UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

IMPACT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST DISTANCE LEARNING

PROGRAMME ON THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BASIC

SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE KUMASI METROPOLIS IN THE ASHANTI

REGION, GHANA

KWAME NKRUMAH

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SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE KUMASI METROPOLIS IN THE ASHANTI

REGION, GHANA.

BY

KWAME NKRUMAH

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

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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: Kwame Nkrumah

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: Mr. Kankam Boadu

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess the impact of the UCC Distance Learning Programme on the professional development of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. It was a descriptive survey. Stratified random sampling procedure was used to sample 315 basic school teachers from the 10 sub-metros of the Kumasi Metropolis to serve as respondents. Data were collected using a questionnaire with a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .80 and an observation guide. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and the results were summarised in tables.

The study showed that basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis had enhanced their understanding of their subject matter knowledge, better use and improvisation of teaching - learning materials as well as improved assessment of their students. The study also indicated that the teachers perceived UCC Distance learning programme as one of the avenues for them to have access to university education. Moreover, teachers who pursued the distance learning programme had acquired improved professional qualifications and ranks in the GES. Furthermore, the competency levels and classroom effectiveness of basic school teachers who have pursued the distance education programme were better than those who only have their initial teacher training college education. It is recommended that more basic school teachers should be encouraged to pursue the programme by offering them financial assistances in a form of scholarships and bursaries.

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DEDICATION

To my brother Yaw Nsiah, for his contribution towards my education.

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# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## Background to the Study

One of the parameters to judge the progress and state of any nation is its educational system. Today's students shall be tomorrow's administrators. Therefore, a good educational system produces good students. To produce good students, we need good teachers. Thus, teachers are some of the prime agents of socio-economic change in a country. The status of the teachers, therefore, reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society.

The teacher is the one who translates educational philosophy and objectives into knowledge and skills and transfers them to students in the classroom. The teacher commands and emits the image of one who improves knowledge and the physical conditions of the classroom through orderliness, discipline and control. The teacher makes diagnosis of students' feelings and attitudes inferred by their behaviour and responses in the classroom environment. Hence Darling-Hammond (1998) concluded that in the absence of school programmes, the major responsibility of working with children in the school rests with the teacher. Likewise, Perration (2000) affirmed that what takes place in the classroom, even though the classroom itself is not an Island, is critical. Therefore, depending on the degree of congruence with classroom practices and school environment, teachers teaching activities may dilute or enhance students' performance.

The roles played by teachers put them always at the forefront of education. This means the teacher should always look for new ways of doing things by seeking knowledge to perform such innovative acts. This makes the quest for knowledge in the twenty-first century to be on the ascendancy for teachers. Many individuals currently have realised that education is a crucial tool for their development. Their desire for development and the acquisition of new knowledge have compelled them to seek ways of acquiring it either through the traditional mode or by Open and Distance Learning. Providers of education have also realised the need and so due to limited classrooms and other facilities, most institutions have opted for Open and Distance Learning to cater for learners who do not gain admission into the regular University system. This is because most institutions of higher learning have realised that distance education could be used as a vehicle to meet the demand for higher education in all aspects of study.

Distance education enables individuals yearning for education to stay in the comfort of their homes, work places and almost everywhere to participate in formal education and obtain diplomas and degrees. Distance education reduces the barriers that prevent and obstruct people's access to and participation in formal education. It also provides a learning environment that promotes self-learning through self instructional materials. Distance education opens up opportunities for access to education and provides chances of successes (Owoeye, 2004).

Ghana's Education Strategic Plan 2003 – 2015(Ministry of Education [MOE], 2005) identified the development of teachers as critical in implementing the Millennium development Goal and Education for all (EFA)

initiatives. Thus, developing teachers for the purpose of achieving the Education for all agenda is a challenge for the nation. It is only through the development of teachers in the country that could ensure that every child in the classroom gets the attention of a well trained and developed teacher. Yet the teacher development agenda of the country grapples with a number of challenges in that the existing structures are not able to provide the requisite number of trained teachers.

The Centre for Continuing Education of the University of Cape Coast (CCEUCC) introduced a three-year Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) programme in 2001 and by 2006 had 8,336 students at 18 study centres in all 10 administrative regions. It initiated Post-Diploma (PDE) Programmes in the 2005 – 2006 academic year (Ministry of Education, 2002; Ossei-Anto, 2003; Brown, 2004). Currently, it could be estimated that there are over twenty-thousand teachers pursuing both the Diploma and Post-Diploma programmes in Basic education. Apart from the distance education programme of the University of Cape Coast, other Universities namely University of Education, Winneba, University of Ghana, Legon and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology are running Distance Education programmes for teachers. There are even emerging private ones. All these institutions are heavily patronized by teachers from public and private schools in the country.

Despite the successful implementation of distance education in Ghana and the key role it plays in the training of teachers, the question is "Is distance education providing quality education needed for the socio-economic development of Ghana, as well as total professional development of its products?" It is an attempt to provide an acceptable answer to this question

that has called for this study. Thus, examining how the University of Cape Coast Distance learning programme has impacted on the professional development of its products is the thrust of this study.

### Statement of the Problem

Teachers are expected to render a very high job performance and the Ministry of Education is always curious regarding the job performance of its teachers. Within the context of the University of Cape Coast Centre for Continuing Education, Distance Education is used as a form of support for formal education directly, through courses in school or indirectly by helping teachers gain access to in-service training or on the job development. Distance education has been used effectively for the development of both the professional and unprofessional teachers in other countries.

The mission of the Distance Education programme in part is to ensure quality education and the professional development of teachers at all levels accessible and relevant to meet the learning needs of Ghanaians so as to enhance their performance and improve the quality of their lives. The demand for university education by non-graduate teachers is due to the government's directives that the minimum qualification for teaching in Ghanaian basic schools by 2005 should be at least Diploma Certificate.

The Centre for Continuing Education was established in the year 1997 and became vibrant in 2000/2001 academic year with an initial intake of seven hundred and fifty basic school practising teachers to pursue a three-year Diploma in Education, to develop their professional skills. Primarily, the Centre for Continuing Education was established to provide opportunities for teachers and other professionals to pursue higher education in the comfort of

their homes, to develop themselves professionally for all levels of Education and develop the professional competence of serving teachers of the Ghana Education Service (CCEUCC, 2011).

Teacher preparation by the distance education mode of delivery was introduced in Ghana in 1998 to accelerate the production of trained teachers and to enhance the quality of teaching in basic schools. No standard has been articulated to measure the impact and the success of the programme. Impact assessment is crucial to the development of any programme to see if the stated objectives have been achieved (Mark, Henry & Julnes, 2000), and the programme is on course. Despite the key role that impact assessment plays in programme development, no impact assessment has so far been conducted in Ashanti Region. This study examines the impact of the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme on the professional development of basic school teachers in the region.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of the Centre for Continuing Education Distance Learning programme (CCE) at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana's premier teacher preparation institution, on the professional development of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis.

## Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide and give direction to the study:

1. What is the perception of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis about Distance Education?

2. To what extent has the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme enhanced the professional development of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis?

3. What value has the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme added onto the professional status of basic school teachers who have pursued the programme in the Kumasi Metropolis?

4. What contribution has the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme made to the over-all teaching competence of the basic school teachers who have pursued the programme in the Kumasi Metropolis?

5. What are the challenges involved in pursuing the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme?

**Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in that distance education is used for in-service training of active but untrained teachers and for professional upgrading of already trained teachers in basic schools (Saint, 1999; Perration, 2000; Robinson & Latchem, 2002). Information from this study would provide data on how professional developments have been achieved by the teachers.

With the introduction of distance education, the Ministry of Education (2002) intended to solve not only the shortage of teachers but also the high attrition rates often associated with study-leave. In addition, the Ministry of Education wanted to ensure that teachers would not need to move from their duty stations to seek further education. They could remain at post and learn by integrating college work with their teaching work (Darling-Hammond, 1998).

The results of this study may provide useful information to the Ministry of Education in fulfilling its objectives and the kind of assistance that

the Ministry should provide for the training institutions and the teachers to meet its desired objectives. Distance education has the potential to stem high attrition rates of teachers and reduce the migration of teachers from basic classrooms to high school or college classrooms after they have received higher qualifications and have gained additional experience. The recommendations from this study may therefore, be useful in solving a number of the teaching problems which affect the teachers during the course of their pursuing the programme.

Solutions to the problems identified may make the programme worthwhile for the teachers to pursue and meet their professional development needs. Also, the results and findings of this study will add to the literature and serve as a source of reference materials for other researchers who may want to embark on similar studies in the same area or other areas of teacher efficiency and effectiveness.

**Delimitation of the Study**

The study was limited to the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme. The study also captured only the basic school teachers in the Kumasi metropolis who had pursued the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme. The choice of the Kumasi metropolis for the study was influenced by the fact that the metropolis contained a lot and different kinds of the University of Cape Coast distance learning products, for which reason it could provide a fair sample for the study.

The study did not cover the entire scope of distance education. It was delimited to face- to- face type of distance education due to the fact that ICT in Ghana had not fully developed. Thus, the study did not include the types of

distance education that employs electronic media as mode of teacher-student interaction.

The study aimed at only basic school teachers in the Kumasi metropolis who were already trained teachers before being enrolled in the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme. The reason for excluding basic school teachers who were not trained teachers at the time they applied for the programme was that records of participants' final teaching practice raw scores awarded to them when they were being trained as teachers at the training college level were expected to be obtained from the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast and used as a proxy for their initial competence level against which subsequent performances were compared for statistical significance. Thus, it would have been very difficult to obtain initial competence data for untrained teachers, hence their exclusion from the target population.

Similarly, continuing students of the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme who were on the Diploma in Basic Education programme were also not captured by the study since they had not done their final teaching practice which could have provided post test scores for comparison. However, continuing students who had successfully completed the Diploma in Basic Education programme and were on the Post-Diploma Degree in Basic Education Programme were included since they did a final teaching practice in their final year at the Diploma level.

## Limitations of the Study

In spite of efforts made to conduct a thorough scientific study, some limitations could hardly be avoided. These limitations include the following:

1. The use of closed-ended questions in the instruments did not allow respondents room for their own responses in most cases. Therefore, respondents' views and ideas which would have enriched the study were not captured.

2. In the Ghana Education Service, appraisal of teachers takes at least one year's observation. Due to time constraints, the study had a short period of observation which might have missed out some vital data from the teachers that might have enriched the study.

### Definition of Terms

**Professional Teachers**: People who have learnt and have been certified in the art of imparting knowledge to others from an institution specialized in teaching methods, school administration, psychology, comparative education and philosophy of education

**Programme**: Series of courses designed to achieve a specific goal.

**Single mode**: A type of organisation of distance education where an institution is established purposely for the running of distance education programmes only.

**Dual-mode**: A type of organisation of distance education in which an established institution in addition to running conventional programmes also runs distance education programmes. Resident and non- resident students are subjected to a common curriculum, a common assessment and are awarded identical certificates (Renwick, 2002).

**Face-to-face sessions**: This constitutes an arrangement by which students studying via distance, their teachers and colleagues who are separated by

location, meet to discuss issues relating to their courses, write quizzes or semester examination.`

**Study centre**: A multi-purpose local venue where face-to-face meetings and other useful activities may occur for the support of distance learners. Most support services and facilities for students may be provided in study centres.

**Off-Centre Teaching Practice**: The kind of teaching practice that takes place at the duty stations of distance education students.

**Professional development**: Skills and knowledge attained for both personal development and career advancement.

### Organisation of the Rest of the Study

The thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter One deals with introduction which provides preamble to the study. It gives background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, specific objectives, research questions, and significance of the study. Other components of the introductory chapter were limitation and delimitation of the study, organization of the work and definition of terms.

Chapter Two reviews literature relevant and related to the study. The chapter looked at the concept of Distance Education, models of Distance Education, benefits associated with distance learning, professional development of teachers and problems confronting Distance Education learners.

Chapter Three describes methodology and research procedures used to conduct the study. It focuses on research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation, data collection procedures and analysis.

Chapter Four presents the results and discussions of the findings of the study. It discusses data analysis and interpretation and discussions of the results in relation to the research questions. The discussions are supported with relevant literature cited from chapter two.

Chapter Five summarises the research process and findings of the study. Conclusions are drawn and recommendations are also made in this chapter. Moreover, suggestions are made for further research.

# CHAPTER TWO

# REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

## Introduction

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the study and focuses on concept of distance education, models of distance education, benefits associated with distance education, professional development of teachers and problems confronting distance education learners.

## The Concept of Distance Education

Learning at a distance is no new phenomenon. For generations, books have been a major source of information across the barriers of time and space (Tait, 2003). Learning at a distance received a new impetus with the establishment of single mode institutions like the Rapid Results Collage, Wolsey Hall and The Open University, all of Great Britain, whose stock in trade was largely to provide correspondence courses through self-instructional manuals. According to Adentwi (2002), distance education has taken the form of a combination of print and electronic media (such as radio, television and computers). In the Ghanaian experience, as elsewhere, Aggor, Kinyanjui, Pecku and Yerbury (1995) asserted that distance education has embraced the additional element of providing limited face-to face interaction between course tutors and learners at appointed time intervals.

Technically speaking, distance education has been defined as "an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and / or time from the learner"

(Perraton, 1993). In a workshop, for Distance Education Writers, Ministry of Education (2002) defined distance education as a teaching-learning organization in which students of a variety of ages and backgrounds, study in groups or individually with centrally provided self-instructional materials distributed through a variety of media and with regular communication and feedback.

Taken together, the foregoing definitions suggest that distance learners receive much of their tuition through correspondence courses instead of attending formal classes in a residential institution. Also, especially where distance education is used as a means of teacher education, arrangements may be made for learners to occasionally meet their course instructors face-to-face in a classroom setting to engage in discussions and other exchanges on their course.

