-up some of the aspects of the lesson plan as medium, low or uncertain, means that all is not well in those areas. In Table 4, irrespective of the "high" and "very high" ratings majority (67 to 92%) of the respondents offered in ranking their ability and confidence in lesson planning, the challenging areas (by the ratings) for some of them include: stating

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instructional objectives in taxonomic categories and behavioural terms; topic introduction (linking previous knowledge to the new topic); choosing the right teaching method in relation to the content and objectives of the lesson; and references citation. The remaining two areas, which are not too profound like the aforementioned ones, are the assessment of student learning and evaluation of the lesson. All these are reflective in the results of the document analysis in Table 5 and support the research results of Joice and Harootunian (1964), Vogler (1991) and Boz and Boz (2006). These researchers consistently found that teachers in their early practices find it puzzling to state instructional objectives in behavioural terms. They unanimously ascribed the reason to the fact that novice teachers do not fully understand the conceptual distinctions between aims, goals and objectives and so have difficulty matching goals, objectives, instructional activities and evaluation procedures. In the same vein, the result supports the findings of Lampert (1985), Kagan and Tippins (1992), and Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) that many teachers especially, the neophytes, have difficulty integrating subject topics, understanding the concepts or tasks embedded in curriculum materials and manipulating conflicting goals when there is uncertainty about how to achieve multiple desired outcomes.

There are two main possibilities that can be drawn as the causes of such low ratings that some of the respondents assigned to their confidence and the shortfalls that the supervisors found in their ability to prepare some aspects of the lesson plan. It is either they did not get much time to practise those areas very well during the ONCTP or they simply did not take the ONCTP serious. This inference is based on an observation made by Bhargava (2009)

that a batch of students which had more practice in microteaching performed confidently and in better way in comparison to the group which had less preparatory time. Similarly, Al-Mahrooqi (2011) found in his study that students who often practised lesson planning during their microteaching felt that they were adequately prepared to write effective lesson plans without any assistance.

An observation worth noting is that the aspects of lesson plan preparation that some of the trainees rated as having low confidence in their ability to prepare them, and also where supervisors found flaws in their ability, happened to be the most important areas. They include the areas that GES guiding principles expect teachers to be confident and competent of their ability (cited in Koomson, et al., 2002). Some of these trainees, by their own ratings, fall short of the requirement expected by their probable future employer, the GES. Nevertheless, the consolation is that the majority rather were more confident in preparing effectively, the lesson plan as a whole and the essential aspects in particular.

Research Question 2: Which lesson planning format do teacher-trainees mostly prefer to use?

Teacher-trainees on OFCTP from UCC are usually entreated to stick to one format of lesson plan preparation, especially, the one that they were taught during their methods class (as encouraged by the UCC TP Coordinator during the OFCTP orientation organised for UCC teacher-trainees on 16th September, 2013, at auditorium 900). I therefore endeavoured to find out the lesson plan format that trainees would have rather preferred to use, if they had the freedom to choose any format at all. In addition to this, I intended to find other two

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things: first, the lesson planning format that most trainees were taught to use and, the second, the one they actually used when they got to the field. Table 6 shows the responses.

Table 6: Lesson Planning Format

Statement	Tabular %	Prose %	Both %	Total %
The lesson planning format(s) I was taught to use is/are:	30	55	15	**100**
The lesson planning format I used is:	36	60	4	**100**
The lesson planning format I actually prefer to use is:	51	45	4	**100**

Source: Field data, 2013   N= 279

From Table 6, over half (55%) of the respondents were taught to use the prose format while 30% were taught the tabular format. Only 15% of the respondents were taught both formats. This means that most of the trainees involved in this study were taught the prose format of lesson planning. For this reason, 60% of the respondents used the prose format alone while 36% used the tabular format alone. Only 4% claim to have used both formats during the exercise (meaning they disobeyed the directive that trainees should be consistent with the lesson planning format that they used). Majority usage of the prose format implies that more time and mental effort have been used in the preparation of the lesson plans as indicated by Lynn (2009) as a disadvantage of this format.

Meanwhile, if trainees had the opportunity to choose any format irrespective of what they were taught in school, more than half (51%) of the respondents would have preferred to use the tabular format only whereas 45%

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would have preferred to use only the prose format. Again, only 4% of the trainees would have preferred to use both formats instead of just one. What this implies is that majority of the trainees would prefer to use the tabular format after graduating from the university. Perhaps, because of its simplicity and its relatively less detailed description of teacher-learner activities which makes it more attractive to teachers (Koomson, et al., 2002). The fact that majority of the trainees prefer to use the tabular format but did not do so and rather used the prose format gives support to the fact that trainees do not have the freedom to choose the format of their choice, ideally. It is what is prescribed or preferred by the department that trainees in that jurisdiction follow. Majority of the trainees did not have any challenge with respect to the choice of lesson plan format to use as the supervisors (apart from those they instructed to be consistent with the choice of format) did not have any problem with the formats (refer to Table 7).

One may ask: if teacher-trainees were taught only one of the formats but used or preferred to use the other format, how did they become conversant with the one they were not taught but used or preferred to use? As indicated in Figure 1, the lesson plan, generally, follows a simple approach with similar components. Tamakloe, et al. (2005) hint that the most important components of many lesson plans are the topic, objective(s), previous knowledge, teaching/learning resources, introduction, presentation, closure, evaluation, pre-lesson preparation and a remarks column. The format is about just the organisation of these components in a logical manner that would lead to effective teaching and learning. All other things being equal, a trainee who is

well-versed in the specific format he/she was taught should not find it difficult to transfer that knowledge.

Teachers already in the profession mostly prefer to use the tabular format instead of the prose as indicated by Singh (2008). GES also endorses this format; but responses in Table 6 indicate that, relatively, fewer respondents were taught how to prepare lesson plan in the tabular format. Since the majority of the teacher-trainees prefer to use the tabular format, those who wish to use the tabular format should rather be taught that format during their methods class in the university. After all, according to Lynn (2009), if the lesson format is the same for all teachers and in all subjects, then all students will know how the lesson is to begin, develop and end, regardless of which teacher or lesson they encounter. As Lynn indicated, this is particularly useful for youngsters and those who have learning problems and therefore, have difficulty in organising themselves.

Research Question 3: What challenges of lesson plan preparation do teacher-trainees face during OFCTP?

Preparing a lesson plan either in the form of prose or tabular during the OFCTP, is never devoid of challenges. The challenges spring from inadequate or lack of material and human resources to challenges posed by supervision. Table 7 shows the percentage, mean and standard deviation distributions of trainees' responses to challenges of lesson plan preparation posed by the items listed. The most challenging issues for almost all the teacher-trainees (99 to 100%) include the contradictory lesson planning suggestions from internal and external supervisors and the lack of teachers' handbook to guide teacher-preparation.

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Table 7: Challenges of OFCTP Lesson Plan Preparation

Statement	NC %	C %	QS %	S %	VS %	Total %	M	SD
Textbooks	77	19	4	1	1	**100**	1.31	.70
Syllabus	73	22	2	2	1	**100**	1.37	.74
Teachers' handbook	1	1	1	12	85	**100**	4.78	.65
Subject dictionaries	18	10	36	12	24	**100**	2.86	1.47
Internet for school	20	17	35	6	22	**100**	2.72	1.40
Computer	40	41	11	4	4	**100**	2.03	1.26
Projector	6	18	37	33	6	**100**	3.02	1.56
Laboratory	7	30	33	26	4	**100**	2.61	1.60
Electricity	76	15	4	1	4	**100**	1.44	.97
Time	31	50	3	3	13	**100**	2.00	1.36
Instructional materials (TLMs).	29	47	9	12	3	**100**	1.94	1.15
Getting mentors' assistance.	28	47	7	4	14	**100**	2.09	1.40
Getting resource persons.	30	42	10	14	4	**100**	2.20	1.13
Mentor's actions and inactions discouraging me from writing lesson plan	72	19	4	3	2	**100**	1.44	.88
Supervisors forcing me to teach when I do not have any lesson period on the time table.	17	60	4	3	16	**100**	1.96	1.48
Contradictory lesson planning suggestions from internal and external supervisors.	0	0	1	19	80	**100**	4.78	.47
Unfriendliness or unapproachability of supervisors.	24	67	3	3	3	**100**	1.69	1.17
The lesson planning format I use.	88	7	3	1	1	**100**	1.22	.67

Source: Field data, 2013. N= 279; MM=2.30; MSD=1.11; Not a challenge (NC=1); Is a challenge (C=2), Quite serious (QS=3), Serious (S=4), Very serious (VS=5).

From Table 7, the respondents rated the contradictory lesson planning

suggestions from internal and external supervisors (M= 4.78; SD=.47) and the

lack of teachers' handbook (M= 4.78; SD= .65) as "Very Serious". They then rated the availability of subject dictionaries (M= 2.86; SD=1.47), internet for school (M= 2.72; SD= 1.40), projector (M= 3.02; SD=1.56), laboratory and lab tools (M= 2.61; SD= 1.60) as "Quite Serious". Availability of computers, time factor, instructional materials (TLMs), getting mentors' assistance, getting resource persons, supervisors forcing trainees to teach when they do not have any lesson period on the time table and, unfriendliness or unapproachability of supervisors were rated as "challenges". Some things were however, not considered as challenges at all (M<2.30; SD<1.11). These include textbooks; syllabi; electricity; and finally, the lesson planning format used. In addition to these, the result shows that actions and inactions of mentors did not discourage them from writing lesson plan before teaching. For example, as will be shown later, majority (70%) of the trainees observed that their mentors who taught did not prepare lesson plans before teaching but that did not discourage them from doing so as trainees.

Contradictory directives on lesson plan preparation are the major components of the challenges that trainees encounter during the OFCTP. Al-Mahrooqi's (2011) study in Oman and Acquah and Anti's (2013) study in Ghana found this same problem and so there is no doubt that the respondents ranked it as the utmost challenge. This, perhaps, is the main reason why trainees agreed to seek for clarification when they get back to school after the OFCTP (as will be shown later). Inability to do so means that such trainees would graduate with the confusion still in mind.