Perraton (1993) opined that the combination of multiple communication media in distance education serves to counter balance the strength and weaknesses of the individual media and to have a reinforcement effect on learning. On the other hand, the permanence of print can also balance the speed with which radio and television signals, in our memory, passes away with time. It should be clear that the face-to-face discussions with instructors make for considerable dialogue and feedback that may not be possible with other media.

### Distinguishing Characteristics of Distance Education

According to Keegan (1996), distance education has some distinguishing characteristics. He asserted that it is a teaching learning interaction process marked by quasi-permanent separation of teacher and

learner throughout the length of the process. Keegan further stated that distance education is an educational arrangement which has planning and preparation of learning materials and the provision of student support services as a very essential component. It involves the utilisation of a multiple number of media of instruction such as the print and audio-visual equipment like radio, television, video and the computer.

Keegan (1993) reiterated that distance education involves a two-way communication process in which instructors and learners engage in useful information exchanges via the multiple media. It involves the quasi-permanent absence of a leading group throughout the duration of the course. This means that the learners do not usually study in a classroom group setting but mostly engage in self-instructional readings (or self tuition). They only have very limited face-to-face interaction among themselves and with their course instructors. In the case of the centre for Continuing Education, the students meet their course tutors fortnightly for the face-to-face meetings on Saturdays and Sundays.

Other additional characteristics of distance education include the fact that it is usually made flexible enough to enable learners learn at their own pace in the comfort of their homes. The flexible nature of distance education also takes cognisance of or makes allowance for the need to permit distance learners to work and earn an income as they pursue further training (Coleman & Anderson, 2000).

Also, Moore and Tait (2002) asserted that distance education requires a huge initial capital outlay to meet all needed electronic gadgetry and to provide teaching and learning resources. However, as intake increases over

time, the cost per student in providing distance education is far less than the amount required to provide equivalent residential education. Furthermore, distance educational materials according to Keegan (1996) are deliberately made detailed enough and student friendly in order to serve as a useful reference for learners who engage in lonely studies away from course mates and course instructors.

## Modes of Distance Education

Aggor, et al. (1995) identified three different organizational models in distance education. These are the single mode institutions, the dual or mixed mode institutions and the consortia.

### Single Mode Institutions

According to Adentwi (2002), single mode or purpose-built institutions are institutions which are created solely for the purpose of providing education by distance learning. Such institutions prepare their own detailed instructional packages for the use of their students in the pursuit of specific academic or professional programmes. Usually such bodies have accreditation and they are made to prescribe their own syllabuses, conduct their own examinations and award their own certificates and diplomas. The single mode institutions have considerable recognition and reputation among employers in industry, commerce and government organisation. This makes it possible for graduates of such institutions to find suitable and well paid jobs after graduation.

The Open University of Great Britain is the most widely known single mode institution that provides distance education. Wolsey Hall and Rapid Results College, both based in Great Britain are other well-known single mode institutions. These are profit-making concerns which earn their revenue by

providing tuition to their students to take public examinations. David and Daniel (1998) cited a number of reasons for the popularity of single mode distance education establishments. Among the reasons they identified included the following:

i. Distance learners are best served in single mode institutions whose programmes are purpose-built to serve them. In other words, instructors in such institutions are specifically trained to meet the special needs of distance learners to whom they own their first loyalty. Hence other distractions which may serve to dilute their services are removed.

ii. Single mode distance education programmes are versatile enough to accommodate desirable changes which distance learners may require. To put it in another way, it is easier for course instructors to design new courses to meet the changing needs of their clientele than it is to do so in the conventional residential institutions. In university setups, it is a common practice for conservative subject specialists or academics to dominate decision making bodies and often block innovations in the form of new courses that they are not familiar with.

iii. Single mode distance education programmes also tend to be more suitable to their more matured and employed students who prefer adult teaching and learning methods which permit them to learn on their jobs and at their own pace.

Peat and Helland (2002) explained that the main shortcoming associated with the single mode organizational model is that it is expensive to operate. It requires setting up an organisation having its own plant in the form of buildings, machinery, tools and equipment, for planning, designing and

producing instructional materials. It also requires a large army of highly qualified staff to handle the business of providing education at a distance. For such an organisation to enjoy the economics of scale, it must be very large. The result of all these is a very huge initial financial outlay.

**Dual Mode Institutions**

According to Adentwi (2002), Dual or Mixed Mode distance education institutions provide both on-campus conventional residential education and off-campus courses by distance via correspondence and other electronic media. Some of such institutions, such as the University of Lagos in Nigeria and the University of Zambia were originally conventional residential universities which added the distance education component to meet pressing needs. The distance education initiatives at University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba, fall under the dual mode distance education model. The IN-IN-OUT programme introduced into initial Teacher Training Colleges in Ghana (Now College of Education) in 1999 is an interesting novelty in teacher education in Ghana. It combines the features of both conventional face-to-face programmes in the colleges and distance learning methods during the third year of training.

A cardinal feature of the dual mode system is that under it, existing conventional universities provide the traditional courses as before and also mount such programmes concurrently for distance learners who study in the comfort of their homes (Bates, 2000). Such institutions have their traditional campus-based courses run for non-resident students simultaneously. This arrangement has both advantages and disadvantages associated with it.

**The advantages of dual mode**

1. Dual-mode institutions ensure that comparable standards are met across both of their programmes, by both resident and non-resident students alike. This uniformity of standards, Renwick (2002) argued, is ensured by subjecting students on both programmes to a common curriculum and common assessment. Also, graduates of both programmes are awarded identical certificates.

2. It has been observed by Bates (2000) that   where the universities concerned make it a policy to recognize distance education materials for academic credits that count towards promotion, and also pay good money to writers of distance education materials, it results in a lot of publications and this serves to enhance the "publication culture" of the universities. Ultimately, teaching and learning in the Universities improves because some residential students can also have access to distance education materials.

3. The dual mode system according to Allen, Bourhis, Burrell & Mabry (2002) also helps to give credibility to certificates obtained by distance learning. This is because the public tends to give recognition to certificates based upon the institutions awarding them. Allen et al. tend to reason that if the distance education courses were offered by the already established universities, the graduates of the distance education programmes must have been subjected to the right kind of learning experiences. This point holds particularly where no distinction is made between the certificates of residential and distance education graduates.

### The disadvantages of dual mode

1. The key problem identified by Adentwi (2002) to be associated with the dual mode institutions is the fact that where the same lecturers who teach courses to resident students also take up additional responsibility as distance education instructors, they may be over loaded with work. In the circumstances they may ignore their duties in respect of distance education or approach them in a haphazard manner (Rumble, 2002).

2. Furthermore, where distance education in such dual mode institutions is handled by a separate staff, they tend to be looked down upon by their colleagues in the conventional programme.

### Consortia

According to Adentwi (2002), consortia refer to an assemblage of independent educational broadcasting and publishing organisations which collaborate to provide distance education services. This is an unusual or uncommon organizational pattern. A notable example is the Massey University of New Zealand. Other examples of consortia exist in Ireland, Norway and Germany. In practice, consortia arrangement has not worked out very well or successfully because of petty jealousies, bureaucracy and financial problems, among other things.

It is perhaps, important to mention that there is no one distance education model that is suited to all kinds of situations. The most appropriate model is the one that suits the circumstances under which it is operated.

### Organisation and Management of Distance Education

Management has been defined as "the process of planning, organising, directing, controlling and coordinating of the human and material resources of a purposeful group in order to realise its stated purposes (Boachie-Mensah,

2000). Organisation, which is the end result of organising, is only one of the many functions of management and has to do with the process of creating a viable structure for the successful accomplishment of work (Boachie-Mensah, 2000).

To describe it in a more comprehensive manner, organising basically consists of the process of dividing work into convenient tasks of duties; this involves grouping such duties in the form of posts, appointing qualified staff, and of establishing a network of authority, responsibility and accountability relationships to ensure that the work is carried out as planned. Organisation and management are ultimately aimed at getting specified work, task accomplished through the utilisation of human and material resources in the efficient and effective manner.

In conventional residential educational institutions, many activities, processes and materials have to be managed on a day to day basis which makes the management of such institutions a very complicated and demanding business. Where such an institution combines residential education with distance education, additional responsibilities are added on which make the organisation and management of such an institution even more complex. Even where an institution is in the sole business of providing distance education, the organisational and management task can be enormous since the processes involved in creating and disseminating educational materials to widely dispersed learners can make its own heavy administrative demands (Brown, 2004). For this reason any institution involved in distance education needs to work out how to provide the services which its students need by identifying

the many elements that need to be organized and managed and acting towards them appropriately so that the intended impact required is achieved.

A discussion of organisation and management of distance education is included in this study because it will help to find out if the programme is suitable to make the desired impact on its students, for this study the impact on professional development of teachers. For this study, the discussion is limited to policy making and control, materials development, student support services, record keeping, monitoring and evaluation.

**Policy Making and Control**

Perration (2000) suggested that effective organisation and management of distance education needs to start with policy making and control for it to have its desired impact. This has to do with creating the necessary administrative structures through which policies governing distance education may be formulated. Again, it involves entwisting some people, holding certain positions with authority to direct affairs and to establish the necessary control mechanisms for the work of the institution to proceed according to plans. Perration further reiterated that as a matter of fact, a distance education institution usually requires the services of a larger number of qualified academics and other educated employees than a conventional university engaged in face-to-face educational services.

Thorpe (2003) contended that where a residential university decides to engage its academic and administrative staff in distance education, they need to be trained specifically on how distance education functions. They may have to unlearn several of their usual behaviours appropriate to residential face-to-face education and acquire new concepts, methodologies and technologies for

their new roles in distance education. Much of distance education teaching roles are multi disciplinary requiring cooperation with diverse personnel such as administrators, curriculum designers, correspondence materials writers, subject specialists, course co-ordinators, tutors, counsellors, editors and evaluators.

According to Robinson and Latchem (2002) training programmes for distance education personnel usually includes induction sessions, instructions to writers, seminars, symposia and the like, and internship workshops. They argued that sometimes some people may have to be sent abroad for further studies on distance learning. Distance education personnel do not only need to be properly trained but must also be given adequate remuneration and motivation for them to give off their best.

**Materials Development**

A distance education institution must usually find people with the requisite knowledge background and train them to write student-friendly distance education materials (Saint, 1999). Perraton, Creed and Robinson (2002) asserted that it is necessary to have to find people to develop modules, units and lessons using audio-visual equipment like radio, television, video and computers. Distance education institutions usually make use of distance education materials that are centrally developed and disseminated to distance learners on one-on-one basis to be studied in the comfort of their homes.

To serve as an effective instructional manual and reference material, Rumble (2002) advised that such materials should be carefully developed so that they are both easy to read and detailed enough to provide explanations to issues and questions that distance learners may want to find answers to.

Distance education materials are produced to ensure active learning. This means that such materials must have clearly stated objectives, provide advice about how to study the materials, get learners actively involved in the lessons by asking questions and reflecting upon what they are learning and finding useful answers on their own. Furthermore, the materials according to Adentwi (2002) should be conversational and interesting in style, presented in the form of a dialogue with a friendly and encouraging tone. The materials should also be clearly structured with content divided into small sections with appropriate heading.

Again, distance education materials must be illustrated with easily understood, yet comprehensive diagrams. They must also provide space for learners to make notes and provide responses. Above all, Calder (1994) advised that distance education materials should be tailor-made to suit the maturity level, intellectual development and other background factors of learners for when they are intended. Calder (1994) reiterated that where media, other than the print medium are combined, they need to be clearly structured and presented in such a way that they have reinforcing effect on each other to deepen learners' understanding and to develop needed skills, attitudes and sensitivities in them.

Brindley (2004) argued that to ensure that distance education materials measure up to the standards described above, it requires that the right calibre of persons are engaged and monitored to produce the desired materials. To avoid the possibility of engaging people who are not good at writing, there is always the need to test their writing ability before giving them the appointment.

Other alternative approaches include adoption of course materials that have already been developed for an existing institution to the needs of its learners. Secondly, a distance education institution can get its course materials developed by arranging for the writers of other institutions to be seconded to them on short-term basis to help with the development of such materials (Ossei-Anto, 2003).

The third approach for developing distance education materials is to engage the academic staff of a dual-mode institution to develop distance education materials after they have been given special training for this purpose. Both the distance education programme of the University of Education, Winneba and the Centre for Continuing Education of University of Cape Coast in Ghana, have used this method in developing course materials for their diploma and degree programmes by distance education (Koomson, 2005). Koomson explained that the problem associated with this approach is that it causes so much delay in developing the materials because of pressures on the time of the already burdened staff.

Whichever method of acquiring distance education materials is considered to be the best under a given situation, course writers do not develop the materials alone. They usually have to work with a whole army of other personnel providing support of diverse kinds. It is part of the organisation and management functions to ensure that the efforts of those engaged for the various tasks such as curriculum developers, instructional designers and subject specialists are properly coordinated for them to do a good job. Koomson (2005) argued that it is a useful organisational strategy to let a team

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of experts write a manual so that they can share ideas and counter balance their strengths and weaknesses for optimal results.

A distance education programme which combines radio broadcasting with print media should have an organisational arrangement for ensuring that course instructors and broadcasting staff cooperate together to achieve stated purposes and objectives. Broadcasts and print media must be combined in such a way that they enhance understanding of students instead of confusing them. In this regard it should be carefully checked that both the radio and correspondence courses highlight the same points, instead of giving conflicting information (Perration, 2000; Rumble, 2002).

It is indeed, important to be mindful of the fact that distance learners need help which goes beyond teaching about a particular subject. They require teaching in self-study skills and giving other pieces of information about the examination system for example. They may also need to be promptly informed about changes in certain arrangements and about misprints in the printed texts. Again radio can prove to be a very useful complement in this regard.

Grow (2001) opined that while planning and selecting media, we should not over look the fundamental truth that it is not the quality of media which will determine the learning process, but more importantly, the pedagogical quality of the actual learning material. He also cautioned that no single medium possesses the properties which are uniquely adapted to perform one or a combination of instructional functions. Choosing the media then must rest on the learning task.

**Student Support Services**

According to Keegan (1989), it is the provision of learner support services that distinguishes distance education from private study and teach yourself programme. The main objective of these support service is to motivate learners and keep them on the right track, encourage them to make use of the facilities provided, and above all facilitate their learning.

The central figure in an educational institution is the student. The system and structures are developed and finally aimed at the success of the students. Mounting distance education programme does not end with the production of course materials. An important ingredient is the support system put in place. It refers to all the services that are given to distance learners to facilitate effective learning (Hui, 1989). This type of support is to help make up for the opportunities that distance learner's lack. The importance of student support for successful learning is also illustrated by what Saint (1999) wrote about his experience from the University of South Africa.

According to Saint (1999), when the University of South Africa discovered that pass rates for its physics courses were only 20%, it responded by strengthening student support services. As a result of adaptation such as second-chance assignment, more tutorial support and a decrease in the ratio of student per staff member from 2001, the pass rate doubled to 40% (p. 24). Robinson (1981) described student services as "a vital element in any distance education project" (p. 4). It refers to all the support that is given to the distance learners to enable them to go through the distance education programme successfully.

As Wright (1991) explained, a support service is the "requisite students' services essential to ensure the successful learning at a distance" (p. 59). To Wright, for the distance education student to succeed, support is essential. In support of this, Rumble (1992) wrote that "these services exist to ensure that students are admitted to the institutions and enrol on the courses, allocated to tutors and appropriate counsellors', told what is expected of them in terms of their formal commitment to the institution, told where and when to appear to sit any examination and generally provided with help to get them through the system" (p. 6).

It is clear that the support service help individuals and groups to learn at a distance. It is, therefore, necessary for distance education institutions, especially as pioneers to understand whether support is important at all and if so when it should commence in a programme. The issue of whether student support is necessary or when it should commence has been a popular debate among distance education writers (Shale, 1990). The literature available in this respect indicates that one group maintains that emphasis should be placed on the production of high quality course package which can offer self support to learners engaged in distance education.

Bame (1991) pointed out that a well developed self-instructional material can ensure the necessary two-way communication at a distance. The implication is that, to Holmberg (as cited in Rumble, 1992), there is no need for separate support services. Writing in defence of this, Bame (1991) indicated that "distance education can be, and is often, exclusively based on non-continues communication and on individuals" (p. 53). It can be

supplemented by face-to-face teaching, as well as laboratory exercise in groups.

Bame (1991) viewed distance education as an educational method that makes use of largely course materials with other features like face-to-face and group work as being supplementary. The author further makes it clear that in actual fact there are only a few institutions that offer distance education. According to him the fundamental mode of delivery of distance education remains the correspondence.

The second position of the debate comprises those who believe support services outside the course package are very necessary. Some of these authors include Robinson (1981), Paul (1988) and Keegan (1990). Despite these diversified views, most writers see this support system as being crucial to the effective functioning of the programme. Keegan (1990) highlighted this point when he stated that "it is mainly through them (support) that two-way communication is established between students and institutions,… the provision of students support services distinguishes distance education from other forms of education" ( p. 15).

The need to provide student support services have been viewed from different perspectives and the argument keeps going. The philosophy underlying student support services is to provide a measure of human contact and help students overcome their learning barriers. These barriers result from the loneliness and isolation of working alone without the face-to-face support from fellow students and teachers. In conventional education, the barriers are overcome by the presence of a teacher in the classroom providing the necessary support. Robinson (1981) argued that "distance education students

face not only the problem that conventional students face but also those generated by distance education itself" (p. 141). Robinson classified the problems associated with study techniques and learning as follows:

1.  That students have difficulty in managing and expressing their views in written form;

2.  Those students have problems with understanding text and some students lack reading skills.

Commenting on the problems, which arise from trying to interact with a distance institution, Robinson (1981) explains that unlike conventional students, distance students' lack facilities such as access to tutors and friends. Sometimes, even encouragement is lacking especially for those in remote areas. Without the necessary support services, studying at a distance could become complicated and frustrating. Among personal problems that Robinson identified is lack of a convenient place of study, lack of access to library facilities, conflict between work and study as well as financial constraints. An observation by Perraton (1992) which supports Robinson's assertions is that students face problems with lack of time, interest and personnel help. These views are similar to those expressed by Burge (1993) in the study of problem areas of students in the United Kingdom-Open University.

Robison (1981, p. 64) identifies the following problems of students in decreasing order of frequency:

1.  Lack of time

2.  Difficulties in concentration

3.  Family commitments

4.  Organisation of time and planning

5. Low levels of motivation

6. Study skills

7. Resources

8. Anxiety

9. Isolation

The list of problems goes to show that it cannot be assumed that the learning enterprises are easy for distance students. Lack of time and poor organisation of time and planning mean that devotion to study is bound to suffer. Family commitment will add to the draw back. Difficulties in concentration, low level of study skills and of motivation will combine to dwindle learning output. Put together, a providing body has to set up efficient support services in order to encourage the students to persist in their studies, and make the learning process less tedious. Similarly, Paul (1988) outlined the reasons why students' services are necessary as:

1. Isolation of learning

2. Lack of self identity on the part of the student

3. Demands of the effective domain

4. Financial demands

5. Students' advocacy role.

Paul (1988) singled out isolation of learner, the problem with resources which he described as financial role and anxiety within the effective domain. He, however, added that a student should be a person at the receiving end of the process. He is an integral part of the whole educational delivery system and should be recognised as such. Support services, are expected to provide this integration. Support services theoretically, have become an integral part of

distance education out of the balance right between "interaction" and "independence." By "interaction" is meant activity within a distance learning which brings the student into contact with other people and by "independence", working alone (Davis, 1988).

According to the author, the main aim of getting the balance right between interaction and independence is for reasons of students' motivation, counselling completion rates, costs and quality learning and providing agencies. Therefore, striking a balance between these variables in order to effectively promote learning at a distance is essential.

**The Need for Support Service**

Learner support services are important in distance education because of special characteristics of this system of learning. When the learner joins this scheme for the first time they find themselves in an unfamiliar situation (Paul, 1984). According to Paul, they usually, associate learning with being taught by a teacher who is physically present. But, now they will be expected to use a greater proportion of their time on their own, in the absence of a teacher. It should also be remembered that the learners are adults studying part time. According to Wortman, Loftsus and Marshall (as cited in Darling-Hammond, 1998), many of the learners are not generally confident of their capacity to learn through unfamiliar learning package that are sent to them.

According to Koul (as cited in David & Daniel, 1998), there are three categories of learners in distance learning system. The first category is that of learners who have confidence in their ability to work on their own. They are confident enough to think that they can succeed without any guidance from the counsellor. They are the ones who may not make any contact with counsellors

throughout the programme. However, it should be remembered that simply having confidence in their ability to succeed without the help of a counsellor need not necessarily lead to success. Many of them in spite of being very sure of their abilities, may finally need help.

The second category of distance learners are those who actually need talking to. Having someone to help in solving their problems gives them reassurance about the system as well as builds a little more confidence in them. To them a face to face support system can make all the difference between withdrawing from the course and completing it. The third category of distance learners, who fall between the above two types, are those who are really sitting on the wall. If only they run into intractable problems, they approach the counsellor for help.

According to Tait (2000), distance education requires the provision of student support services in the form of tutoring, counselling, information delivery services, library services, and centres for practical work. Distance learners mostly work in isolation without the support that comes from course instructors or other students on the courses. There is, therefore, the need to give them individual encouragement, help, tuition and guidance to reduce the sense of isolation with which they carry out their studies. Many distance education institutions meet this need by creating study or resource centres manned with duly qualified staff and equipped with up-to-date reference materials.

The idea of student support services is premised on the belief that piling up packages of study materials on students will be inadequate to ensure effective learning on their part unless there are human beings available to offer

support of diverse kinds to bring learning at a distance closer to face-to-face residential education. As a matter of fact, where distance learners are denied such support services, they are likely to delay the completion of their programmes or drop out altogether, though a few support services would help solve their problems with ease (Tait, 2003; Thorpe, 2003).

Student support services provided by the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Cape Coast include:

1. Study centres where students go to access for information. Such centres are also used to provide face-to-face contact programmes which permit some measure of feed back between course instructors and distance learners.

2. Tutor-counsellors with the responsibility to give general guidance and direction to students on effective self-study techniques, provide tutorial services and support as they progress through their studies, and see to the over all academic progress and other pertinent issue that affect students.

3. Regional offices under the supervision of Regional Resident Tutors (RRT) who are qualified academic staff of lectureship status. The RRT's are supposed to perform the following functions:

   i. Supervise the activities of tutor-counsellors and distance learners.

   ii. Supply distant learners with needed study materials

   iii. Visit distant learners periodically wherever they may be to help them plan and improve their learning and also to monitor the tutors.

   iv. Oversee the continuous assessment of the work of distant learners from the main office at Cape Coast.

v. Provide counselling services and other pieces of information to distance learners (CCEUCC, 2011).

According to Bampo (2008), the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Cape Coast in addition to its main distance education course materials provides the following support services:

i. Face- to- face residential sessions,

ii. Assignment and assignment feedback,

iii. Tutoring and counselling,

iv. Library facilities,

v. Financial support in the form of flexible terms of fee payment,

vi. Regional study centres and

vii. Study groups.

Bampo (2008) recommended that available learner support services for University of Cape Coast distance learners could be improved through the following ways:

i. The Ghana Education Service, the Ministry of Education and the various district assemblies need to institute books and materials allowance scheme for teachers learning by distance.

ii. The Centre for Continuing Education, University of  Cape Coast in partnership with the Ghana Education Service need to transform the existing teachers' resource centres at all district capitals to provide teachers learning by distance academic and psychological support in addition to the purpose for which the centres were established.

iii. Professional staff of the education office qualified by the University's standard could be trained in the area of tutoring and counselling distance

learners to enable them to support teachers learning by distance at the district level to complement the support services they receive from the regional study centres.

iv. The number of regional study centres need to be increased and their location should ensure that the distance education students have easy access to learner support services.

v. The Centre for Continuing Education, University of Cape Coast needs to pursue partnership with other institutions and funding agencies to equip the university, study centres, public, community, and school libraries with relevant reading materials to enable distance learners to get easy access to relevant library services. Arrangements should be made to stock sections of existing libraries with relevant reference materials for distance education students.

vi. Special arrangements should be made by the Centre for Continuing Education of the University of Cape Coast to provide distance education students with borrowers' cards which will enable them to enjoy the services of different libraries.

vii. The writers of the main distance education course books and other supporting staff charged with the responsibility of producing and distribution of the books could be given adequate incentives in order to motivate them to discharge their duties on schedule (pp. 125-126).

To strengthen the support services and enhance their effectiveness, Shachar and Neumann (2003) suggested the following:

i. Materials should reach distance learners in time.

ii. Assessment should provide adequate feedback to inform students and give directions.

iii. A credit system should be used to ensure flexibility and adaptability of programmes.

**Record Keeping**

Perration (2000) identified record keeping as another vital aspect of the management of distance education. He explained that a distance education institution will need to keep records on its students, its tutors and its courses among other things. Records on students are supposed to cover their background and enrolment, progress on the course, payment of fees, problems, attendance at courses and examinations. On the other hand records on tutors or course instructors will cover their quality of work, arrangement for their remunerations, absence or leave and problems.

On the course, records will cover production stages of materials, stock control, dispatch to students, and students' reaction among others. Such records help to ensure early delivery of quality distance education packages for use by distant education students.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

In several respects, assessment of students on a distance education programme is similar to assessment in a residential institution (Shachar and Neumann, 2003). According to Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005), evaluation in the context of distance education may take three main forms. In the first place, they explained it may refer to evaluating the performance of individual students to determine whether they have passed or failed part or all of their courses. Secondly, it may take the form of programme evaluation

whereby the success or otherwise of the programme is checked with the view to improving it where necessary. Thirdly, evaluation in distance education may be summative. Here evaluation is done at the end of the programme in order to answer broad questions about its success and failure.

Evaluation in distance education is often concerned with students' knowledge in their subject matter and also about their performance as student teachers (Mark et al., 2000). Mark et al. argued that both evaluations are conducted in much the same way as in residential face-to-face education. An important issue connected with the evaluation system under distance education is the type of certificate they take home. It is advisable that some standards are maintained in the examination system for distance education as for residential education. In many distance education programmes, opportunity is provided for students to take examinations under close supervision. The papers distance learners write must also be of same standard as for residential education to add credibility to the certificates they take home at the end of the course.

**Professional Development of Teachers**

Professional development according to Borko (2004) is essential for every individual, whether employed or not. It is vital for every business and professional organization to increase the knowledge and skills of their employees. According to Darling-Hammond (1998) teachers' professional development is a process of enhancing teachers' status through increased awareness and an expanding knowledge base. With the passage of time, many societies change their education system when they are making educational reforms.

In Ghana, the 1987 and 2007 educational reforms are examples. The most important part of these reforms is professional development for teachers. This is because it is only through teachers that society can improve. Darling-Hammond (1998) argued that professional development does not only entail attention to acquire knowledge through text books and lectures, but the professional development means acquiring expertise in the relevant field. He went on to state that just to know about anything is not enough but doing that work is a part of professional development. Professional development is like a model which takes care of knowledge, skills and attitude and in other words, professional development programmes should involve head, hand and heart.