The lack of teachers' handbook (rated as very serious by teacher-trainees) has a great influence on subject teaching. It is in this book that the

teacher obtains detailed and specific procedures for the teaching of the subject aside the syllabus. It also provides ways to improvise certain TLMs and how to make them "profitable" to the learner. Having no teacher's handbook in the subject areas suggests that the trainees largely depended on their own ingenuity to accomplish a lot of tasks in the classroom, some of which may be inappropriate.

So much is required of the teacher-trainee during the OFCTP (University of Cape Coast, 2013). As the trainee works hard to earn more marks, he/she also works assiduously on his/her professional development in handling other issues including co-curricular activities. The respondents' varied rating of time as a challenge was an indication that some trainees needed extra time to accomplish what they did as novice teachers. During the document analysis, I found that trainees who taught two or more subjects in order to get the required number of teaching periods as well as those who taught the same subjects but at different levels needed to prepare two or more lesson plans per day. This corresponds to the reason why Bhargava (2009) says that students tend to focus too much on completion of task and tend to have sleepless nights rather than on reflecting on classroom activities and teacher-professionalism during field experience.

Adu (2002) as well as Coletta and Norris-Bauer (2008) assert that access to TLRs is not an easy task for teachers. This has been affirmed by the trainees' response shown in this study (Table 7). Teachers' handbook, subject dictionaries, internet access, projector, laboratory and tools were found to be inadequate or not available at all. However, in the OFCTP, in every lesson taught, trainees are supposed to provide TLMs that are appropriate and related

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to students' experiences and should be indicated in suitable stages of the lesson plan as instructed on the assessment Form "A". But for the trainees, preparing (improvising) charts, models, and other TLMs, consume a lot of time as indicated by Kyriacou and Stephens (1999) and sometimes expensive. For most teacher-trainees, preparing TLMs is like a heavy home task every day. The schools which could have provided these are also battling with profound inadequacies in these resources.

As already stated, trainees are expected to provide and use TLMs in every lesson prepared and taught. But for some topics, getting TLMs for them is nearly impossible for the trainees. For example, there appears to be no simple TLMs for teaching elasticity of demand and supply in Economics. In the document analyses, I discovered that because trainees do not want to lose marks on their failure to provide appropriate TLMs when supervised, they tend to select and prepare lesson plans on different topics for which they could get TLMs easily when there is going to be supervision. Sometimes, they rather repeat lessons for which they have appropriate TLRs. This is also evident in the extract from the report that the headmistress of one senior high school in the study area wrote about students who did their TP in her school in the year 2012 (see pp. 7 & 8 in Chapter 1). She lamented that quite a number of the teacher-trainees repeated lessons unnecessarily thereby wasting the time of students. Others simply assumed and stated the appropriate TLMs in the lesson notes but they become unattainable in the instructional period as revealed in the document analysis (see pp. 91 & 92).

The trainees rated "getting mentors' assistance" as a challenge. Reasons to this rating were provided in the open-ended section of the

questionnaire by some of the respondents. According to them, some teachers who were to serve as mentors stopped attending school when they assumed duty as student–teachers taking over the subjects that they (mentors) taught. For example, one respondent wrote this: "After taking over my mentor's classes, I never set my eyes on him till the time I was to submit examination questions". Several statements of this kind were written at the open-ended section of the questionnaires on challenges of OFCTP lesson plan preparation. This is in line with the study result of Azeem (2011), and Acquah and Anti (2013) which showed that teachers stopped going to class as soon as their classes were taken over by trainee-teachers.

Others also wrote that some mentors came to school regularly but did not stay long on campus to offer their assistance to them in their lesson planning. Those who came regularly and stayed long on campus were also so busy that they were not able to assist them in preparing their lesson plans let alone read through the lesson notes before the trainee goes to class with it. This is in contrast with the findings of Hu and Wong (as cited in Ngara, Ngara & Ngwarai, 2013) that cooperating teachers in their study were the ones with whom student teachers had most conversations during TP but spent least time talking to their college or University supervisors and school principals. Given the trainees' responses to my questionnaire, it can be concluded that the behaviour of some of the veteran teachers (especially, those serving as mentors) put a lot of responsibilities and lesson planning challenges on the novice teachers who need more guidance in order to succeed. Research shows that moving from novice teacher to highly effective teacher takes time, so the support given to novice teachers needs to be more than a sporadic effort; it

must occur on a consistent and persistent basis (Athanases, et al., 2008; Boreen & Niday, 2000; Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2008; Evertson & Smithey, 2000; Ross, Vescio, Tricarico & Short, 2011).

Duncan and Met (2010) noted that effective mentoring requires that the mentor works with the novice on an on-going basis. Successful mentors commit the time necessary to be accessible so they can address the many questions novice teachers have right away and also, help them find the basic materials they might need for lesson preparation (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Cherubini, 2007; Algozzine, Gretes, Queen & Cowen-Hathcock, 2007). By this, it can be said that majority of the veteran teachers and those serving as mentors in the OFCTP are not committed to the training of the new teachers. This lack of proper assistance is sharply in contrast with what happens to student teachers in Pennsylvania State University, USA. For them, according to the University's Student Teaching Handbook for 2013/14, the mentoring teacher must approve the mentee's lesson plans at least 24 hours in advance of teaching. This provides a point of discussion that can facilitate cooperative planning, clarification and trouble-shooting. If the mentee's written lesson plans are not submitted at least 24 hours in advance, the supervisor may recommend that the mentee does not teach the lesson at all (University Student Teaching Handbook for 2013/14). This can hardly happen to a teacher-trainee here in Ghana. The reason being that trainees generally do not get access to mentors' assistance during OFCTP as confirmed by the respondents in this study (see Table 7). Similarly, Acquah and Anti (2013) found that majority of mentors (veteran teachers) whose subjects are taken over by trainees seize

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going to school during OFCTP. So, virtually, there is no authorised person to check the trainee in the absence of the supervisor in the OFCTP.

Closely linked to the above is the problem of getting resource persons to "inject" their practical knowledge into some specific topics as rated by the trainees as a "challenge". Access to such experts is difficult and expensive, but their contributions to lessons usually complement the class teacher's efforts and sometimes, knowledge.

Some supervisors occasionally go to the schools at the time when the teacher-trainee has no lesson specified on the timetable and ask him/her to organize a class and teach and be supervised. The respondents rated this as a challenge (see Table 7). Some trainees who experienced this action wrote in the open-ended section of the questionnaire that it made them disorganised in the first place; since they had no lesson note and TLMs prepared for that impromptu lessons. They then had to teach an already treated lesson for which they had lesson notes and TLMs; but in such situations, the class became very "artificial" and appeared to be like a revision class since the learners virtually already knew everything that was being repeated. In the course of the data collection, trainees who went through this spoke to me about this and they attributed their low performance to such actions by some of the supervisors. They reckoned, "failure to do so and be supervised also meant that you would bear the wrath of the supervisor and not get the required number of supervision".

Unfriendliness or unapproachability of supervisors was also variedly rated as a challenge. This problem can lead to poor social and professional interactions between such supervisors and the supervisees and even has the

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power to make the post-observation discussion a-one-way communication (i.e. only from supervisor to the supervisee and not vice-versa). The *Teaching Practice Handbook* (UCC, 2013) requires that the pre- and post-observations must be, indeed, a "discussion". But with some supervisors being unfriendly and unapproachable as variedly rated by the respondents, the "discussion" could be a flaw and not achieve its purpose. Ligadu (2004) and Al-Mahrooqi (2011) found this "unfriendliness/unapproachability" of supervisors to be the contributing factor to the confusion in lesson plan preparation since the trainee does not feel comfortable to freely ask questions on issues that bother him/her on lesson planning. This situation could make the trainees find it difficult to seek for support from supervisors (a role clearly spelt out in the *Teaching Practice Handbook*, UCC, 2013, p. 6, for supervisors). It is not surprising that in a related study, even with the relationship between mentors and mentees, Hobson, Malderez, Tracey, Giannakaki, Pell, Kerr, Chambers, Tomlinson, and Roper (2006) found that half of all the respondents rated such relationships as "very good", whilst the remaining half of the respondents also rated same mentor-mentee relationship as either "poor" or "very poor".

Discussion of Trainees' Responses to the Open-Ended Items on Challenges of OFCTP Lesson Plan Preparation: On the questionnaire, there was a portion for trainees to state other lesson planning challenges that they faced. Some of the notable and very common challenges stated are presented. In the comments, trainees frequently compared the ONCTP lesson planning to that of the OFCTP in terms of difficulty. By the trend of their responses, it is clear that trainees see the demand to meet the requirements for lesson plan preparation in the OFCTP to be higher than that of the ONCTP. My

observation and experience as a teacher-trainee in the 2010 ONCTP is that trainees are made to prepare their lesson plans for at most 20 minutes each time they had to teach, while in the OFCTP, they face the reality of preparing a lesson for two to three periods combined (about 90 to120 minute-lesson plan). Bhargava (2009) also made a similar observation and reported that trainees usually have sleepless nights during TP, as they had to prepare lesson plans and teaching aids for three or four periods by the next morning. If the exact requirements in the OFCTP are practised in the ONCTP, trainees are likely to experience no difficulty with respect to lesson planning in the OFCTP.

Several statements like "It is difficult to prepare lesson in my minor subject area" drew my attention to the fact that in the ONCTP trainees are not made to practise lesson plan preparation in their minor subject areas (except the major area). Even in Methods class in the university, student teachers are grouped and taught according to major subject areas. This means that trainees who have to add some periods of time from their minor subject areas to make up the minimum number of teaching periods during the OFCTP will face some few challenges. These problems would be prevented if trainees are trained in planning lessons in their minor areas as well before embarking on the OFCTP.

In most lessons, novice teachers have to use different teaching methods in various ways to find the most appropriate one that suits a particular class or group of students at a time. However, trainees claim "It is difficult to use trial-and-error way to identify the most suitable teaching technique because supervisors do not take that as an excuse for unsuccessful lessons". But, it must be said that OFCTP is indeed a "teaching practice" and so, it should be

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accorded as such. Teacher-trainees must therefore, have the opportunity to practise all methods of teaching deemed appropriate at this level. This is because, trainees would be "perfect" only when they try such methods of which some would definitely fail in the course of trying them. At best, they should be pardoned if they genuinely did so.