Professional development programmes are efforts to bring change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitude, their beliefs and in the learning outcome of students (Dede, 2006). Teachers are attracted to professional development because they want to expand their knowledge, their skills and abilities. As Dede pointed out, teachers want to contribute their knowledge and skills and enhance their effectiveness. But it is not enough to get knowledge and skills, the major role of teachers is how to implement these practices, and also enhance the knowledge of students. Professional development is specific and certain rather than vague or general and practice ideas that are directly related to day by day practices in their classrooms (Fishman, Marx, Best & Tal, 2003; Iecle, 2006).

**Professional Development and Teacher Change**

Professional development in a broader way refers to the development of a person in his or her professional role. Hawkes and Good (2000) stated that more specifically, we can say that professional development is a professional

growth which teachers achieve in gaining increased experience and examine their professional career systematically. Professional development includes formal experience as well as informal experiences. Borko (2004) said formal experiences can be acquired through attending seminars, further training, professional meetings and workshops, and informal experiences can be acquired through watching television, documentaries and reading professional publications.

Borko (2004) and Dede (2006) identified some standards required for professional development. These standards are related to the following areas of teachers' professional development.

1. **Subject matter knowledge**: This refers to teachers' understanding of the basic concepts, theories, history, latest trends in national and international level and process of getting knowledge of that subject which they are going to teach.

2. **Human growth and development**: Teachers' understanding of how students acquire knowledge, skills and develop habit of mind. How to identify the developmental abilities of students and provide opportunities to that which supports students' intellectual, emotional, and physical development.

3. **Instructional planning and strategies**: This refers to teachers' understanding of the instructional planning and design short term as well as long term plans which are based on students' needs and development progress and then develop strategies to achieve these goals.

4. **Assessment**: The teacher uses different types of assessment for evaluating how students learn and how they implement their knowledge

in their practical life. The result of such kind of assessment improves teaching and learning.

5. **Teaching environment**: The teacher creates supportive and respective learning environment that encourages student's positive social interaction in learning and self motivation.

6. **Effective Communication and use of Technology**: Teachers use verbal or non- verbal kind of communication techniques for supportive interaction with students. Teachers use of technologies in class rooms and laboratory activities.

These standards according to Fishman et al. (2003) can be acquired during courses, workshops, education conferences or seminars, qualification programmes and observation visits to other schools. Other types of professional development they identified were participation in a network of teachers, individual collaborative research, mentoring or peer observation and coaching, reading professional literature and engaging in informal dialogue with peers. From the above types of professional development, distance education can be used as one of the potential sources which can be used to develop professional standards of teachers while pursing the course and after the course. This is because the teachers would be exposed to these standards, while pursuing their courses. Pupil teachers are likely to benefit most.

**Factors influencing the effectiveness of teachers' professional development**

There are a number of factors which were identified by Abbasi (2010) as important for teachers' successful professional development. Several of these factors are described below

1. **Continual development of teachers as trainers**. Regular training workshop and seminar which are based on new practices and knowledge encourage the trainer to participate in these special conferences and seminars which enabled them to keep up to date with new technologies. This knowledge enhancement is not only beneficial for teachers but also for these learners who learn from these teachers.

2. **Sharing knowledge and skill**. Teacher learns from other teachers in their institutions and training centres. Teachers gain confidence after using the tools in classrooms which they have learned.

3. **Collaboration and partnership**. Teacher development programmes build a partnership among teachers, trainers and supervisors. These networks facilitate sharing of knowledge which leads to further improvement.

4. **Support from heads and administration**. It is important for heads and administrative staffs to provide support and opportunities that enable teachers to apply the knowledge and technologies which they have learnt from training.

Teachers should demonstrate the use of modern methods and techniques of teaching in the classroom. Teachers' professional development must be as a long term process which begins with the initial stages of training and ends when the teacher retires from the profession. Distance education is one of the programmes that can make teachers to be more competent, effective and knowledgeable and therefore suitable for teachers' professional development.

**Benefits Associated with Distance Education as a Strategy for Training Teachers**

Distance education has worldwide reputation as a viable alternative to conventional residential education because of its cost effectiveness and also of its enormous potential for providing education to large masses of people who would otherwise have no opportunity to acquire formal education (Adentwi, 2002). In contemporary Ghana, distance education is fast gaining popularity as a very effective strategy for training teachers because of the many benefits associated with it.

Changes in the education system of Ghana, occasioned by the Educational Reforms of 1987 and 2007 coupled with fCUBE and its resultant effect of expansion of the school-age population at the pre-tertiary level, make it imperative to increase the supply of qualified teachers in the schools (Dawson-Brew, Oduro, & Ankoma-Sey, 2009). However, they asserted that it has been almost impossible to expand facilities for conventional residential teacher training (now colleges of Education) because of lack of financial and other resources. This has made the demand for teachers far outstrip the supply of teachers.

Indeed, expansion in teacher supply by conventional methods will necessitate a very huge capital outlay in the form of buildings and other infrastructure which the nation cannot afford in the short run in the economic constraints of the country. Dawson-Brew et al. (2009) explained that the inevitable result has been the perennial problem of a backlog of qualified candidates who are denied access to the colleges of education and universities even though they qualify for admission by all standards.

The foregoing background makes distance education a very viable supplement and an alternative to residential teacher training in the colleges of education. It is believed that a well planned distance education programme will increase access to teacher education in both the colleges of education and universities and also help to supply the needed qualified teachers in the classrooms in a relatively short period of time.

Akyeampong (2001) and Oduro (2008) believed strongly that distance education will surely provide the answer to the "tertiary education placement crisis" and also help to solve some of the problems of tertiary education such as the over-stretching of the woefully inadequate user facilities in the universities. Addo-Sampong (2009) also pointed out that distance education has the "capacity for sharing and, therefore, making more efficient use of scarce existing resources and personnel" (p. 10).

Another benefit associated with distance education is its capacity to achieve significant economics of scale if operated for a reasonably large number of students (Adentwi, 2002; Verspoor, 2004; Abbasi, 2010). Under such circumstances, Adentwi (2002) said it can offer educational opportunities at a lower average cost per student and produce teacher education graduates at a lower cost than can be achieved by conventional residential education methods. This advantage is possible because distance education will ordinarily not require the putting up of buildings to be used as dormitories or halls of residence and classrooms. This means that the huge utility bills paid by residential teacher education institutions will be considerably reduced.

Also, Verspoor (2004) contended that the huge sums of money spent as remuneration for the academic staff will be substantially reduced because with

distance education so many thousands of students can be easily reached through the print and / or electronic media thereby eliminating the necessity to employ a large number of teachers to provide tuition to small groups of students on face-to-face basis.

According to Dawson-Brew et al. (2004), distance education is characterized by a flexible arrangement which allows learners to learn in their own time and place while they continue to earn a living, thereby contributing to social and economic development. In the Ghanaian experience, Aggor et al. (1995) said teachers in the schools who are either unable to gain admission to the universities or those who opt to study in the comfort of their homes are allowed to enrol on distance education programmes. This way, they are trained in their classrooms and have the opportunity to pursue further academic studies in their own time and at their own pace. By this means, the number of people who would have taken study leave with pay and be removed from the classroom is considerably reduced, thus minimizing the disruption in school teaching programmes that results from teachers on study-leave.

Again, a well-executed teacher training by distance education programme is supposed to provide trainee teachers the opportunity to study at first hand the problems of practical teaching in the school in the light of the theoretical knowledge they acquire through self-tuition (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). The courses mounted by the Centre for Continuing Education include: General Principles and Methods of Teaching, Educational Psychology and Administration among other related courses. These have been found to equip basic school teachers with practical methods and skills of teaching, classroom management and assessment of pupils. The courses also help the teachers to

understand individual differences in class and how to pay attention and deal with such pupils (Dawson-Brew et al., 2009). The content of courses studied at the Post-Diploma level and methods of teaching also improve the subject matter content and pedagogical knowledge of the teachers who pursued such courses.

Adolescence psychology also provide a vital ground for the teachers pursuing the programme to have a clear understanding of the growth, emotional and physical development of the pupils and how they are to be handled and taught so that they can acquire knowledge they need so as to become useful citizens to their communities.

This scenario is supposed to enhance teaching efficiency as the student teachers learn to appreciate the problems of practical teaching in a scientific way. Also they learn to apply the theories and principles they learn in isolation to the everyday problems of teaching that they have to grapple with (Adentwi, 2002). In a nutshell, as Koomson (1998) pointed out, distance education enables teachers to acquire higher professional training by remaining at their work places and practicing the skills they acquire through self-study.

Dawson–Brew et al. (2009) further argued that distance education may even be the answer to the problem of gender imbalances at the tertiary education level. They explained that distance education, perhaps, provides a convenient way by which many women can combine their desire for higher education with their matrimonial responsibilities. They were optimistic that if distance education was given the chance, it might prove to be the means of bridging the gap between male and female students at the tertiary education level.

Also, where a dual-mode distance education system is operated, as in the case of Centre for Continuing Education of University of Cape Coast; it creates the opportunity for lecturers to improve their writing skills, thereby resulting in the production of many useful reading materials. Indeed, it has been found by Adentwi (2002) that when lecturers in a conventional residential university get involved in distance education programmes, they become more careful with the content and presentation of materials as they write distance education materials. As a matter of fact, a lot of publications have not only resulted from such efforts, especially where the university has adopted the policy of recognizing such publications for academic credits for promotion purposes, but valuable and high quality materials are made available to distant education learners. Invariably, distance education materials produced this way also find their way into the hands of residential students, thereby improving tuition in the institution generally (Addo-Sampong, 2009).

Furthermore, where a distance education institution such as the Centre for Continuing Education of University of Cape Coast, creates opportunity for its students to meet face-to-face with the course tutors or instructors and fellow course participants at short spells of time, it provides the opportunity for students to interact with their instructors and course mates to receive counselling, motivation and support of various kinds (Dawson-Brew et al., 2009). This helps to reduce the sense of isolation associated with distance education and also to reduce the drop-out rate. During the interactions especially, the peer teaching period, or on- campus teaching, which forms part of the program of the Diploma and Post-Diploma in Basic Education courses, student teachers learn from their peers various skills of teaching such as

preparation of teaching-learning materials, improvisation of teaching learning materials, lesson delivery and other techniques of teaching. These according to Dawson-Brew et al. help professional development of the teachers because they adopt some of these newly acquired and learnt skills when they go back to their schools to teach.

Coleman and Anderson (2000) and Robson (2002) argued convincingly that in many developing countries, distance education provides the most cost effective and practical means of combating mass illiteracy and of bringing education to the door steps of all the children and adults who want to learn but who are at the present, denied access to education. This is because the study centres are dotted all over the country and are easy to reach by the students and accessible to them. For teachers who teach in remote rural areas, where there are no opportunities for career advancement, distance education provides the most practical means of furthering their education in the homes and work places while they continue to earn their incomes.

The strongest argument in support of distance education put up by Adentwi (2002) and Villegas-Reimers (2003) is the realisation that there is no significant difference in the achievement levels and teaching performance of student teachers who enrol on conventional residential teacher education institutions and those who acquire their training by distance education. In other words, distance education can be just as effective as traditional school.

Indeed, Peat and Helland (2002), found for example, that instructional radio, supplemented with printed materials, was just as effective as traditional instruction with a teacher in a class room. In some instances, distance teaching using radio really outperformed traditional instructional practices. For

example, Moore and Tait (2002) reported that the Nicaragua Radio Mathematics Project classes using radio lessons had lower repetition rates and greater achievement than traditional classes. Students taking the Telesecundaria course in Mexico in mathematics, Spanish and Chemistry are also on record to have scored 1.5 to 2 times higher than those in a control group doing the same subject by traditional methods (Rogers, 1995; Ray & Day, 1998).

**Problems Associated with Distance Education as a Strategy for Teacher Training Programme**

Adentwi (2002) asserted that notwithstanding the many benefits associated with distance education as a strategy for teacher training in Ghana and other developing countries; it has quite a number of problems associated with it. There are a myriad of problems that control the individual students on a distance education programme. Other problems are due to the organizational structure of the distance education institution or to improper application of the principles of effective distance education. Yet, other problems may be attributed to the socio-economic context within which distance education institutions operate.

Dawson-Brew et al. (2009) reiterated that distance learners study under conditions that are somewhat different from those of their counterparts on residential programmes. They, thus, face a number of problems which peculiarly affect them. They explained that distance education learners experience feelings of isolation because they are more or less permanently separated from their course tutors and other students pursuing the same programmes. This means that they do not get the chance to discuss issues affecting them with their course tutors and colleagues on face-to-face basis,

and to clarify aspects of the course which they do not clearly understand. In the case of teacher education, for instance, where learners need to acquire professional training through regular contact with and imitation of their instructors, this problem becomes even more evident and serious (Keegan, 1993). Keegan argued that as a matter of fact, distance learners easily get frustrated where they do not find answers to questions that bother them. Sometimes lack of the necessary information de-motivate them so much that some of them easily dropout of the course, especially where they do not have anybody to encourage them.

In addition to the foregoing, Banda (2000) expressed the views that distance learners in many developing countries lack the requisite environment to carry out studies. He explained that some live in overcrowded compound houses where there is virtually no quiet place for them to concentrate on their course work. Also, there are considerable social commitments like funerals and church activities and family pressures which engage their attention and subtract from the time available for self instructional readings. Furthermore, distance learners sometimes lack appropriate self-study skills because they are more used to studying by the traditional face-to-face residential education system. Distant learners also lack time management skills.

Again, Talbot (2003) contended that distance learners living in remote rural areas may not have easy access to library facilities, workshops, laboratories, tools and equipment for practical works. All the foregoing problems affect distant learners individually and may make study at a distance ineffective if the distance education institution does not take the necessary steps to ensure that the right type of students support services are provided.

The problems that result from weaknesses in the organizational structure of distance education institutions and ineffective application of the principles of distance education are also quite enormous. For example, in dual-mode institutions where distance education is an added function to conventional face-to-face residential education, there is always the problem of how to effectively utilise the scarce academic staff in distance education programmes. In certain cases, what this academic staffs does is not meant for distant learners but for their conventional students.