Other respondents wrote this: "Students usually do not answer questions that I pose to introduce my lesson". It was also observed in their lesson notebook (during the Document Analysis) that some trainees even ignored writing how they would introduce the lessons. For those who did this, I saw it as a way to overcome the frustration on their inability to appropriately introduce new lessons to students by linking what they already know to "the yet to be taught" (see Table 4). This is, perhaps, why supervisors entreated trainees to learn how to link RPK to new lessons and stop asking the students questions that appeared to suggest that they already knew what they were yet to teach them .

Each and every lesson activity, ideally, must have the maximum time to be spent on it stated in the lesson plan. But the trainees wrote that "It is not easy to predict how long each activity in the lesson plan will take during delivery". Numerous comments that trainees wrote on this issue clearly show that sometimes, an activity that they thought would only take a few minutes rather engages them for a whole class period; other times, an activity that was thought would generate discussion for at least thirty minutes dies after say, fifteen minutes. To Kyriacou and Stephens (1999) this is one of the differences between the novice teacher and the veteran teacher who has learned from hard experience that the unexpected will happen and that things

rarely go entirely as planned. Keene (2010) suggests that when faced with this challenge, quick but wise changes such as discarding some parts of the lesson if things start running overtime or adding some important materials if the original plan does not last as long as intended, is the way to go. But I think it will definitely be to the disadvantage of the learner if something is to be discarded. This is one of the factors supervisors are to take into consideration and not admonish trainees too much for teaching overtime or having the lesson completed before time.

I think that the best thing to do is for the TPU (as stated in the *Teaching Practice Handbook*, UCC, 2013) in collaboration with the school authorities to ensure that the OFCTP begins with the student teacher initially observing their mentors prepare lesson plan and teach for some time before the trainee takes on some teaching responsibilities under the guidance of the mentor and later before taking charge of a full class in an independent teaching. As these neophytes gain teaching experience from their mentors, their ability to estimate how long activities will run (and the closely related issue of how enthusiastically students will respond to lesson activities) will gradually improve. After all, Duncan and Met (2010) agree that estimating time for each classroom occurrence is a skill that develops quickly; and that is why Ross, Vescio, Tricarico, and Short (2011) stress that lesson planning involves judgments that novices are still developing. The impediment in this case is the issue of mentors not preparing lesson plans or refusing to go to school or class after trainees take over their responsibility of teaching.

In the mist of all these, teacher-trainees depending on their orientation, place different values on lesson plan preparation. Some may think that lesson

planning is the sure way to go for one to become a successful teacher; but, others may also think otherwise. What then does UCC teacher-trainees think about the importance of lesson plan preparation? Responses to the items under Research Question Four answer this question.

Research Question 4: What level of importance do teacher-trainees place on lesson plan preparation?

It is said that effective teachers are those who take time to prepare their lesson notes and use them in teaching (Adu, 2006). The lesson plan is as important as the lesson to be taught. However, the reasons why a teacher will be willing to prepare a lesson might vary from one teacher to another. The teacher-trainees in this study responded to various reasons why it was so important for them to have their lessons well-planned before entering the classroom. Table 8 (p. 111) gives the mean and standard deviation distributions of their responses. To them, the main reason why they prepared lesson plans was because it is a requirement for them to pass the OFCTP (M=1.11; SD=.32). However, generally, the respondents agreed variously on all the reasons why teacher-trainees prepare their lessons (MM=1.59; MSD=.83). The respondents collectively agreed that they prepare lesson plans because of the following: they must do so to pass the OFCTP (M=1.11; SD=.32); it helps them teach easily (M= 1.59; SD= .83); it helps them identify and gather materials for their teaching (M=1.59; SD=.72); it helps them sequence the instructional activities (M=1.58; SD=.76) and also because it makes them feel well-organised (M=1.57; SD=.83).

Table 8: Reasons why Teacher-trainees Prepare their Lesson Plans

Lesson planning is very important because:	M	SD
it helps me teach easily.	1.59	.83
it helps me identify and gather materials for teaching.	1.59	.72
it helps me sequence the instructional activities.	1.58	.76
it makes me feel confident in what I teach.	1.80	1.08
it helps me avoid irrelevant information.	1.72	.93
it makes me read and consult some sources of information.	1.85	1.08
it makes me feel well-organised.	1.57	.83
it could help someone teach my lesson in my absence.	1.53	.88
I must do so to pass the OFCTP.	1.11	.32

Source: Field data, 2013. N=279; MM= 1.59; MSD= .83; Strongly Agree (SA=1), Agree (A=2), Uncertain (U=3), Disagree (D=4), Strongly Disagree (SD=5)

Nonetheless, given the mean and standard deviation distribution of the responses, their opinions varied in agreeing to the fact that (1) lesson planning makes them feel confident in what they teach (M=1.80; SD=1.08); (2) lesson planning helps them avoid irrelevant information (M=1.72; SD=.93); (3) lesson planning makes them read and consult some sources of information (M=1.85; SD=1.08) and finally, (4) that lesson planning could help someone teach their lessons in their absence (M=1.53; SD=88).

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Trainees agreeing to these advantages of lesson plan preparation confirm the benefits that Koomson, Frimpong, Amuah, Anyagre and Brown (2002); Adu (2006); Sukran, Turkay, and Sevda (2013) among other scholars ascribe to lesson plan preparation. For teacher-trainees in this study to have such a belief and confidence in the importance of lesson plan preparation is a great gain to teacher education in Ghana. This is in contrast with Oguz's (2009) study that found that a significant part of the primary school teachers in his study did not think it was necessary to prepare a lesson plan because they felt they were not efficient in lesson planning.

The reasons why teacher-trainees prepare their lessons largely inform one about the level of importance they place on lesson plan preparation. If the reasons are cogently in favour of lesson preparation, then one could say that the trainees have high value for lesson plan preparation. As can be seen in Table 8, the main reason why trainees prepared lesson plans was because it is a requirement for them to pass the OFCTP. So, does it mean that without this obligation, trainees would not have prepared lesson plan? Trainees' responses to the statements in Table 9 (p. 113) show the level of importance that teacher-trainees place on lesson plan preparation despite the challenges they encounter. The information shows that the minimum positive response that 75% to 98% of the trainees gave to 10 out of the 14 items (on the importance they place on lesson planning) is "agree". This translates into a minimum rating of "high" valuation of the importance of lesson planning on the five-point Likert-type scale designed on the questionnaire. For instance, in sum, 85% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that writing lesson plan for teaching has more advantages than disadvantages.

Table 9: Importance Teacher-trainees Place on Lesson Plan Preparation

Statement	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %	Total %
I prepare my lessons even when I do not expect any supervisor.	53	34	2	3	8	**100**
I would have prepared lesson plans for my teaching if lesson plan preparation were not part of the areas of development expected of me.	1	16	66	12	5	**100**
I impart better when I teach from my prepared lesson plan.	55	30	3	10	2	**100**
The fact that I know the content very well does not mean that I should not prepare lesson plan for teaching.	48	33	3	11	5	**100**
There is the need to put the lesson plan into written form even if the plan is in my head.	48	33	5	10	4	**100**
Teachers should be forced to prepare lesson plan before teaching.	0	0	2	3	95	**100**
I will want to seek for further clarification on lesson planning back at school even after this OFCTP.	60	35	0	3	2	**100**
Teachers should be identified by lesson note and not by cane, chalk, marker or pen.	54	44	1	1	0	**100**
Inadequate lesson planning resources is not a guarantee for me not to prepare a lesson plan.	26	39	7	25	3	**100**
Lesson planning is not an archaic (outmoded) teacher pre-engagement preparation.	34	48	6	8	4	**100**
No matter the time constraint I will prepare my lesson plan before teaching.	6	5	78	8	3	**100**
OFCTP is not the final period for me to prepare lesson plan as a teacher.	32	43	9	6	10	**100**
Students will lose more if I do not prepare my lesson.	55	37	3	4	1	**100**
I see writing of lesson plan for teaching to have more advantages than disadvantages.	39	46	6	6	3	**100**

Source: Field data, 2013. N=279; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Uncertain (U), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

In Table 9, majority of the trainees (82%) collectively supported the fact that lesson planning is not an archaic (outmoded) teacher pre-engagement preparation. Also, most of the respondents (98%) agreed collectively that teachers should be identified by lesson notes and not by cane, chalk, marker or pen. As much as 92% of the 279 respondents either just agreed or strongly that their students would lose more if they do not have their lessons prepared. This particularly shows how valuable lesson preparation was to the trainees in general.

Similarly, the high value that the respondents placed on lesson planning is also evident in the majority (87%) conviction that they prepared their lessons even when they did not expect any supervisor. There was also a high agreement on the issue that because they (teacher-trainees) knew the content very well did not mean that they should not prepare lesson plan for teaching. In view of this, 81% of them either simply agreed or strongly agreed that there is the need to put the lesson plan into written form even if the plan is in their heads. One thing that also testifies the high level of importance that teacher-trainees place on lesson plan preparation is the majority (65%) opinion that inadequate availability of lesson planning resources is not a guarantee for them not to prepare a lesson plan. This shows how serious and prepared the trainees were towards doing the right thing irrespective of the challenges of lesson planning they went through.

However, majority of the respondents were uncertain about two issues. First, on their opinion about whether they would have prepared lesson plans if lesson plan preparation were not part of the areas of development expected of them in the OFCTP, 66% of them were indecisive. No wonder that the trainees

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strongly agreed (M=1.11; SD=.32) that they prepared lesson plan mainly to enable them pass the OFCTP (see Table 8). Secondly, 78% of the 279 respondents were uncertain about whether irrespective of the time constraint, they would still prepare their lesson plans before teaching. Their uncertainty about these two issues raises a question on their level of commitment towards lesson plan preparation. A quite insightful one is the strong collective disagreement (by 95% of them) on the assertion that teachers should be forced to prepare lesson plan before teaching. They value the lesson plan as an important material for teaching but they do not accept a situation where if a teacher does not want to prepare any, he/she should be forced to do so. One trainee commented while responding to that particular item on the questionnaire in this way: "the teacher is like a medical doctor or surgeon, if you force him to administer healthcare, you are forcing him to do the right thing the wrong way". That is, trainees expect teachers to prepare lesson plan out of their own wish but not to be forced by any external body. This fairly implies that the directive from GES in 2013 that SHS Teachers must all prepare lesson plans before teaching is not something that would be appreciated by most teachers.

As a matter of interest, I decided to find out from the respondents whether their mentors prepared lesson plans before teaching or not. On this, Table 10 (p. 116) gives a lot of surprises. Only 81 representing 29% of the 279 respondents either simply agreed or strongly agreed that their mentors prepared lesson plan before teaching. But the overwhelming 196 (70%) respondents claimed their mentors did not prepare any lesson plan.

Table 10: Trainees' Opinion about Mentors' Lesson Preparation

Statement	Opinion				
	SA **No.(%)**	**A** **No.(%)**	**U** **No.(%)**	**D** **No.(%)**	**SD** **No.(%)**
My mentor prepares lesson plan before teaching.	42(15)	39(14)	2(1)	103(37)	93(33)

Source: Field data, 2013.   N= 279

Since mentors themselves do not prepare lesson plans, it means that trainees cannot get the opportunity to observe them in lesson plan preparation. This refutes the call that teacher-trainees should understudy or observe their mentors as they (mentors) prepare and teach with lesson plans. This is in support of Boikhutso's (2010) conclusion that school-based supervisors (teachers) with whom trainees spend considerable time and act as mentors, are not compelled to use lesson plans in their own teaching. The mentors have, therefore, virtually lost the moral right to beseech their mentees to prepare lesson plans before teaching. With this conduct, the teacher trainees might think that lesson planning is just a means to obtaining a certificate and not an end to be desired afterwards. No wonder majority of the trainees strongly agreed that they prepare lesson plans because they "…must do so to pass the OFCTP" (see Table 8).

Surprisingly, despite all these opinions that the trainees had about the lesson plan preparation, because of the contradictory directives on lesson planning (as shown earlier in Table 7), most of them (95%) agreed (in Table 10) that they would seek for further clarification on lesson planning back at school even after the OFCTP. This further confirms the valuable nature of lesson plan preparation to the trainees and an indication of their readiness to

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learn the correct thing about lesson preparation even after the opportunity for them to do so was exhausted.

Research Question 5: What are the opinions of teacher-trainees about OFCTP lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision?

During the OFCTP, trainees consider supervision as the most important factor that determines their success. Some believe that it is the sole source of the confusions that teacher-trainees undergo every year during the OFCTP. Table 11 (p. 118) gives what teacher-trainees' think about supervisors' assessment and supervision of their lesson plans. From Table 11, a mean of means of 2.76 with a standard deviation of .90 shows that generally, trainees were uncertain about whether OFCTP lesson supervision is helpful or not helpful to them.

Specifically, majority (63%) of the respondents were uncertain (M=3.30; SD=.79) about whether the suggestions made in their lesson notes and on the Form Bs by supervisors were supportive (helpful) or not, as such suggestions contradicted what their lecturers taught them in the University. Meanwhile, most of them (78%) disagreed variously (M=3.78; SD=1.11) on the claim that supervisors' assessment or suggestions did not give them new ideas on lesson planning. To the teacher-trainees, the "new" ideas offered them by different supervisors and mentors might be right but, those ideas were simply "alien" to them as novice teachers. This made them wonder if what they were being told to do were the right way to go (and even if they were, the contradictions made them doubtful).

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Table 11: Teacher-Trainees' Opinion about Supervisors' Assessment and Supervision of their Lesson Plans

Statement	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %	Total %	M	SD
Supervisors' directives on lesson planning are quite different from what I was taught in the University.	82	16	0	1	1	**100**	1.22	.55
Some supervisors are not interested in the lesson plan I prepare rather, they are interested in the teaching I do.	4	5	5	16	70	**100**	3.56	.95
When supervised by two or more supervisors at the same time in a lesson, their comments on my lesson plan vary on same issues.	75	24	1	0	0	**100**	1.28	.50
My mentor prefers that my lesson note covers more lessons at a time in order to complete the whole syllabus early.	43	53	1	2	1	**100**	1.64	.68
External supervisors complain that my lesson plans are too detailed or loaded for the time period.	37	55	5	2	1	**100**	1.75	.74
There are some complaints from the supervisors concerning the lesson planning format I use.	3	11	3	38	45	**100**	4.11	1.08
Suggestions made in the lesson notes and on the Form Bs are not supportive or helpful.	3	4	63	21	9	**100**	3.30	.79
Supervisors' assessment does not give me new ideas on lesson planning	6	11	5	54	24	**100**	3.78	1.11
Some comments made in my lesson note and on the Form B by some supervisors are offensive to me	6	21	9	41	23	**100**	3.55	1.22
Some supervisors' comments make me feel like I was not taught anything on lesson planning in UCC	10	11	61	10	8	**100**	3.43	1.37

Source: Field data, 2013. MM=2.76; N= 279; MSD=.90; Strongly Agree SA=1), Agree (A=2), Uncertain (U=3), Disagree (D=4), Strongly Disagree (SD=5)

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In the open-ended section of the questionnaire, one respondent wrote, "I don't really know what to do now: whether I should provide answers to the evaluation questions or not; because, one supervisor comes and says this, tomorrow another comes and refutes what the first person said. The supervisors are confusing me". This complaint is confirmed by the majority's (82%) strong agreement in Table 11 that supervisors' directives on lesson planning were quite different from what they were taught in the University (M=1.22; SD=.55). Similarly, 99% of the 279 respondents, in sum, agreed (M=1.28; SD=.50) that when supervised by two or more supervisors at the same time in a lesson, the supervisors' comments on the lesson plan vary on same issues. In this situation the question then is whose directive is to be taken into consideration? This, perhaps, is one of the reasons why trainees wished (in Table 9) to seek for some clarification and be certain on issues concerning lesson preparation and its delivery.

In total, 96% of the respondents agreed (M=1.64; SD=.68) that while their mentors preferred that their lesson notes cover more lessons at a time in order to complete the whole syllabus early, external supervisors on the other hand complained (M=1.75; SD=.74) that their lesson plans were too loaded for the time period that they taught. This was also evident in the document analysis presented earlier in this chapter. The teacher-trainees reported that mentors usually called them to find out the number of topics covered so far; and always entreated them to work faster to cover more. Mostly, it is heard that school authorities (e.g. heads of departments) complain that always trainees come and make their students lag behind because topics that they teach per period are too few. For trainees, because they are under supervision

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and diligently teach for marks (among other things), they have to exhaust every step of the lesson delivery including areas that are not usually considered by their mentors. For instance, while the teacher-trainee has to explore and connect RPK appropriately, share lesson objectives with students, use appropriate pace to the benefit of the whole class, the teacher already in the system may ignore most of these things without any direct effect on him (even though it is not the best). For the veteran teacher in the school, the announcement of the bell may end his/her lesson abruptly and nobody will query him/her on that; but the teacher-trainee under supervision has to (as shown in Figure 1, p. 45) draw learners' attention to the end of the lesson before using questions, summary or practices linked to the objectives to consolidate or reinforce major points learned before formally, he/she finally closes the lesson. So, while the veteran teacher usually spends all his/her time on treating more subject matter at a time, the teacher-trainee has to use some of the time to always do other important things as stated above.

All along, a section of the teacher-trainees who have undergone OFCTP informally complained that some supervisors' comments made them feel like they were not taught anything on lesson planning in the University. On this issue, majority (61%) of the respondents were uncertain (M=3.43; SD=1.37) as to whether that happened to them or not. Similarly, majority (64%) of the respondents variously disagreed to the assertion that some comments made in their lesson notes and on the Form Bs by some supervisors were offensive to them (M= 3.55; SD= 1.22). From the responses given by the trainees in Table 11, lesson plan format was not a bother to the supervisors. In all, 83% of the trainees either simply agreed or strongly disagreed that there

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were some complaints from the supervisors concerning the lesson plan format they used during the OFCTP. But, it was observed in two lesson notebooks during the document analyses that supervisors insisted on the use of one format. A large number of the respondents (70%) also strongly disagreed (M=3.56; SD=.95) that some supervisors were not interested in the lesson plan they prepared and rather interested in the teaching they did. Some trainees stated in the open-ended section that some supervisors assessed only their lesson plans and not their teachings. It can be inferred therefore, that some supervisors take the lesson plan more seriously than the instructional time (maybe, because assessing the lesson plan somehow shows some record of supervision). Acquah and Anti (2013) also concluded from their study that there were situations where external supervisors marked only lesson notes and failed to sit in the classrooms to observe as teacher-trainees teach. All these contribute to the reason why trainees think OFCTP lesson assessment and supervision is very subjective (see p. 122)

Another issue was that some trainees became "breathless" on seeing the supervisors cancel or write something in their lesson notebooks before or during the teaching. This can be seen in Table 12 (p. 122). From Table 12, 128 (46%) respondents either strongly agreed or just agreed to the statement that seeing the supervisor cancel something in their lesson notes before or during the teaching puts them off. This has the power of giving the victim some emotional imbalance before or during the teaching period. Bhargava (2009, p. 2) observed that "…mental and emotional stress is also felt when not very favorable comments are written on their record books by supervisors".