Incidence of this has occurred several times in the setting of questions for distant learners of Centre for Continuing Education, University of Cape Coast (Dawson-Brew et al., 2009). The usual staff through short orientation courses after which they are engaged as course writers / instructors and counsellors on the distance education programmes. This scenario quickly brings into sharp focus the problems of divided loyalty.

Already, over burdened staff teaching conventional residential courses try to do their best on the two programmes which usually run concurrently. They end up, either not doing an adequate work or any of the programmes, or as it sometimes happens, they satisfy the requirements of the residential programmes at the expense of the distance education programme which is regarded as part-time business.

Another organisational problem that confronts distance education is inadequate provision of the required student-support services (Elikplim, 2005). To cushion some of the problems affecting individual learners, distance education institutions try to put student –support services in place. Distance students are provided with counselling and tuition on how to select courses,

how to cope with their domestic responsibilities, official responsibilities as classroom teachers and self-study demands. Where such services are not effectively provided, distant students get disenchanted and discouraged, leading to a high drop-out rate.

According to Banda (2000) there is also the problem of lack of recognition among the populace for certificates acquired through distance education. Banda explained that this problem usually arises in a dual-mode institution where distant learners are taught by a separate crop of staff other than those teaching on the residential programme. In situation like this, there is usually the feeling, even among colleague academic staff that the instructors on the residential programmes are superior to those who teach on the distance learning programmes. This tendency, Banda said, often creates the unnecessary suspicion that students on the distance education programme may not be as good as those on the conventional residential programme.

Yet, another organisational problem is how to ensure effective supervision of the work of distant learners and to avoid the possibility of impersonation (Perraton, 1993). Perraton argued that, usually, distance education thrives best in a situation where a sizeable number of students enrol on it so that the total cost of providing distance education services can be spread on a large number of students. Elikplim (2005) stated that increasing enrolment on distance education programmes to a large number of students widely spread in various geographical locations in a country where accessibility is difficult also increases the risk of impersonation on the part of the students.

The first and foremost socio-economic problem affecting teacher training by distance education identified by Dawson-Brew et al. (2009) is how to provide for the huge capital outlay required to set up distance education programme. Although distance education does not make such demands on academic user facilities like classroom, dormitories or halls of residence and other related facilities, it also makes its own demand for plant facilities in the form of reprographic equipment for producing distance education manuals, electronic hardware for producing radio and television programmes, computers, a fleet of vehicles for distributing distance learning materials.

The situation at the Centre for Continuing Education where regular face-to-face meeting is required, classrooms for holding such meetings are required. All these, according to Dawson-Brew et al. (2009), call for a huge initial capital investment to put the necessary installations in place and to get started. For many developing countries including Ghana, the initial cost for setting up distance education facilities can be quite prohibitive, though experience has shown that when distance education catches on with the populace, the cost can be easily covered with fees collected from distance education students.

Distance education involves cost since it is a human transaction and all human transactions involve cost. The cost involved includes payment of fees, transportation among others. In the case of those who travel from far places to attend weekly or fortnightly face-to-face meetings, cost in respect of accommodation is also incurred. According to Perraton (1993) and Dawson-Brew et al. (2009), student teachers are not sponsored for their distance

education so students have to bear a significant proportion of the costs involved.

Female teachers pursuing distance education have to study and at the same time be raising children and caring for the family. This is a major problem to the distance learners especially women. To be able to combine both activities successfully, learners need a lot of commitment. According to a survey conducted in Malawi, female teacher learners had family problems that negatively affect their studies (Banda, 2000). For instance, some of the learners dropped out on the instruction from their spouses to choose between marriage and the programme.

Banda (2000) continued that most women in Malawi were over burdened with domestic household chores, insufficient sleep attending to their babies and husbands as well as cooking. The tension and stress increased especially during examinations. The problems of women pursuing distance education in Malawi is not quite different from those reported in Ghana especially those pursuing Centre for Continuing Education distance Education programme of the University of Cape Coast.

Dawson-Brew et al. (2009) also reported that lack of classroom accommodation at some study centres are some of the challenges of distance education. They contended that most of the institutions especially the Centre for Continuing Education, offering distance educations do not have classroom accommodation facilities and so depends on the educational institutions who also have large number of students. In some instances, distance learners are stranded when the facilities are being used by students of the host institutions.

Mention should also be made that the programme for distance education of Centre for Continuing Education are not on line, student registration is therefore difficult. Students who do not report at their study centres on scheduled date for registration are confronted with many problems. Even in some instances the affected students have to travel many times to Cape Coast either to register or resolve pertinent problems surrounding their course and issues related to their examination results. Electronic media offering tuition to students and also to enhance adequate interaction between tutor-student and student –student are absent and where they exist the interaction is minimal.

In the Ghanaian experience, the target group for distance education are the teachers in the schools who qualify for entry into the Universities for further education but are denied admission because of lack of space. The incomes of the target population are usually very low. Since the cost of distance education is usually borne by the student-teachers themselves, there is the fear that the programmes will not receive the huge patronage it requires to be sustainable unless there is a drastic increase in the pay of the expected course participants. There is also a stiff competition from private institutions that have also started distance education programmes to train pupil teachers. The flexibility of their programmes in terms of payment of fees, conducting examinations and the organization of the entire courses may cause a drift of students to such institutions.

**Suggested Solutions to the Problems of Distance Education as a Strategy for Teacher Training**

The anticipated benefits of distance education can only be realized if effective solutions are found to the problems that confront it. Koomson (2005)

has suggested a number of useful solutions to the problems of distance education as a strategy for teacher training with particular reference to Ghana. These solutions are the following:

In the first place, Koomson (2005) suggested that to resolve the problem of divided loyalty of academic staff as a result of the pressure of workload, university lecturers engaged as course writers/instructors in distance education programmes should be adequately remunerated. This is to motivate them to take up the excess workload. He also suggested that to meet the initial capital requirements, governments of developing countries should begin by providing facilities for distance education by print media, sophisticated gadgetry could then be added later as patronage of distance education programmes increases.

Effective supervision of the work of distance learners could be assured by using carefully selected and trained local supervisors so that the academic staff of the universities could be relieved to attend to their other responsibilities. Koomson (2005) also said an effective student-support system should be put in place to provide counselling, motivation and other kinds of help to students to minimize the drop-out rate and motivate students to continue with the programmes in the face of adverse conditions.

Dawson-Brew et al. (2009) reiterated that there should be a nationally sponsored financial package to help teachers pursuing further qualifications by distance to meet the financial requirements of distance education. The SSNIT loan scheme operated in Ghana and Scholarship package should be extended to distant education students. The government should pay part of their fees for them.

**Conceptual Framework for Teacher Professional Development**

The present study adapted self efficacy to provide a framework that could be used to understand teachers' professional development through the impact of distance education and factors influencing teachers' professional development. In 1963, Bandura and Walters (as cited in Bandura, 1997) wrote a book entitled "Social Learning and Personality Development", which broadens the frontiers of social learning theory with the principles of observational learning and vicarious reinforcement. Later, in 1997, Bandura published "Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioural change" where he identified self beliefs which were missing in his social cognitive theory propounded earlier (Pajares, 2002).

With the publication of Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory, Bandura (1986) advanced a view of human functioning that accords a central role to cognitive, vicarious, self-regulatory, and self-reflective processes in human adaptation and change. People are viewed as self-organizing, proactive, self-reflecting and self-regulating rather than as reactive organisms shaped and shepherded by environmental forces or driven by concealed inner impulses. From this theoretical perspective, human functioning is viewed as the product of a dynamic interplay of personal, behavioural, and environmental influences. For example, how people interpret the results of their own behaviour informs and alters their environments and the personal factors they possess which in turn, inform and alter subsequent behaviours.

This is the foundation of Bandura's (1986) conception of reciprocal determinism, the view that (a) personal factors in the form of cognition, affect,

and biological events, (b) behaviour, and (c) environmental influences create interactions that result in a triadic reciprocality (Figure 1). Bandura altered the label of his theory from social learning to social "cognitive" both to distance it from prevalent social learning theories of the day and to emphasize that cognition plays a critical role in people capability to construct reality, self-regulated, encode information, and perform behaviours.



**Figure 1:** Conception of Reciprocal Determinism

Source: Bandura (1986)

The reciprocal nature of the determinants of human functioning in social cognitive theory makes it possible for therapeutic and counselling efforts to be directed at personal, environmental, or behaviour factors. Strategies for increasing well-being can be aimed at improving emotional, cognitive or motivational processes, increasing behavioural competences, or altering the social conditions under which people live and work (Schunk & Pajares, 2002). In school, for example, teachers have the challenge of improving the academic learning and confidence of the students in their charge.

Pajares (2002) said using social cognitive theory as a framework, teachers through distance education can acquire skills and knowledge which

they can use to work to improve their students' emotional states and to correct their faulty self-beliefs and habits of thinking (personal factors), improving their academic skills and self-regulatory practices (behaviour), and alter the school and classroom structures that may work to undermine student success (environmental factors) (Koomson, 1998).

To Bandura (2005) and Schunk and Pajares (2002) social cognitive theory is rooted in a view of human agency in which individuals are agents proactively engaged in their own development and can make things happen by their actions, as teachers do in their professional development. Key to this sense of agency according to Pajares (1997) is the fact that among other personal factors, individuals possess self-beliefs that enable them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings and actions that "what people think, believe and feel affects how they behave. Bandura (1986) provided a view of human behaviour in which the beliefs that people have about themselves are critical elements in the exercise of control and personal agency.

Thus, individuals are viewed both as products and as producers of their own environments and of their social system. People worked together on shared beliefs about their capabilities and common aspirations to better their lives. Based on this aspect of social cognitive theory, teacher professional development can be described as a process embracing all activities that enhance professional career growth (Rogan, Grayson & Towarels, 2003) or as formal and informal experiences throughout the teachers' career to better him or herself. This, the teachers are doing through distance education. This conceptual extension makes the theory applicable to human adaptation and

change in collectivistically-oriented societies as well as individualistically-oriented ones.

Zimmerman and Schunk (2007) contended that rooted in Bandura's social cognitive perspective is the understanding that individuals are imbued with certain capabilities that define what it is to be human. Primary among these are the capabilities to symbolize, plan alternative strategies (forethought), learn through vicarious experience, self-regulate, and self-reflect. These, Bandura (1995) said, are influential in determining their own destroy.

### Self-Efficacy Beliefs

Of all the thoughts that affect human functioning, and standing at the very core of social cognitive theory, are self-efficacy beliefs, " people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Schunk & Pajares, 2002) Self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for human motivation, well-being and personal accomplishment. In the same way distance education lays the foundation for teachers' professional development. This is because, unless people (teachers) believe that their actions can produce the outcomes they desire, they have little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of difficulties.

Much empirical evidence now supports Bandura's (1995) contention that self efficacy beliefs touch virtually every aspect of people's lives, whether they think productively, self pessimistically or optimistically, how well they motivate themselves and persevere in the face of adversities; the vulnerability

to stress and depression, and the life choices they make. Self efficacy is also critical determinants of self-regulation (Pajares, 2002).

Human functioning is influenced by many factors. The success or failure that people experience as they engage the myriad tasks that comprise their life naturally influence the many decisions they must make. Also, the knowledge and skills they possess will certainly play critical roles in what they choose to do and not do. Self-efficacy is also important in the teaching profession. The effectiveness of the teacher depends on his or her competence (academically and pedagogically) and efficiency, (ability, work load, and commitment), teaching and learning resources, methods, support from education authorities and supervisors (Rogan, 2004; Mosha, 2004). Teacher professional development provide opportunities for teachers to explore new roles, develop new instructional techniques, refine their practice and broaden themselves both as educators and as individuals.

Individuals interpret the results of their attainments, however, just as they make judgments about the quality of the knowledge and skills they posses (Pajares, 1996; Pajares & Schunk, 2001). Bandura's (1997) key contentions as regards the role of self efficacy beliefs in human functioning is that "people's level of motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively true" (p. 2). For this reason, how people behave can often be better predicted by the beliefs they hold about their capabilities than by what they are actually capable of accomplishing, for these self-efficacy perceptions help skills they have.

This helps explain why people's behaviours are sometimes disjoined from their actual capabilities and why their behaviour may differ widely even

when they have similar knowledge and skills. This theory explains why in the professional development of teachers, they should be equipped with the knowledge of individual differences so that they can deal with all categories of pupils in their classes to help them attain their educational goals.

Belief and reality are seldom perfectly matched, and individuals are typically guided by their belief when they engage the world. As a consequence, people's accomplishments are generally better predicted by their self efficacy beliefs than by their previous attainments, knowledge, or skills (Pajares, 2000). Teachers also believe that their professional development through distance education can equip them to improve their teaching performance than what they have learnt previously. Thus, teachers' self-efficacy can be enhanced through professional development by distance education. This is what has led many teachers to pursue distance education to develop their professional competences.

Of course, no amount of confidence or self-appreciation can produce success when requisite skills and knowledge are absent (Pajares, 2000; Pajares, 2002). The contention that self-efficacy beliefs are a critical ingredient in human functioning is consistent with the view of many theorists and philosophers such as Aristotle, Dewey, Kant, Maslow, Nisbett, Ross & Rokeach who have argued that the potent affective, evaluative and episodic nature of beliefs make them a filter through which new phenomena are interpreted (Schunk & Pajares, 2002).

According to Zimmerman and Schunk (2007) and Pajares (2002), because individuals operate collectively as well as individually, self-efficacy is both a personal and a social construct. Collective systems develop a sense of

collective efficacy, a groups' shared belief in its capability to attain goals and accomplished desired tasks. For example, schools develop collective beliefs about the capability of their students to learn, of their teachers to teach and other wise enhance the lives of their students, and of their administrators and policy makers to create environments conducive to these tasks. Educational programmes such as the University of Cape Coast distance education programme that demands strong sense of collective efficacy exercises, it empowers, vitalizes and influences its constituents. These effects are palpable and evident.