Table 12: Provocative Act by Supervisors

| | Opinion | | | | |
Act	SA No.(%)	A No.(%)	U No.(%)	D No.(%)	SD No.(%)
Seeing the supervisor cancel something in my lesson note before or during the teaching puts me off.	58(21)	70(25)	43(15)	74(27)	34(12)

Source: Field data, 2013.   N=279

Discussion of Teacher-trainees' responses to the open-ended items on OFCTP lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision: At the open-ended section of the questionnaire on supervision and assessment, trainees put down some comments and suggestions that expressed their opinion. These have been grouped and discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

The teacher-trainees stated that supervisors who only assess trainee's lesson plan and ignore the observation of the trainee's teaching in the classroom should be forced to desist from that. Comments like the following were very common: "Some supervisors do not come to observe us in class, they only assess our lesson plans"; "Supervisors finish awarding marks and leave before the lesson gets to a closure"; "Some supervisors do not do any pre- and post-observation discussion for us; "Others come in late but manage to assess areas of the lesson where they did not come to meet." All these are possible contributions to the reason why trainees mostly wrote in the open-ended section of the questionnaire on lesson assessment and supervision that, "Awarding of marks is too subjective" and that something should be done

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about it. This subjectivity in assessment was also the opinion of teacher trainees in Azeem's (2011) study that found that college supervisors did not visit trainees timeously and frequently and trainees never liked the situation where supervisors awarded scores before the discussion of the lessons with them. The trainees therefore had the opinion that awarding grades in the TP was too subjective. In fact, this shows the extent to which supervision is a problem to most teacher-trainees.

They also recommended that supervisors should be those who have some knowledge in the subject area they supervise. Trainees indicated that the supervisors who do not have much knowledge about the subject to be supervised rather look for petty mistakes like handwriting, spellings, punctuations, marker-board management, without looking at the content of the lesson. Trainees re-echoed the fact that lesson supervision is full of contradictory suggestions. For example, they stated that some supervisors recommend more use of leading questions while others recommend no use of leading questions. Some also claim that when one lesson plan is assessed by two or more supervisors consecutively, one supervisor's comment(s) especially, that of the first influences the rest.

The trainees again, commented that "supervisors should be friendly and stop frowning". This so-called attitude of some supervisors disturbs most trainees. Moreover, my observation is that when the first three or so supervisions do not go well for some trainees, they become disturbed and then throw their hands into despair (and sometimes, isolate themselves from their colleagues, and refuse to seek for help on lesson planning). With this, if supervisors do not open up and offer some special counselling services to such

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trainees, they are likely to undergo more mental and emotional stress, as Bhargava (2009, p. 2) proclaims, during the OFCTP. Others complained that they did not have internal supervisors who could attend to their teaching needs.

Overall, under Research Question Five, the responses discussed so far show that trainees are indifferent with respect to the usefulness of OFCTP supervision. As discussed earlier in Table 11, despite the challenges trainees faced from supervision, there was a high disagreement (M=3.78; SD=1.11) on the claim that supervisors' assessment or suggestions did not give them new ideas on lesson planning. But their problem was that there was so much uncertainty about whether some suggestions made in their lesson notes and on the Form Bs were supportive (helpful) or not, because such suggestions contradicted what they were instructed by their methods lecturers to go and do. Often, some of them had to grapple with what they called "illegible" or "meaningless comments" from some supervisors who will not also wait till the end of the lesson and have post-observation discussion with them.

One observation I have made during this study is that due to the nature of supervision offered to trainees, it appears that most teacher-trainees were preoccupied with issues of supervision and underestimated some important issues that could make their professional development sufficient. There is complete lack of creativity in lesson planning since lesson planning in OFCTP is also aimed at earning more marks from supervisors. Any attempt to introduce or try-out something could lead to the trainee's downfall in marks obtained. Hence, teacher-trainees plan the lesson to meet the status quo (which is what most supervisors expect) rather than being creative, experimental and

initiative, as indicated by Bhargava (2009). This has actually stifled the development of the reflective teacher practitioners which the Faculty seeks to produce. According to Benson (2000), critical reflection should facilitate teacher autonomy, especially through the mediation between pedagogical goals and situational constraints within a research-like approach to teaching, whereby educational contexts are questioned and scrutinised in order to be understood and changed. This trait can be cultivated if one month to the end of the OFCTP, teacher-trainees are made to work in close association and under guidance of senior teachers acting as mentors. In this period trainee teacher will be performing all the duties of a regular teacher which they were unable to do due to supervision, shortage of time and other hectic engagements. This practice will give ample time to teacher trainees to act as regular innovative, creative and experimental teachers (without fear of being observed or obtaining low marks from supervisors) whose duties extend beyond the classroom to the play grounds or in organizing co-curricular activities.

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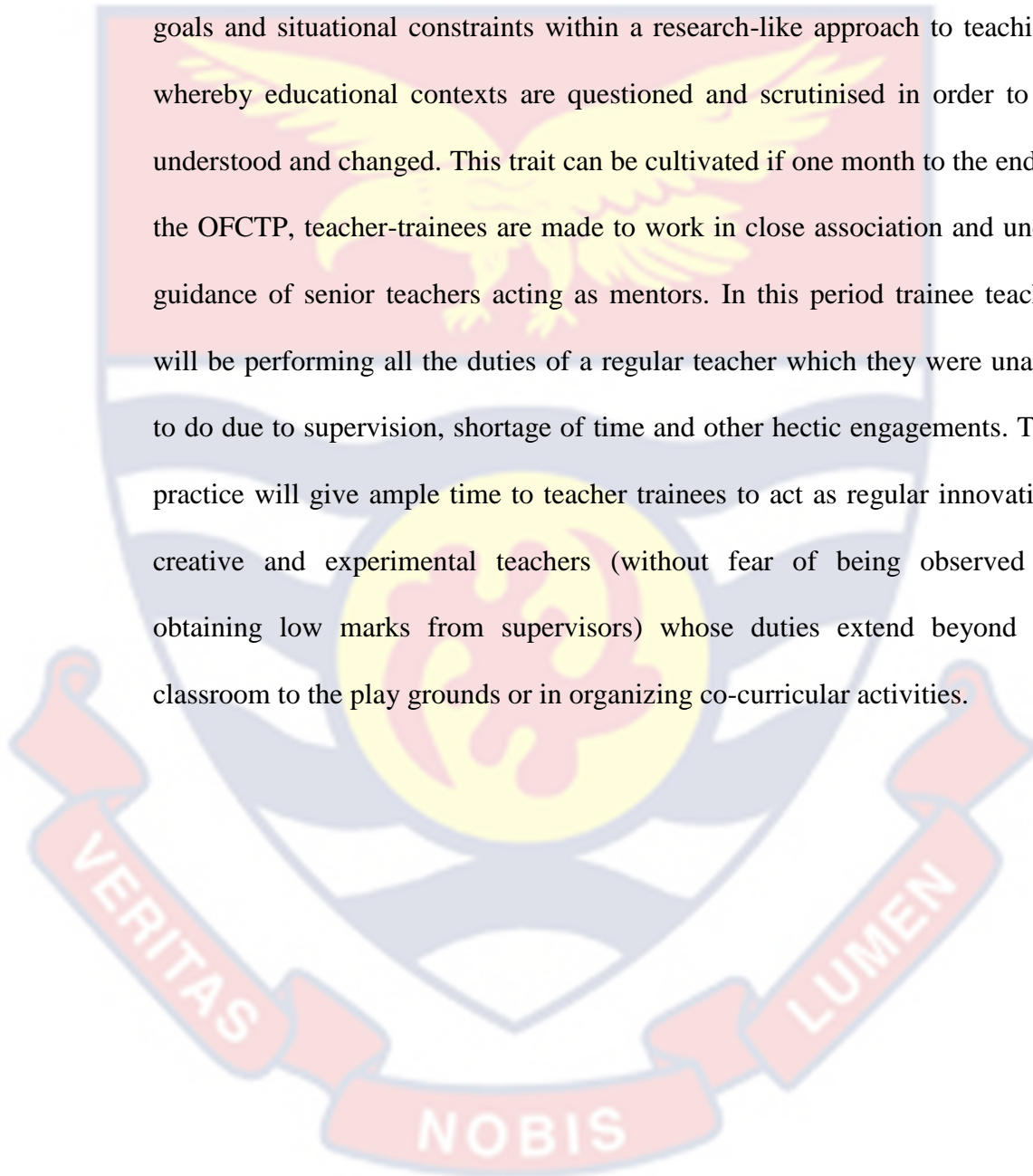
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter comprises an overview of the study and the methodology; a summary of the key findings; conclusions drawn from the findings and recommendations for professional practice. Suggestions for further study have also been provided in this chapter.

Summary

Overview of the Study

Lesson planning is not only a special responsibility for teacher-trainees but, also, a hallmark of professionalism for all teachers. It is a teacher pre-engagement activity whose importance cannot be overemphasised. Thus, in teacher-education too, it is accorded a great factor that contributes to the professionalism of teachers. However, casual observations and informal comments from teacher-trainees showed that they generally faced lesson planning challenges during OFCTP. Because of this, I decided to research into the exact lesson planning issues during OFCTP. I set out to answer the following research questions:

1. In what aspects of lesson plan preparation are teacher-trainees in the University of Cape Coast most confident about their ability?

2. Which lesson planning format do teacher-trainees mostly prefer to use?

3. What challenges of lesson plan preparation do teacher-trainees face during OFCTP?

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4. What level of importance do teacher-trainees place on lesson plan preparation?

5. What are the opinions of teacher-trainees about OFCTP lesson plan assessment and lesson supervision?

I employed the descriptive survey method of research design. The population for the study comprised all Level 400 teacher-trainees from the University of Cape Coast who did their OFCTP in Zone 1[A] in the year 2013. There were 449 teacher-trainees in Zone 1[A] alone which covers Cape Coast Central, Elmina and its environs. A sample size of 285 was selected through the quota sampling technique. Both quantitative and qualitative data collected, using closed- and open-ended questionnaire and document analysis, were analysed as indicated on

Key Findings

The essential findings of the study are the following:

1. Majority of the trainees, ranked their confidence in their ability to effectively prepare the whole lesson plan as "high" (MM= 1.52; MSD= .78). Thus, between 67% and 92% of the 279 respondents gave "high" as the minimum rating for their confidence in their ability to prepare all the aspects of the lesson plan. About 50—56% of the respondents rated "very high" their confidence in their ability to: carve-out a teachable topic or subtopic from the syllabus; state instructional objectives; state the core points to clarify the main ideas (concepts, skills, knowledge); summarising the lesson; assessing student learning and evaluating the lesson. By this, it can be said that trainees are most confident of their ability to prepare these six aspects of the lesson plan. However, the

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document analyses (the supervisors' commendation on the Form Bs) showed that it is rather in stating the topic or subtopic, writing the core points, summarising the lesson and assessing students' learning that majority of the trainees were good at. Thus, the supervisors' comments did not agree fully with the responses of the teacher-trainees on their ability to prepare certain aspects of the lesson plan. However, both of them reckoned that decision over choice of appropriate teaching method, the linking of RPK to the new lesson or topic, and choice and usage of appropriate TLMs were the main problem areas.

2. Over half (55%) of the respondents were taught to use the prose format while 30% were taught the tabular format. Only 15% of the respondents were taught both formats. For this reason, 60% of the respondents used the prose format alone while 36% used the tabular format alone. Only 4% claimed to have used both formats during the exercise. Meanwhile, if trainees had full opportunity to choose any format irrespective of what they were taught in school, more than half (51%) of the respondents would have preferred to use the tabular format only whereas 45% would have preferred to use only the prose format and only 4% of the trainees would have preferred to experiment both formats instead of just one.

3. The challenges cut across a wide spectrum from material resource unavailability or inaccessibility to human resource and supervision issues. The material resource challenges teacher-trainees faced include lack of teaching-learning resources such as teachers' handbook, subject dictionaries, school internet access, and time as a factor. Majority of

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them (70%—72%), in varying degrees, faced the challenge of getting mentors and resource person's assistance. The majority's lesson planning challenge faced as a result of supervision is caused mainly by the contradictory lesson planning suggestions from internal and external supervisors, the unfriendliness or unapproachability of some supervisors and some supervisors forcing trainees to teach when they did not have any lesson period on the time table. Supervisors' comments in the lesson notebooks and on the Form Bs showed that majority of the trainees faced the challenge of introducing the topic by linking up the relevant previous knowledge to the new lesson. In the same vein, it was also found that the teacher-trainees had the problem of choosing appropriate teaching methods and materials that suit particular lessons or class at a time. Some trainees faced the challenge of preparing lesson plan in their minor subject areas when the need arose. Due to all these, trainees believed that ONCTP lesson plan preparation is too difficult.

4. The main reason why teacher trainees prepared lesson plans was because it is a requirement for them to pass the OFCTP (M=1.11; SD=.32). To most of the trainees (85%), lesson planning has more advantages than disadvantages. They, therefore, agreed that lesson planning helped them teach easily, it helped them identify and gather materials for their teaching, it helped them sequence the instructional activities and finally, it made them feel well-organised. Most teacher-trainees valued lesson planning so high that they prepared lessons even when they did not expect any supervisor. They agreed that, the fact that

they knew the content very well did not mean that they should not prepare lesson plan for teaching. In view of this, they agreed that there is the need to put the lesson plan into written form even if the plan is in their heads. The teacher-trainees believed that lesson planning is not an archaic (outmoded) teacher pre-engagement preparation and that teachers should be identified by their lesson notebooks and not by cane, chalk, marker or pen. Thus, it is their opinion that there is the need to put the lesson plan into written form even if the plan is in their heads. It was also the view of the respondents that inadequate lesson planning resources are not a guarantee for them not to prepare lesson plans. As a result of the various contradictory suggestions for lesson planning, trainees agreed to seek for further clarification on lesson planning back at school after OFCTP. They were, nevertheless, uncertain about whether they would have prepared lesson plan if it were not part of the areas of development expected of them and, whether they would prepare lesson plan (before teaching) no matter the time constraint. Aside all these opinions, 95% of the respondents strongly disagreed that teachers should be forced to prepare lesson plan before teaching.

5. The respondents were of the view that lesson assessment and supervision was highly subjective. They indicated that most supervisors did not wait till the end of their lesson delivery in the classroom and did not have post-observation discussion with them. Teacher-trainees agreed that some supervisors assessed their lesson plans alone but did not go to the classroom to supervise their delivery

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of the lessons. It was also found that some trainees were forced by some supervisors to organise classes and teach when they did not have any lessons on the timetable, hence, such lessons were taught and assessed with already used lesson plans, contingency lesson plans or without any lesson plan at all. Another thing brought to the fore was the fact that while mentors preferred that trainees' lesson plans cover more lessons at a time in order to complete the whole syllabus early, external supervisors rather complained that trainees' lesson plans were too detailed or over-loaded for the time periods. Trainees disagreed that some comments made in their lesson notes and on the Form Bs by some supervisors were offensive to them. Trainees conceded that their inability to obtain required grades in OFCTP would be associated with supervisors' approach towards lesson assessment and supervision. Most of the teacher-trainees (78%), generally, disagreed that supervisors' suggestions or assessment did not give them any new ideas on lesson planning. They were rather uncertain about whether OFCTP lesson supervision was helpful or not helpful to them. This is because trainees largely doubted the usefulness of most suggestions made by supervisors on lesson planning due to the contradictions in the opinions of the supervisors on lesson planning. So, generally, the teacher-trainees had a mixed feeling about the essence of OFCTP lesson supervision.

Conclusions

Based on the key findings the following conclusions were made:

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1. The teacher-trainees mastered lesson plan preparation generally, but some trainees could not synchronise their confidence in lesson planning with the real writing of the lesson plan in their lesson notebooks. Supervisors had misgivings about trainees' level of mastery of some of the areas. Trainees' confident areas are not so essential as compared to the areas where they had low confidence in their ability. It is, therefore, concluded that lesson planning ability of teacher-trainees in Zone 1[A] was quite inadequate.

2. Majority of teacher-trainees preferred to use the tabular format which the GES has approved, but since they did not have absolute choice over their preferred lesson planning format, it is concluded that OFCTP stifled the novice teachers' sovereignty, ingenuity and professionalism in lesson planning and teaching.

3. Teacher-trainees faced a wide range of lesson planning challenges. It is therefore, concluded that the challenges they faced contributed to the inadequacies in their ability to prepare lesson plans in the study area (as concluded in 1 above). It is also concluded that the challenges did not allow the teacher-trainees to demonstrate their high-rated confidence in lesson plan preparation.

4. Teacher-trainees recognised the important roles of lesson planning in the teaching profession, but they were most concerned with the immediate role it played in qualifying them to become Bachelors of Education instead. And since they rejected the call that teachers should be forced to prepare lesson plans, the conclusion is that majority of the

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trainees are not likely to prepare lesson plan for teaching after graduation.

5. The teacher-trainees had mixed feelings about the worth of OFCTP lesson supervision in the study area. Thus, they saw supervisors' directives on lesson planning and lesson delivery as an end to passing OFCTP but not the absolute truth for lesson planning or lesson delivery. So by this, it is concluded that teacher-trainees do not have complete trust in the quality and reliability of the assessment of their lesson plans as well as the directives given by OFCTP supervisors on lesson planning and lesson delivery.

Recommendations

On the bases of the findings of this study and the conclusions made, the following were recommended.

1. In relation to some problem areas in lesson planning as noted in one of the findings, it is recommended that methods and microteaching lecturers emphasise the following aspects of the lesson plan and guide students to master them efficiently: Topic introduction (previewing of previous knowledge and linkage to new topic), choosing appropriate teaching method, stating lesson objectives, how to improvise and use appropriate TLMs and, how to cite references in the APA style. Additionally, methods lecturers and supervisors should endeavour to give demonstration lessons (on planning and delivery) for teacher-trainees to observe and emulate. UCC in collaboration with GES should put in place measures that would retain experienced teachers to

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offer their utmost assistance to trainees on OFCTP as spelt out by the *Teaching Practice Handbook* (2013)

2. With respect to lesson planning format, teacher-trainees should be taught mainly the tabular format since it was found to be the most preferred format the GES approved format. Any other format taught should be for the purpose of enriching the teacher-trainees' general knowledge in lesson planning. UCC should collaborate with GES so that what is taught in the College also reflects that on the field.

3. In relation to the contradictory directives on lesson planning, I suggest that during the TP orientation organised for supervisors prior to supervision, sample lesson plans should be provided for hands-on activity so as to help streamline and ensure consistency on the requirements of a good lesson plan and lesson delivery. Only dedicated supervisors who are willing to offer their full time to the exercise should be made to take part in the supervision. If possible, in each subject area, only supervisors who have knowledge about it should be made to supervise it. Thus, veteran teachers (still-strong teachers on pension) should be recruited to augment the effort of the university lecturers. During microteaching, trainees should be made to, at least, prepare lesson notes in their minor subject areas as well. Also, the TPU should petition the academic board through the College of Education Studies to extend the periods allocated to the ONCTP to make lessons planned in the ONCTP have a greater positive correlation with that of the OFCTP in terms of time and other requirements.

4. The College of Education Studies and its departments and the TPU, should make teacher trainees aware that lesson planning is not just a major requirement to passing TP but also, a major component of the teaching profession as a whole. This is in relation to their indecision on whether lesson planning is a permanent component of the teaching profession.

5. The College of Education Studies of UCC should increase the membership of the TP Monitoring Team and the number of times the team visits each school during the period. Visiting each school at least once in the whole TP period as stated in the *Teaching Practice Handbook* (UCC, 2013) is woefully inadequate to ensure that supervisors do the right thing. Supervisors should be entreated to adhere to the guidelines meant to streamline and ensure consistency in the OFCTP lesson assessment and supervision as proposed by the TPU. Mentors should be made to take active part in the supervision. The experienced and good-standing mentors should rather take over the assessment of trainee's subject-matter knowledge during the pre-observation, observation itself and the post-observation discussion times.

Suggestions for Further Research

I suggest that a study be conducted to find out the specific subject-related challenges in lesson plan preparation. Also, I suggest that a study that examines the challenges posed by supervisors' content knowledge in OFCTP lesson supervision be conducted.

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

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University Post Office,
Cape Coast, Ghana.

Date: 10ᵗʰ October, 2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The bearer of this letter **Mr. Alex Tetteh** is a graduate student of the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana.

He requires some information from your institution for the purpose of writing a thesis which is a requirement of M. Phil Degree Programme.

I would be grateful if you could kindly allow him to collect the information from your institution. Kindly give the necessary assistance.