In general, researchers have established that self efficacy beliefs and behaviour changes and outcomes are highly correlated and that self efficacy is an excellent predictor of behaviour so is professional development a good predictor of teachers' knowledge and skills and therefore the attainments of their pupils' performance. The depth of this support prompted Pajares and Schunk (2001) to conclude that particularly in psychology and education self-efficacy has proven to be a more consistent predictor of behavioural outcomes than have any other motivational constructs. Clearly, it is not simply a matter of how capable one is, but of how capable one believes oneself to be.

### Factors Affecting Teachers' Professional Development

Although self-efficacy beliefs exercise a powerful influence on human action, a number of factors can affect the strength of the relationship in the same way discussion of factors that affect teachers' professional development will lead to desired outcome that will facilitate pupils' achievement in schools. Villegas-Reimers (2003) identified conceptual, contextual and methodological factors that contribute to a successful professional development programme.

Conceptual factors relate to how change, teaching, and teacher development are perceived, while contextual factors refer to the role of the school leadership, organisational culture, external agencies and the extent to which site-based initiatives are supported. Methodological factors relate to processes or procedures that have been designed to support teacher professional development. It can be seen that from the perspective of an interactive system model, teacher professional development is a function of the interaction between and among five key players or stakeholders. These are the ministry responsible for teacher education, universities, schools, the community and the teachers themselves.

In the context of Ghanaians, the Ministry of Education is responsible for providing policy and financial support for teacher professional development (Ministry of Education, 2005). Universities and Colleges of Education are responsible for providing training, conducting policy oriented research and providing relevant literature and materials to support teachers in schools. School management on its part is supposed to provide support to the teacher on a daily basis through advice, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning activities. The community through the school committee is responsible for supporting the teacher's professional development by providing the necessary resources in the budget. The teacher is responsible for being proactive in seeking for opportunities for his or her own professional development.

Teachers' motivation is the most important of all factors. A teacher's intrinsic drive towards self improvement cannot be matched with any amount of pressure from the educational managers. For real teacher professional

development, the teacher herself/himself has to perceive it positively. The teacher has to see and accept the need to grow professionally. A teacher who perceives professional development positively is eager to attain new knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and dispositions, self efficacy. Within such dispositions, there is pride, self-esteem, team spirit, commitment, drive, adventure, creativity, and vision. All these attributes have to be owned by the teacher (Mosha, 2006).

Teacher's perception depends on self-efficacy and self-evaluation, the influences and supports of school leadership, and high quality education. If school managers are empowered, they will be able to play their social and technical roles more efficiently (Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Mosha, 2006). School management capacity is the ability of the leadership to perform its duties including supporting teacher professional development at the school. This ability depends on the way it has been empowered by education administrators and supervisors; human and physical resources available; managerial knowledge, skills of the head teacher and the school culture.

The school head is the key player or backbone of a school and the main executive of school management. The overall effectiveness of the school is directly influenced by the headteacher. Her/his roles include facilitating, broker, providing resources, encourage, command, question, coach, and cheer leading (Dillon-Peterson, 1986). The teacher is like the spring to the watch and an engine to the ship. Again the teacher is the heart of school and school management. The head teacher should be well knowledgeable and skilled on management issues. S/he has to attend various seminars, workshops, meetings and courses on management administration. Rowland and Adams (1999)

suggested that the head teacher should be committed to develop teachers and therefore be able to design professional development activities. She/he has to be a model. Her/his work of teaching must be exemplary and has to make sure that she/he inspects teachers in order to know their teaching abilities and provide clinical supervisions.

Education managers are very important in capacitating the school management. They have to interpret and monitor the implementation of educational policies at their levels of administration (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). They have to plan and develop teachers and to guide, direct and advice the school management on teacher professional development. Planning has to be based on teachers' needs, examination evaluations, inspectorate and monitoring reports. The teacher cannot teach productively, even if s/he is well qualified and developed, in the absence or inadequacy of teaching and learning facilities. There should be adequate classrooms equipped with facilities like furniture, books and visual aids. These help the teacher to perform her/his duties competently. Many classes are overcrowded. For the teacher to realise the best of her/his potential, there should be enough teaching and learning materials and facilities at her/his disposal. Teachers' participation is sustained easily without the help of teaching and learning resources.

A school management with motivating culture encourages teachers to engage in professional development programmes at the school or elsewhere like the distance education. A motivated teacher learns from others and he or she is more likely to attend various professional development activities. Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic, which drives the teacher toward self improvement. Collegiality within the school is part of the school culture. If

teachers cooperate, there is room for them to learn from each other (Galabawa & Agu, 2001). The role of school management is to encourage this culture to prevail in the school and between the schools.

This is one of the indicators of the presence of a responsible school management in the school. Planning, that is the setting of goals and objectives with activities to be done at the specified time is one of the main roles of the school management. To involve all teachers in the school during the planning process should be part of the school culture. Effective participation leads to a feeling of ownership and easy implementation (Galabawa, 2001).

## Summary of Literature Review

It can be inferred from the reviewed literature that distance education has proven to be reliable in providing educational needs of a society and meeting the expectations of learners as a way of providing access to qualified applicants like teachers and those who for one reason or the other cannot study full time on campus in both developed and developing countries. From the literature, it can be pointed out that the University of Cape Coast's distance learning programme has produced quite a good number of professional teachers for the Ghana Education Service. The literature reviewed so far is of interest to the present study as it indicates the ever preparedness of distance education institutions to support workers especially teachers in upgrading themselves professionally. However, completely missing and creating a big gap in the literature is the issue of impact assessment of distance education in the Ashanti Region of Ghana and for that matter the Kumasi Metropolis.

Although, the literature indicated high patronage of University of Cape Coast's distance learning programme by teachers from all the ten

administrative regions in Ghana, there is an on-going argument among some stakeholders in education in Ghana that distance education students are not as good as students produced by conventional means and for that reason some people tend to doubt the credibility of distance education certificates (Banda, 2000). The present study sought to fill the gap in the literature and to determine whether or not these negative perceptions about distance education students are mere fallacies or otherwise.

# CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

This chapter specifies the general strategy adopted to collect data for the study. It specifies the research design, population, sample and sampling technique and instruments to use. Data collection procedures as well as data analysis are also described

### Research Design

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods with descriptive survey as its design. A two-pronged descriptive survey design was used because information was collected from the sampled population on two occasions, answering questionnaire and observation during practical teaching lessons in the classroom. The descriptive survey design was considered appropriate because it would enable information collected from the sampled population to be used in describing the opinion of the target population.

The descriptive survey gathers data at a particular point in time with the intention of using it to describe the nature of the existing conditions. According to Gay (1992), descriptive survey involves collection of data to answer research questions formulated to give direction to the problem under study. The use of the descriptive survey strategy enabled collection of a large number of data from a large population which is scattered in the study area at

the same time. In addition, the descriptive survey is perceived to be authoritative and comparatively easy to explain and understand.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) stated that obtaining answer from large group of people to a set of carefully designed and administered questionnaire lies in the heart of survey research. Babbie (1990) also recommended the design for generalizing from a sample of a population so that inferences could be made about the characteristics and attributes of the population.

Furthermore, the descriptive survey design allows for in-depth follow-up questions so that unclear items can be explained (Fraenkel & Wallen 2000; Sarantakos, 1998). According to Osuala (1991), descriptive surveys are versatile and practical especially; to the administrator. Cohen and Mansion (as cited in Sarantakos, 1998) stated that descriptive surveys are usually collected through the use of self completion or postal questionnaire. Interviews, standardised test attainment or performance, attitude scales and observations.

Like all forms of research designs, the descriptive survey design is not without weaknesses. According to Seifert and Hoffinugs (1991), the questionnaire requires respondents who can articulate their thought in writing. This implies that illiterates are often left out. Again, the wording of questions and statements as well as the alternative responses provided may be unclear, ambiguous and inadequate. Another weakness associated with the descriptive survey has to do with the possibility of respondents supplying false answers especially where they feel their private lives are being delved into.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the descriptive survey design was considered the most appropriate for this study as its strengths far, far outweigh

its few weaknesses. The choice of the design was also influenced by the fact that the target population was a literate one.

## Population

The target population for this study consisted of all trained basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis who had pursued the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme.

## Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for the study consisted of 332 basic school teachers who had pursued the University of Cape Coast Distance learning programme and were teaching in the Kumasi Metropolis. The selection of the sample was based on the recommendations by Ary, Jacob and Razaviech (2002) who recommended in descriptive research, a sample size of 10 - 20% is enough to produce reliable results. The respondents were sampled using the stratified random sampling technique. To ensure a complete coverage and to avoid biased sampling of respondents in the metropolis, the researcher obtained names and contact details of all basic school teachers in the metropolis who had successfully completed the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme from the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Cape Coast.

The contact details of the teachers were used to group respondents into the various sub-metros within the study area to form the strata. Separate sampling frames were then constructed for the various sub-metros in the metropolis. After constructing sampling frames for the target population of the sub-metros, each sub-metro at a time was taken and the names of all teachers in a particular sub-metro who constituted the target population for that sub-

metro were written on slips of paper and put in polythene bags, making sure the slips of paper were well mixed. Twenty percent of the target population for each sub-metro was then computed.

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Sampled from the Ten Sub-Metros**

| Sub-Metro | Target Population | Number Sampled |
|---|---|---|
| Bantama | 242 | 48 |
| Kwadaso | 200 | 40 |
| Asawase | 125 | 25 |
| Oforikrom | 115 | 23 |
| Suame | 120 | 24 |
| Manhyia | 153 | 30 |
| Old Tafo | 201 | 40 |
| Asokwa | 216 | 43 |
| Nyiaeso | 145 | 29 |
| Subin | 150 | 30 |
| **Total** | **1667** | **332** |

Source: Field Data, 2012.

Having done that, a slip of paper at a time was picked from the polythene bags without looking into the containers. The name on a drawn out slip was recorded and thrown back into the polythene bag before another slip was picked. Having finished selecting 20% of the target population for each

sub-metro, the sub-metro samples were merged into one to form the final sample for the study. Table 1 represents the distribution of sampled participants by sub-metro.

## Research Instruments

The instruments used to elicit relevant data for the study were a questionnaire and an observation schedule. The combination of observation and questionnaire made dichotomous and validation of data possible as different sources were consulted in order to eliminate inherent weaknesses of each of the techniques to improve the study.

### Questionnaire as a technique of data collection

The main instrument used to elicit relevant data for the study was a questionnaire because of its effectiveness in securing factual information about practices and existing conditions, and for enquiring into the opinions and attitudes of the subjects (Kerlinger, 1993). In this study, to make it attractive and interesting, the choice of close-ended format was adopted because they were easier to be completed since they did not need any extensive writing. The items were also easier to be administered, coded and analysed.

However, open-ended items were included in Section B which demanded simple answers. The open-ended items gave the respondents free will to express themselves, which added richness to the data collected. These two forms of structuring questionnaire were used to make up for any in-built weaknesses of each form.

The contents of the questionnaire were developed along the line of the research questions and divided into five sections. Section 'A' of the

questionnaire contained three items and described respondents' demographic characteristics which include gender, age and number of years of teaching experience.

Section B was about the value added onto the professional teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis who have pursued the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme. It contained seven items which demanded respondents to provide short answers to questions related to their professional quality before and after their training and learning from University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme. Section C contained nine items on enhancement of professional development of teachers.

The items in section C and D were constructed along four-point Likert-type scale (summated) of strongly agree (1) disagree (2) agree (3) and strongly agree (4). A summated rating scale which is called Likert-type scale is a set of attitude items, all of which are considered approximately equal, "attitude value" and to each of which subjects respond with degree of agreed and disagreed (Kerlinger, 1993). The instrument was validated by competent supervisors and lecturers in the departments of Arts and Social Science Education and Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, University of Cape Coast.

**Observation as a technique of data collection**

In addition to the main research instrument, observation was employed to elicit otherwise hidden information from the participants of the study. To this end, an observation guide designed and used by the teaching practice unit of the University of Cape Coast technically known as "Teaching Practice

Assessment Form 'A' was used by the researcher for the observation exercise. The observation schedule among other things, focused on:

1. Teachers' advance lesson preparation characterized by procurement of TLMs and detailed lesson notes.

2. Teacher's classroom organizational skills

3. Effective use of TLMs

4. Statement of clear and achievable objectives

5. Communicative skills

6. Teachers' knowledge of the subject matter

7. Teacher's use of questions

8. Teacher's ability to link the various segments of the issues

Despite some few weaknesses associated with observation as a tool for data collection such as its time consuming nature, its inability to study opinions directly and its inability to provide information about past or future, the researcher combined it with the questionnaire in the data collection exercise. The  choice for the observation technique as an additional research instrument as opposed to other data collection instruments was influenced by the fact that it is comparatively the most appropriate data collection technique deemed fit for the impact assessment of the practical teaching by the participants in the classroom. The following also justifies the inclusion of observation in the data collection exercise:

i. It provides information when other methods are not effective.

ii. It can offer data when respondents are unwilling to offer information.

iii. It approached reality in its structure and study elements as they evolve.

iv. Observation offers first hand information without relying on the reports of others.

v. It is relatively inexpensive.

(Amedahe & Asamoah, Gyimah, 2004)

## Pilot-Testing of Instrument

To ascertain the reliability and suitability of the instruments, they were pilot-tested in four basic schools in the Atwima Kwanwoma District with nine basic school teachers who pursued their distance education programme from the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Cape Coast. The pilot-testing was also aimed at testing the effectiveness and discriminative nature of the items used in the instruments. Also, the pilot-testing of the instruments was aimed at finding out whether respondents needed further explanation on some of the items and finally to ascertain whether all the research questions were covered by the items.