Yours faithfully,

REV. DR. SETH ASARE-DANSO
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

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APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION
M.PHIL CURRICULUM STUDIES

<u>**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER-TRAINEES ON OFF-CAMPUS TEACHING PRACTICE (OFCTP)**</u>

I am conducting a research on the topic **Lesson Planning Issues in Off-Campus Teaching Practice: Teacher-Trainees' Perspectives.** You will be helping me immensely if you respond to all the items on the questionnaire precisely as you perceive/experience the issue under consideration—there is no wrong or right answer. Your confidentiality and anonymity are assured. You are also, hereby informed that this exercise <u>has nothing to do whatsoever</u> with the marks you will earn in the on-going OFCTP. Thank you. Alex Tetteh (*0249129494*)

    A. COMPETENCY (ABILITY) REQUIREMENTS FOR LESSON PLAN PREPARATION

On the 5-scale below, indicate your confidence level (by ticking (√)) in the following aspects of lesson plan preparation

Aspect of the Lesson Plan	Confidence Level				
	Very High	High	Mode-rate	Low	Uncer-tain
Carving out a teachable topic or subtopic from a unit or chapter in the syllabus					
Stating instructional objectives in taxonomic categories & behavioural terms					
Introducing the topic (linking previous knowledge to the new topic)					
Choosing the right teaching method (logical teacher-learner activities) based on the content, objectives & the learner's developmental level					
Stating the core points to clarify the main ideas/concepts/skills/knowledge					
Summarising the lesson					
Assessing student learning					
Evaluating the lesson					
Writing references for the lesson					

B. LESSON PLANNING FORMAT

Statement	Format		
	Tabular (1)	Prose (2)	Both 1 & 2
The lesson planning format(s) I was taught to use is/are			
The lesson planning format I use is			
The lesson planning format I actually prefer to use is			

C. CHALLENGES OF LESSON PLAN PREPARATION

Indicate by ticking (√) the extent to which each of the following is a challenge to you when preparing your lesson plan.

Statement	*Not* a challenge	Is a challenge	Quite serious	Seri-ous	Very serious
1. Material Resource Availability/Accessibility					
Textbooks					
Syllabus					
Teachers' handbook					
Subject dictionaries					
Internet connectivity for school					
Computer (personal or for school)					
Projector					
Laboratory & lab tools					
Electricity					
Time constraint for lesson planning					
Instructional materials (TLMs)					
2. Human Resource					
Getting mentors' assistance					
Getting resource persons					
Mentor's actions and inactions discouraging me from writing lesson plan					
3. Supervision					
Supervisors forcing me to teach when I do not have any lesson period on the time table					
Contradictory lesson planning suggestions from internal and external supervisors					
Unfriendliness/unapproachability of Supervisors					
The lesson planning format I use					

Other lesson planning challenges that I face include…………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

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D. IMPORTANT OF LESSON PLANNING

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncer-tain	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree
Indicate whether you agree to, disagree to or are uncertain about each of the following statements by ticking (√)					
I prepare my lessons even when I do not expect any supervisor					
I would have prepared lesson plans for my teaching if lesson plan preparation were not part of the areas of development expected of me					
I impart better when I teach from my prepared lesson plan.					
The fact that I know the content very well does not mean that I should not prepare lesson plan for teaching.					
There is the need to put the lesson plan into written form even if the plan is in my head.					
Teachers should be forced to prepare lesson plan.					
I will want to seek for further clarification on lesson planning back at school even after this OCTP					
Teachers should be identified by lesson note and not by cane, chalk, marker or pen					
Inadequate lesson planning resources is not a guarantee for me not to prepare a lesson plan					
Lesson planning is not an archaic (outmoded) teacher pre-engagement preparation					
No matter the time constraint I will prepare my lesson plan before teaching					
OCTP is not the final period for me to prepare lesson plan as a teacher.					
Students will lose more if I do not prepare my lesson					
I see writing of lesson plan for teaching to have more advantages than disadvantages to me.					

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IMPORTANCE OF LESSON PLANNING (**continued**)

Lesson planning is important because it:					
--helps me teach easily					
--helps me identify & gather materials for teaching					
--helps me sequence the instructional activities					
--makes me feel confident in what I teach					
--helps me avoid irrelevant information					
--makes me read & consult some sources of information					
--makes me feel well-organised					
--could help someone teach my lesson in my absence					
--I must do so to pass the OFCTP					
My mentor prepares lesson plan before teaching					

E. SUPERVISORS' ASSESSMENT OF THE LESSON PLAN

Indicate your opinion about supervisors' assessment of your lesson plan (by ticking (√))

Statement	Opinion				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncer-tain	Dis-agree	Strongly disagree
Supervisors' directives on lesson planning are quite different from what I was taught in the University.					
Some supervisors are not interested in the lesson plan I prepare rather, they are interested in the teaching I do.					
When supervised by two or more supervisors at the same time in a lesson, their comments on my lesson plan vary on same issues.					
My mentor prefers that my lesson note covers more lessons at a time in order to complete the whole syllabus early.					

Continue from page 152

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SUPERVISORS' ASSESSMENT OF THE LESSON PLAN (**continued**)

External supervisors complain that my lesson plans are too detailed/loaded for the time period					
There are some complaints from the supervisors concerning the lesson planning format I use.					
Suggestions made in the lesson note and on the Form B are not supportive/helpful					
Supervisor's assessment does not give me new ideas on lesson planning					
Some comments made in my lesson note & on the Form B by some supervisors are offensive to me					
Some supervisors' comments make me feel like I was not taught anything on lesson planning in UCC					

Indicate your opinion about the following by ticking (√)

Seeing the supervisor cancel something in my lesson note before or during the teaching puts me off.					

Other issues about supervisors' assessment of my lesson plan include………
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Any suggestion for improving the Off-campus Teaching Practice lesson plan supervision…………………………………………………………………………...
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APPENDIX C
DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE
ANALYSIS OF SUPERVISORS' COMMENTS ON TEACHER-
TRAINEES' FORM B AND LESSON NOTES

Aspects of the Lesson Plan	Supervisors' Comments
	GOOD[+] SATISFACTORY[±] NEEDS IMPROVEMENT[-]
Statement of topic or subtopic (well-carved, well-worded, suitable for the specified time)	
Objectives (specific, measurable, relevant & achievable within the duration of the lesson)	
Topic introduction Preview of previous knowledge & linkage to new topic(interesting and captivating)	
Teaching methods (varied & appropriate teacher-learner activities showing student involvement)	
TLMs (appropriate, time & stages of usage)	
Core points (reflect set objectives and logically presented)	
Summary of the lesson (tidy and interesting based on the objectives and linked to the core points)	
Assessment of student learning/Lesson evaluation (appropriate questions to depict the achievement of lesson objectives)	
Writing references for the lesson (follow the APA format)	

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APPENDIX D
DISTRIBUTION OF THE TEACHER-TRAINEES ACROSS THE
COUNTRY FOR THE 2013 OFCTP

REGION	ZONE	№	TOTAL
Central	1^A (Cape Coast Central, Elmina & its Environs)	**449**[*]	
	1^B (Imfantsiman District, Effutu, Jukwa, Twifo Praso)	50	
	1^C (Swedru, Winneba, Breman Asikuma, Ajumako, Kasoa)	56	**600**
	1^D (Abura Dunkwa, Assin, Dunkwa-On-Offin, New Edubiase, Dompoase, Obuasi, Bekwai)	45	
Ashanti	6^A (Kumasi North, Central, Agona, Mampong)	75	
	6^B (Kumasi South, Tech, Ejisu)	46	**121**
Greater Accra	3^A (Accra Central)	47	
	3^B (Osu-Tema)	40	**87**
Western	2	82	**82**
Brong Ahafo	7	59	**59**
Volta	5	55	**55**
Eastern	4	51	**51**
Upper East	9	19	
Northern	8 (Tamale)	13	**42**
Upper West	10	10	
Total	**Zones =15**	**1097**	**1097**

* Population for the study area (Zone 1^A)

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APPENDIX E
TABULAR LESSON PLAN FORMAT

(a) HORIZONTAL FORMAT

Subject:
Topic:
Subtopic:
Form:
Date:
Time:
Duration:
Location:
Number of students:
RPK:
Specific Objectives:
References:

Stage/step Content/item Estimated time	TLM/ Measurement/ Equipment	INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY		Main Ideas
		Teacher Activity	Student Activity	
INTRODUCTION (3min)				
CONTENT DEVELOPMENT **i.** (5min) **ii.** (30min) **iii.** (20min)				
APPLICATION (11min)				
CLOSURE (10min)		**Evaluation:**		
Assignment: **Reference:** (1min)				
Remarks:				

(b) VERTICAL FORMAT

Class:
Weekending:
Subject:
References:

Day/ Duration	Topic/Sub-topic/Aspect	Specific objectives/ RPK	Teaching and Learning Activity	Teaching-Learning Materials	Core Points/ Content	Evaluation Remarks

(b)Vertical Tabular Format (GES approved lesson plan format).

APPENDIX F
A TYPICAL PROSE FORMAT OF LESSON PLANNING

SUBJECT:

CLASS:

TIME & DATE:

TOPIC:

REFERENCES:

OBJECTIVES: By the end of the lesson, the student should be able to:

(a) …………………………………………………………………

(b) …………………………………………………………………

(c) …………………………………………………………………

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE:

TEACHING-LEARNING MATERIALS:

INRODUCTION:

PRESENTATION:

STEP I: …………………………………………………………………

STEP II: …………………………………………………………….......

STEP III………………………………………………………………...

CLOSURE:

Summary: …………………………………………………………

Invitation of Questions: …………………………………………….

EVALUATION:

PRE-LESSON PPREPARATION:

REFERENCES:

REMARKS:

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APPENDIX G

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

TEACHING PRACTICE UNIT

TEACHING PRACTICE ASSESSMENT FORM A

NAME OF STUDENT:...................................REG. NO................................ PROGRAMME:...................................... LEVEL.....................

SCHOOL OF PRACTICE:.................................. FORM/CLASS:......................... SUBJECT:..................................... DATE...................