In pilot-testing the instrument, the nine respondents who were purposively sampled for the exercise were given additional A – 4 sheets for respondents to pass comments on the clarity, weaknesses, inadequacies, ambiguities and problems in all aspects of the instrument. Such comments facilitated the refinement of the instrument in order to make it more effective for the data collection exercise. To determine the reliability coefficient of the items on the questionnaire, SPSS software was used to compute the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient. The value of the reliability co-efficient was .80

## Data Collection Procedure

Before embarking on the data collection exercise, an introductory letter was obtained from the head of the Department of Arts and Social Science

Education, University of Cape Coast and used to seek permission from the Kumasi Metropolitan Education Directorate and the departments of Institute of Education and Centre for Continuing Education, University of Cape Coast in order to gain access to sources of data for the study. Data collected from the Institute of Education, UCC was made up of participants' teaching practice raw scores at the training college level which served as a proxy for their initial competence level. Data collected from the department of Centre for Continuing Education of the University of Cape Coast include:

1. Records of all past students of Centre for Continuing Education of the University of Cape Coast who pursued their diploma and Post – diploma in Basic Education Programmes at the Kumasi study Centre.

2. Records of their years of completion of the programme and the courses they pursued (diploma or post-diploma) were also made available to the researcher.

In addition to the above information, records of contact addresses of all past students and their places of residence and schools in which they taught (information given by students to the teaching practice unit of CCE in order to get captured by the teaching practice supervision team) were obtained from CCE. This information was used to sort out basic school teachers who pursued their courses at the Kumasi Study Centre but did not teach in the Kumasi metropolis. Also, a tried and tested observation guide technically called "Teaching Practice Assessment Form 'A' designed by the teaching practice unit of the University of Cape Coast which was used in Assessing the teachers during their training was also given to the researcher to be used in observing the practical teaching of the teachers.

As usual, using the questionnaire to collect data from the 315 participants of the study was preceded by the submission of an introductory letter from the Department of Arts and Social Science Education, University of Cape Coast to the Kumasi Metropolitan Director of Education who in turn issued the researcher another introductory letter in order to enable the researcher collect data from the participants in their schools. After the introductory letter was obtained, friends, relatives, former colleague members (teachers), circuit supervisors and respondents themselves provided assistance in locating schools where the respondents could be contacted.

On arrival in each of the schools, I first of all introduced myself and this was followed by brief explanation about the purpose of the visit which in this case was to seek permission and consent from heads and teachers for data collection. The researcher used two weeks in locating and seeking the involvement of heads and their teachers. During the rapport establishment weeks, participants were informed at hand as to when the questionnaire was to be administered. This was done in order to curb the incidence of absenteeism on the part of the subjects on the day when the questionnaire was administered.

During the actual administration of the instrument, in each school the respondents were called to a meeting and the purpose of the study was explained to them. The respondents assured the researcher their unconditional cooperation. The participants were also assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

Immediately after the briefing, a copy of the questionnaire was given to each respondent. In order to provide appropriate responses and to complete

the filling of questionnaire at their own convenience, the   respondents were not required to fill the questionnaire on the spot. They were given a few days to return the completed questionnaire. Respondents were asked to try as much as they could to return all filled questionnaire in order to ensure high return rate. The collection of the questionnaire was done with the assistance of volunteer teachers and head teachers.

To obtain information about the quality of teaching being done by the basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis who had pursued the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme, the teachers were observed in their classrooms during teaching sessions and awarded marks for teachers' competences in the following areas of lesson delivery using the University of Cape Coast Teaching Practice Assessment Form 'A' as an observation guide.

1.  Lesson Plan

2.  Lesson Introduction

3.  Mastery of Subject Matter

4.  Subject delivery

5.   Teaching / Learning Resources

6.  Classroom Management and Organizations

7.  Student Participation

8.  Communication

9.  Teacher's appearance

Each of the components above has its own sub-components and weights (marks). The mark allotted to each sub-component is 5. In all, the observation guide has 20 sub-components with 5 marks each and the observer

is supposed to indicate by means of a circle the degree to which the teacher displays teaching competences in the areas specified above.

## Data Analysis

Data cleaning and assessment was carried out to find if the collected data were of good quality. The completed copies of the questionnaire were serially numbered and coded for easy identification before scoring. This eased statistical interpretation and analysis.

Items on the Likert scale were scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 for issues with the responses "strongly agree" "Disagree" "Agree" and "Strongly disagree". Since the study was descriptive, descriptive statistical analysis was used. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used in analyzing the data. The data collected was transformed into tables and extracted for the presentation and discussion in the subsequent chapter of this study.

Cross- tabulation was first used to analyse the background information of the research question three while multiple regression analysis was used to analyse Research Question 4. Means and standard deviations were used to analyse research questions 1, 2 and 5. Frequencies and percentages were also used.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Introduction

This chapter presents the findings emanating from the data collected, using questionnaire and observation. The discussion includes the interpretation of the findings with reference to the previous findings and theory. Through logical deduction, each finding is evaluated and its implications examined with respect to the current theoretical position on the impact of distance learning programme on the professional development of basic school teachers as well as educational practice.

The chapter is organised into two parts. The first part deals with the demographic data of the participants and covers areas such as participants' gender, age and length of service. The second part is devoted to responses given by the participants in accordance with the research objectives. At the end of data collection, 315 basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis provided data for the study.

### Demographic Information of the Respondents

This part deals mainly with cross tabulation of the respondents' age and length of service by their gender as shown in Tables 2 and 3.

**Table 2: Distribution of Teachers by Age and Gender**

| Age Group | Gender of Teachers | | | | Total | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| 25 – 30 years | 27 | 15.5 | 24 | 17.0 | 51 | 16.2 |
| 31 – 35 years | 61 | 35.1 | 36 | 25.6 | 97 | 30.8 |
| 36 – 40 years | 43 | 24.7 | 46 | 32.6 | 89 | 28.2 |
| Above 40 years | 43 | 24.7 | 35 | 24.8 | 78 | 24.8 |
| **Total** | **174** | **100** | **141** | **100** | **315** | **100** |
| | **55.2%** | | **48.8%** | | | |

Source: Field Data, 2012.

Table 2 indicates that 55.2% of the teachers were males whilst 44.8% were females. Out of these, only 24.8% of the teachers were more than 40 years representing 24.7% of male teachers and 24.8% of female teachers.

**Table 3: Distribution of Teachers by Length of Service and Gender**

| Length of Service | Gender of Teachers | | | | Total | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Male | | Female | | | |
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Less than 6 years | 16 | 9.1 | 9 | 6.4 | 25 | 7.9 |
| 6 – 10 years | 60 | 34.5 | 37 | 26.2 | 97 | 30.8 |
| 11 – 15 years | 53 | 30.5 | 46 | 32.6 | 99 | 31.4 |
| 16 – 20 years | 32 | 18.4 | 29 | 20.6 | 61 | 19.4 |
| Above 20 years | 13 | 7.5 | 20 | 14.2 | 33 | 10.5 |
| **Total** | **174** | **100** | **141** | **100** | **315** | **100** |

Source: Field Data, 2012.

Table 3 depicts that 7.9% of teachers taught for less than 6 years, 30.8% for 6 to 10 years, 31.4% for 11 to 15 years, 19.4% for 16 to 20 years and 10.5% taught for more than 20 years. Here, a simple majority of teachers (92.1%) had served for 6 years and more. This is a good development since it means that many respondents had stayed in and taught in their various schools for some time.

## Main Findings of the Study

The second part presents the answers to the research questions. Here, means and standard deviations, cross tabulation and multiple regression analysis were used to tasckle the research questions.

**Research Question 1:** What is the perception of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis about Distance Education?

The rationale for this question was to know the perceptions of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis about the University of Cape Coast (UCC) distance learning programme. In order to answer this question, a four - point Likert-type scale was used to measure the perceptions of basic school teachers about UCC distance learning programme. The perceptions of these teachers on UCC distance learning programme were described in terms of means and standard deviations. The following ranges of the means were used as a guideline to explain the individual mean scores.

4 – 3.45 = Strongly Agree            2.44 – 1.45 = Disagree

3.44 – 2.45 = Agree            1.44 – 1.00 = Strongly Disagree

The results showing the respondents' perceptions are provided in Table 4.

**Table 4: Perception of Basic School Teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis about Distance Education**

| Statements | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| Distance education has increased access to university education | 3.89 | .37 |
| Candidates who enrol on distance education programmes are as academically good as candidates who enrol on the conventional programmes | 3.52 | .55 |
| Distance education programme has a brighter future in Ghana | 3.79 | .41 |
| Distance education enables adults to learn in the comfort of their homes | 3.49 | .52 |
| I am proud to be a product of the UCC distance learning programme | 3.74 | .46 |
| Distance education has helped me to upgrade myself professionally | 3.70 | .46 |
| Distance education helps in reducing pressure on facilities in our universities | 3.66 | .49 |
| sDistance education certificates are inferior to conventional educational education certificates | 1.43 | .73 |
| Distance education can help solve the problems associated with study leave with pay | 3.53 | .81 |
| Distance education course materials (modules) serve as reference materials for lesson notes preparation | 3.30 | .62 |
| I felt a sense of accomplishment after completing UCC distance education programme | 3.56 | .59 |
| Distance education has the potential of helping workers to enhance their salary levels | 3.40 | .69 |
| Distance education can serve as a guarantee for job security | 3.64 | .53 |

Where SD = standard deviation (N = 315)
Source: Field Data, 2012.

The perceptions of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis about UCC distance learning programme were described by the calculation of the arithmetic means for each statement. Table 4 indicates that basic school teachers within Kumasi Metropolis agreed (strongly agree or agree) with all the statements presented with regard to their perception on the UCC distance

learning programme (M > 2.44) except the statement, 'distance education certificates are inferior to conventional education certificates' (M = 1.43, SD = .73) which teachers strongly disagree. From Table 4, it could be deduced that the participants perceived distance education in positive terms.

All the statements, except 'distance education certificates are inferior to conventional education certificates', were rated high in positive terms with regard to teachers views on UCC distance learning programme. The statement, 'distance education has increased access to university education' with the highest mean score (M=3.89, SD=0.37) was perceived on the overall as the strongest statement teachers consider.

Therefore, basic school teachers' in Kumasi Metropolis perceived the UCC distance learning programme positively. Seventy-nine percent of the basic school teachers used for the study strongly agreed that distance education programme has a brighter future in Ghana and 21% of the teachers also agreed to the same statement. As indicated by Table 4 , 99.4% of the basic school teachers said that they were proud to be products of the UCC distance learning programme.

This findings support submission by Owoeye (2004) and Adentwi (2002). Owoeye (2004) contended that distance education enables individuals yearning for education to stay in the comfort of their homes, workplaces and almost everywhere to participate in formal education and obtain various degrees. Owoeye argued that distance learning provides an environment that promotes self learning through self instructional materials. Distance education, thus, opens up opportunities for teachers to enhance both their academic and professional competences.

Similarly, Adentwi (2002) said that distance education has a worldwide reputation as a viable alternative to conventional residential education because of its cost-effectiveness and its enormous potential for providing education to a large number of people who would otherwise have no chance to pursue higher education. He concluded that in contemporary Ghana, distance education has gained popularity as an effective strategy for training teachers. The results shown in Table 4 indicate that workers all over the world including teachers in Ghana perceive in positive terms any learning programme that has the potential to enhance their professional competences. This explains why many teachers patronise the distance education programme of the University of Cape Coast.

The participants of the study disagreed with the statement "Distance education certificates are inferior to the conventional education certificates" (M=1.43, SD=.73). This perception of the participants about distance education may be true because distance education course modules and examinations are written and set respectively by chief examiners who teach in the conventional system and always look at some standard set by the University for the Award of its certificates. This finding of the study is inconsistent with the view expressed by Banda (2000) that there is the problem of lack of recognition among the populace for certificates acquired through distance learning.

Among the reasons put forward by the critics according to Banda is that distance learners are taught by separate crop of instructors who are considered by the academic staff of the conventional system as being inferior. Even though not all the instructors of distance education programmes have the

requisite qualifications to teach in higher institutions, in the case of dual-mode distance education institutions such as that of the University of Cape Coast, the instructors are not allowed to use any material other than what the lecturers in the conventional system have written. Thus, in the case of the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme, course instructors only act as facilitators to explain some portions of the textbooks written by the lecturers themselves. In such a situation, the argument that a section of the stakeholders consider distance education certificates as inferior to the conventional ones is baseless and invalid.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent has the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme enhanced the professional development of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis?

The objective for this question was to examine the extent to which the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme has enhanced the professional development of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis. In order to provide an answer to this research question, means and standard deviations were calculated. The result of this finding is shown in Table 5.

The extent to which the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme has enhanced the professional development of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis was described by the calculation of the arithmetic means for each statement. Table 5 indicates that basic school teachers within Kumasi Metropolis agreed with all the statements presented with regard to the extent to which the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme has equipped them with the desired teaching competences needed for classroom lesson delivery (M>2.45).

**Table 5: Enhancement of Professional Development through Distance Education**

| Statements | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| CCE distance education has improved my subject matter knowledge (in the subject I teach) | 3.25 | .48 |
| Through the UCC distance education programme I have understood better my students' human growth and development | 3.41 | .49 |
| My instructional planning and strategies have improved considerably since my completion of UCC distance education programme | 3.37 | .50 |
| Assessment of my pupils has improved since my completion of UCC distance education programme | 3.39 | .56 |
| My ability to create supportive and respective learning environment for my pupils were acquired through the UCC distance learning programme | 3.15 | .65 |
| My communication strategies in the classroom and use of TLMs is better now than before being enrolled into the distance education programme of UCC | 3.34 | .62 |
| My present collaboration abilities are due to what I learnt in the UCC distance education programme | 3.10 | .54 |
| My refining of instructional materials in the classroom is due to what I was taught at the UCC distance learning programme | 3.18 | .59 |
| My ability to improvise and develop new instructional materials is attributed to what I learnt during the UCC distance education programme | 3.10 | .67 |

Source: Field Data, 2012.