TIME: .... LESSON TOPIC: ....

Item and score	1 = Poor	2 = Satisfactory	3 = Good	4 = Very good	5 = Outstanding
Objectives and Core Points in Lesson Plan					
1. Objectives	Teacher states lesson objectives that are relevant but not specific.	Teacher states specific objectives that are relevant but not measurable.	Teacher states specific, relevant and measurable objectives.	Teacher states specific, measurable, and relevant objectives but not achievable within the duration of the lesson.	Teacher states objectives which are specific, measurable, relevant and achievable within the duration of the lesson.
2. Summaries/Core points	Teacher states summaries/core points for some of the teaching/learning activities.	Teacher states core points for all activities, but they are not related to main skills and/or concepts.	Teacher states core points related to some of the main skills and concepts.	Teacher states core points which clarify main skills and/or concepts.	Teacher states core points which clarify main skills/concepts and are related to lesson objectives.
3. Teaching and learning activities	Teacher states teaching and learning activities in lesson plan but they are inadequate.	Teaching/ learning activities stated in lesson plan are adequate but are not sequenced.	Teaching / learning activities are stated in lesson plan sequentially but not logically.	Teaching / learning activities are sequenced, logical and approximate time indicated.	Teacher provides varied teacher/ learner activities that are logical, timely and direct student learning.
4. TLMs	Teacher states TLMs in lesson plan but does not indicate at what point of the lesson they will be used.	Teacher indicates when TLMs will be used in lesson plan.	Teacher indicates when and how TLMs will be used but these are not indicated in suitable stages in lesson plan.	Teacher indicates when and how TLMs will be used, and these are indicated in suitable stages in lesson plan.	Teacher uses TLMs appropriately and relates them to students' experiences. These are indicated in suitable stage in lesson plan.
5. Subject and pedagogical knowledge	Subject matter is disorganized.	Teacher demonstrates knowledge of topic and presents concepts and issues but not clearly and logically.	Teacher presents concepts and issues logically and clearly and provides expected answers to sample questions in lesson plan.	Teacher presents concepts and issues logically and clearly, uses precise vocabulary /technical terms. States expected answers	Teacher demonstrates relevant subject knowledge linked to objectives, uses a variety of techniques to ensure active student participation.

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Item and score	1 = Poor	2 = Satisfactory	3 = Good	4 = Very good	5 = Outstanding
Classroom Organization and Management					
6. Classroom management	Teacher establishes a learning environment but it is not purposeful.	Teacher constantly orders students what to do (Teacher leads lesson and students follow).	Teacher tells students what to do and utilizes students' responses. (Teacher leads lesson by using students' self-motivating responses).	Teacher interacts with students and uses students' ideas to develop the lesson (Teacher and students lead lesson at the same level).	Teacher facilitates active and responsible cooperation among students that lead to students' mutual and progressive learning (Teacher monitors student learning).
7. Class control	Teacher ignores student misbehaviour.	Teacher establishes clear parameters for student conduct and makes expectations known.	Teacher develops appropriate strategies for preventing problems and models expected behaviour.	Teacher deals with misbehaviour promptly and constructively. Teacher remains calm, consistent and fair.	Teacher makes skilful use of body language and assists students towards self-discipline and acceptable behaviour; he is fair, firm but friendly.
8. Teacher behaviour	Teacher lacks enthusiasm in teaching. Does not appear well-groomed in speech, dress, punctuality.	Teacher shows evidence of enthusiasm for teaching, appears well-groomed in speech, dress, punctuality.	Teacher dresses consistently with acceptable professional standards, can assess and handle situations objectively and explain rationale for decisions. Shows discretion.	Teacher demonstrates a variety of strategies to develop rapport with students. Models acceptable behaviour. Provides clear direction for classroom activities.	Teacher is creative and innovative. Exhibits appropriate professional conduct (decorum in speech, behaviour and mannerism).
Teaching Methodology and Delivery					
9. Introduction to the lesson	Teacher barely introduces the lesson.	Teacher introduces the lesson but does not review students' PK.	Teacher introduces the lesson, reviews students' PK and links it up with topic.	Teacher introduces the lesson, reviews students' PK, links it up with topic and shares lesson objectives with students.	Teacher connects content and students' PK appropriately. Explores PK and student interest and shares lesson objectives with students.
10. Presentation – teaching/learning activities	Teaching and learning activities are sequenced but not logically.	Teaching and learning activities are sequenced logically but are not cumulative.	Teaching and learning activities are sequenced logically and are cumulative.	Teaching and learning activities are logical/ cumulative/ provide explanation/ practice of new information.	Teaching and learning activities are logical and cumulative. There is a balance between teacher and student activities.
11. Pace of lesson and audibility of voice	Teacher speaks too fast/slow.	Pace is appropriate but voice is not audible from back of the class.	Pace is appropriate some of the time and voice is audible from back of the class.	Pace is appropriate most of the time and voice is audible from back of the class.	Pace is appropriate for the entire lesson and all students can hear the teacher clearly.

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m and score	1 = Poor	2 = Satisfactory	3 = Good	4 = Very good	5 = Outstanding
Questioning and dback	Teacher asks only factual questions which demand recall and/or right/wrong answers. He/she is not receptive to student questions.	Teacher asks factual and probing questions which require students to explain/elaborate on answers but does not distribute questions fairly. Teacher acknowledges student answers.	Teacher asks and fairly distributes well-balanced mixture of factual and high order questions and changes the questioning pattern to encourage students to interact with teacher and students.	Teacher asks well-balanced mixture of factual and high order questions, facilitating independent/cooperative learning. Accommodates students' questions.	Teacher uses higher order questioning techniques to encourage reflective thinking. Teacher acknowledges, values and respects different contributions.
3. Use of chalkboard	Teacher uses chalkboard but his/her writing is not legible. Subject and topic of the lesson are not written on chalkboard.	Subject and topic are written on the board. Writing on chalkboard is appropriate size and visible to all students but not systematic.	Chalkboard is systematically planned and organized.	Teacher uses chalkboard systematically and students can take notes based on the chalkboard writing/summary.	Teacher uses chalkboard systematically and students take notes and carry out activities by referring to the chalkboard and paper charts displayed on the chalkboard.
14. Use of TLMs	Teacher uses TLMs that do not quite relate to lesson objective(s).	Teacher uses TLMs that are relevant and appropriate to lesson objective(s).	Teacher uses TLMs that are relevant and appropriate to lesson objective(s) and makes students relate new concepts to their PK.	Teacher uses relevant and appropriate TLMs along lesson objective(s), relate them to new concepts and try to link them to students' PK.	Teacher demonstrates relevance and appropriateness of TLM in understanding core points and in achievement of objective(s).
15. Communication/ Use of language	Teacher sometimes uses incorrect language.	Teacher uses grammatically acceptable language but is unable to engage students. He/she stays in front of the class throughout the lesson.	Teacher uses grammatically acceptable language and engages some students. Teacher moves round to monitor student activity.	Teacher uses grammatically acceptable language and gets students to discuss among themselves using acceptable language.	Teacher uses effective oral/written communication including grammatically acceptable English and pays attention to students' use of language.
16. Student participation	Students' participation in the lesson is low.	Some students participate actively in the lesson.	Most students participate actively in the lesson.	Most students carry out problem-solving activities that engage them in purposeful learning activities.	Most students carry out problem-solving activities. Teacher monitors progress and provides feedback which aids progress.

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Item and score	1 = Poor	2 = Satisfactory	3 = Good	4 = Very good	5 = Outstanding
17. Assessment for student learning.	Teacher's methods/items for assessing learning are inadequate. They are not linked to lesson objective(s).	Teacher uses only one assessment method or tool(e.g. oral questioning, written exercise, one-minute t , etc) to determine understanding.	Teacher uses a variety of assessment methods or tools (e.g. oral questioning, written exercise, one-minute test, etc) to determine understanding.	Teacher encourages students' self-assessment of understanding and application of the lesson objective(s)/core points.	Students demonstrate use of self-assessment to improve on their learning and understanding.
18. Mastery of subject matter	Some lesson content is not relevant..	Content is relevant but of limited scope and teacher sometimes gives inaccurate answers to student questions.	Content is accurate with some relevant examples.	Content is accurate with a lot of relevant examples.	Teacher has full command of subject matter and exudes confidence.
19. Closure	The bell announces end of the lesson and teacher finishes lesson abruptly/teacher finishes lesson well ahead of time.	Teacher ends the lesson without completing evaluation of the lesson.	Teacher uses questioning, summary and/or practice to end the lesson and links it with lesson objective(s) but objective(s) is/are not achieved.	Teacher uses questioning, summary and/or practice to end the lesson and links it with lesson objective(s). Lesson objective(s) is/ are achieved.	Teacher draws attention to end of the lesson, helps students to consolidate/ reinforce major points learned. Lesson objective(s) is/ are achieved. Teacher assigns activity for next lesson.
20. Professional commitment	Teacher has no record of previous lessons related to teaching-practice.	Teacher keeps records of previous lessons on sheets of paper.	Teacher keeps records of previous lessons in a bound notebook for reference and guidance.	Teacher uses records of previous teaching experiences to chart progress in teaching practice.	Teacher shows a capacity to reflect critically and improve on teaching practice. Teacher accepts constructive feedback to improve and refine teaching/learning.

TOTAL SCORE ☐   **GRADE** ☐   Overall comments:

Name of Supervisor:...

Signature:...

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APPENDIX H
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
TEACHING PRACTICE ASSESSMENT FORM B

NAME OF STUDENT: ………..……….……………….. LEVEL: ………

REGISTRATION №: ………………………… PROGRAMME: ……………

SCHOOL OF PRACTICE: ……...……………….. FORM/CLASS: ……….

SUBJECT: ……………...……..... DATE …………………. TIME: …………

LESSON TOPIC………………………………………………………………

COMMENTS

A. GOOD:

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B. SATISFACTORY:

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C. NEEDS IMPROVEMENT:

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D. SUGGESTIONS:

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NAME OF SUPERVISOR: ………………………………………………………

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR: …………………………………….............