Forty-one percent of the basic school teachers strongly agreed that through the UCC distance education programme they had understood better their students' human growth and development while 59% also agreed to the same statement. Similarly, 37.5% of the basic school teachers strongly agree that their instructional planning and strategies had improved considerably since their completion of UCC distance education programme, while 61.9% agreed to the same statement.

Majority (98.4%) of the basic school teachers agreed that assessment of their pupils has improved since their completion of UCC distance education programme. In all, basic school teachers agreed that the UCC distance learning programme has really enhanced their professional development in general. This outcome of the study is in line with the view of Dede (2006) who reiterated that professional development of teachers are means of bringing changes in the classroom practices, attitudes of teachers, their beliefs and learning outcome of students.

Dede (2006) explained that teachers are attracted to their professional development because they want to expand their knowledge, skills and abilities because of the various reforms that take place in the education sector. Teachers, therefore, do not want to be rusty but rather update their knowledge to be abreast with the current educational issues and pedagogical processes of imparting knowledge to learners. Teacher's consequently, see distance education as one of the avenues through which they could develop themselves professionally. The participants in this study, therefore, perceive the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme as a programme worth pursuing because of the positive impact it had on their professional development.

**Research Question 3:** What value has the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme added onto the professional status of basic school teachers in the Kumasi metropolis who have pursued the programme?

The rationale for this research question was to know the value the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme has added onto the professional status of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis who

have pursued the programme. Cross tabulation is used to compare the teachers' previous and current credentials they are holding and also their previous and current professional rank.

Table 6 indicates that previously, with regard to teachers' professional qualification, 80% and 20% of the teachers had post-secondary (3- year) and certificate 'A' (4-year) professional qualification respectively. None of the teachers were previously having bachelor's degrees in education.

Table 6 shows that currently, with regard to teachers' professional qualification, 80.3% and 19.7% of the teachers had diploma in education and bachelor's degree in education professional qualification respectively. As indicated by Table 6, none of the teachers is currently having post-secondary (3- year) certificate 'A' or 4- year cert 'A'. This clearly indicates that there has been a drastic positive change with respect to teacher's current credentials.

**Table 6: Professional Qualification of Teachers before and after being enrolled in the UCC Distance Education Programme**

| Professional Qualification of Teachers | Previous Professional Qualification of Teachers | | Current Professional Qualification of Teachers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | % | No. | % |
| Post secondary (3-year) | 252 | 80.0 | 0 | 0 |
| Certificate 'A' (4- year) | 63 | 20.0 | 0 | 0 |
| Diploma in basic education | 0 | 0 | 253 | 80.3 |
| Bachelor of education | 0 | 0 | 62 | 19.7 |
| **Total** | **315** | **100** | **315** | **100** |

Source: Field Data, 2012.

The advancement in teacher professional qualification as a result of the training they had from the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme as found in this study is in line with one of the objectives for which the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme was established (Koomson, 2005). Koomson asserted that the Centre for Continuing Education of the University of Cape Coast (CCEUCC) was created primarily to mount all the viable programmes on distance as a direct response to promote the academic qualifications of basic school teachers.

**Table 7:  Ranks of Teachers before and After Being Enrolled in the UCC Distance Education Programme**

| Rank of Teachers | Previous Ranks of Teachers | | Current Rank of Teachers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | % | No. | % |
| Teacher | 43 | 13.7 | 0 | 0 |
| Superintendent II | 81 | 25.7 | 0 | 0 |
| Superintendent I | 101 | 32.1 | 0 | 0 |
| Senior superintendent II | 29 | 9.2 | 49 | 15.6 |
| Senior superintendent I | 51 | 16.2 | 55 | 17.5 |
| Principal superintendent | 8 | 2.5 | 173 | 54.9 |
| Assistant director of education II | 2 | 0.6 | 23 | 7.2 |
| Assistant director of education I | 0 | 0 | 15 | 4.8 |
| **Total** | **315** | **100** | **315** | **100** |

Source: Field Data, 2012.

Table 7 indicates that the distance education programme of the University of Cape Coast is on course to fulfil one of its core mandates for

which it was established. The impact of the distance education programme on the professional standing of respondents was also noticeable, as indicated in Table 7. Table 7 indicates that previously, with regard to teachers' rank, more than half of them (71.5%) were having ranks lower than senior superintendent II. Only 0.6% of the respondents were previously assistant directors of education II while none was assistant director of education I. Table 7 also shows that currently, with regard to teachers' professional rank, 54.9%, 7.2% and 4.8% of the teachers are having ranks of principal superintendent, assistant director II and assistant director I, respectively. None of the teachers currently belongs to the superintendent I rank or lower. This clearly indicates that there has been a drastic positive change with respect to teacher's current ranks.

Both results in Table 6 and 7 shows that teachers in the Kumasi metropolis who have pursued the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme have value added to their profession as teachers with regard to their professional qualification and rank. These findings are congruent with the submission made by Abbasi (2010) and Fishman et al. (2003) that distance education is a means of improving the professional standards of teachers. They reiterated that the professional development and academic qualification as well as ranks are acquired through courses mounted on distance education, short courses, seminars, workshops and qualification programmes. They indicated that distance education is a potential source which can be used to develop professional standards of teachers during and after going through a course of study. Abbasi and Fishman et al were of the views that pupil teachers are likely to benefit most from distance education.

**Research Question 4:** What contribution has the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme made to the over- all requisite teaching competences currently possessed by the basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis who pursued the programme?

A further analysis using multiple regression analysis was used to examine the contribution or influence teacher training college education and that of UCC distance learning programme had on teachers' current requisite teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery. The rationale for this research question was to know the contributions of training college education and that of UCC distance learning programme to teachers' professional development with respect to competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery. This analysis was undertaken to better understand the kind of training that contributes more to the teachers' professional development and the aggregate contribution of the two levels of training. The summary of the analysis is shown in Table 8.

As noted in Table 8, a multiple regression analysis was conducted with current requisite teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery (observation score) as the dependent variable and teacher training college scores and UCC distance learning programme scores as independent variables. This type of analysis is used to determine the independent variables that contribute more statistically significant to the dependent variable and the aggregate contribution of all independent variables to the dependent variable.

**Table 8: Contribution of Teacher Training College and UCC Distance Learning Programme to Teachers Current Requisite Teaching Competences needed for Effective Classroom Lesson Deliver**

| Variables (Scores) | Mean | Std. Deviation | Beta (Std. Error) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Training college scores | 68.041 | 8.012 | .109 (.043)* |
| Distance learning scores | 72.194 | 5.467 | .297 (.063)** |
| Constant | | | 56.290 |
| R Square | | | .381 |
| Adjusted R Square | | | .325 |

Source: Field Data, 2012.

Table 8 indicates that the two independent variables that are, training college scores and UCC distance learning scores both have positive statistically significant contribution to teachers' current requisite teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery. The independent variable that influences, predicts or contributes more to teachers current requisite teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery is UCC distance learning scores ($\beta$ = .297 (.063), $p < 0.01$) followed by the training college scores ($\beta$ = .109 (.043), $p < 0.05$).

It is, however, significant to observe that the proportional contribution ($R^2$) of the two independent variables is 0.381 with an adjusted $R^2$ of 0.325. This means that the training college education and that of UCC distance learning programme are able to influence, predict, or explain about 38% of the variance in the teachers' current requisite teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery. It, therefore, means that besides these two

levels of professional training, other variables that are not in the model have a chance of influencing or predicting about 62 percent of the teachers' current requisite teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery.

As indicated in Table 8, the mean score for UCC distance learning scores (M = 72.194) is higher than the training college scores (M = 68.041). This means that on the average, basic school teachers who pursued the UCC distance learning programme after completing training college performed better in the programme than in their respective training colleges. In other words, basic school teachers who have gone through the UCC distance learning programme after their training college education acquire more teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery than basic school teachers who after training college did not acquire any training again. The standard deviations of the two scores also indicate that the training college scores are more scattered among the respondents than that of the UCC distance learning programme scores.

The relative improvement in the teachers' teaching competences after going through the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme as portrayed in this study is consistent with the work of Dede (2006). He was of the view that teachers add value to themselves because the knowledge and skills they acquire enhance their effectiveness and promote their competences. The skills and knowledge gained during the distance education programme enabled teachers to keep pace with new technologies and recent pedagogical processes in the classroom. This outcome of the study is an indication that continual professional development of teachers is very important to make them more competent and effective on their job and in the classrooms

**Research Question 5:** What are the challenges involved in pursuing the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme? To find answers to this question, the descriptive statistics on teachers view on the challenges of pursuing UCC distance learning programme was computed and is shown in Table 9.

The objective of this research question was to outline the challenges that pertain to the UCC distance learning programme, looking at it from the perspectives of basic school teachers who have gone through the programme.

**Table 9: Challenges and Problems of Pursuing Distance Education**

| Statements | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| Study materials are very difficult (in terms of content) to study | 2.84 | 1.01 |
| Study materials are full of typographical mistakes | 3.06 | .84 |
| Study materials delay in being handed over to students | 3.10 | .97 |
| The cost of the study materials is too high | 2.65 | .86 |
| Study materials are too broad in terms of scope | 3.07 | .81 |
| Tutors lack professional skill in tutoring | 2.57 | 1.01 |
| Tutors fail to solve students' problems | 2.63 | .98 |
| The distance education programme is very expensive | 3.07 | .87 |
| It is difficult to combine teaching and schooling through distance education | 3.35 | .78 |
| Assessment procedures adopted by the distance education programme are inappropriate | 3.03 | .97 |
| Feedbacks on students' assessment are not prompt and cause anxiety to students | 3.31 | .85 |
| Social issues greatly interrupt with students studies and affect their performance | 3.28 | .78 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Time management is a major factor which negatively affect the students' learning | 3.28 | .83 |
| Administrators always fail to act on students' problem | 2.90 | .93 |

Source: Field Data, 2012. (N = 315)

To find answers to research question 5, the descriptive statistics on teachers view on the challenges of pursuing UCC distance learning programme was computed and is shown in Table 9.

Basic school teachers agreed (M > 2.45) that all the listed statements in Table 9 are the possible challenges and problems of pursuing distance education in UCC. There are some levels of disagreement to some of the statements though they are not enough. For example, 14.0% of the basic school teachers strongly disagreed that study materials are very difficult in terms of content to study while 17.5% just disagreed with that. Again, some of the basic school teachers disagreed (strongly disagreed or disagreed) with the statements that the cost of the study materials is too high (40.9%) and that tutors lack professional skill in tutoring (50.2%).

Only 13.3% of the basic school teachers disagreed (strongly disagree or disagree) that social issues greatly interrupt with students' studies and affect their performance, and that, time management is also a major factor which negatively affect the students' learning. The challenges faced by respondents were also of interest to the study. Respondents' views in that regard are indicated in Table 9.

All the statements were rated in positive terms with regard to basic school teachers' views on some selected challenges and problems of pursuing UCC distance learning education. The statement 'tutors lack professional skill

in tutoring' (M = 2.57, SD = 1.01) with the lowest mean score was perceived on the overall as least challenge and problem of pursuing UCC distance education that basic school teachers consider. Meanwhile, the degree of teachers' perceptions on the challenges and problems of pursuing distance education in Table 9 were largely positive.

The study identified many problems and challenges facing teachers pursuing distance education, which ranges from materials, socio-economic to human resources. The problems identified are likely to impact negatively on the professional development of the distance learner especially those related to the organisational structure of the distance education institutions. These problems can frustrate the teachers. As Keegan (1993) indicated, those who get frustrated due to lack of information easily drop out of the course, especially where nobody is around to counsel them.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study and major findings. Conclusions are drawn and recommendations arising from the findings as well as suggested areas for further research are also provided.

## Summary of the Study

This study examined the impact of the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme on the professional development of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study was designed to delve into the perception of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis about distance education, examine the extent to which the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme has enhanced the professional development of basic school teacher in the Kumasi Metropolis and identify the value that the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme has added to the professional status of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis.

The study also sought to outline the contributions of the distance learning programme to the requisite teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery and looked at some of the challenges and problems confronting the student teachers who are pursuing the programme. It was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the perception of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis about Distance Education?

2. To what extent has the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme enhanced the professional development of basic school teachers in the Kumasi metropolis?

3. What value has the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme added onto the professional status of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis who pursued the program?

4. What contribution has the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme made to the over-all teaching competence possessed by the basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis who pursued the programme?

5. What are the challenges involved in pursuing the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme?

The study used the descriptive survey as its design and sampled 315 basic school teachers from the ten sub-metros of the Kumasi Metropolis to serve as respondents. A self-designed questionnaire which contained 44 items and an observation guide were used as instruments to collect relevant data

from the participants. The 44 items on the questionnaire were grouped into five sections which were in line with the research questions. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics with the help of predictive analytic software (SPSS 16.0 version), in a form of percentages, frequencies and mean values with their respective standard deviations.

Regression analysis was conducted on the secondary data collected from the basic school teachers' teacher training college and University of Cape Coast distance learning programme teaching practice raw scores. This was meant to outline the contribution of the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme to the requisite knowledge and skills currently being possessed by teachers who have successfully completed the programme.

**Findings of the Study**

The findings of the study are organized according to the research questions formulated to guide the study.

**The Perception of Basic School Teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis about Distance Education**

The basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis perceived the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme as one of the means through which they can have access to University Education, upgrade themselves professionally, and study in the comfort of their homes, and as a guarantee for job security.

**Enhancement of Professional Development of Teachers Through Distance Education.**

It was found from the study that the distance education programme of UCC had helped basic school teachers to understand their students' human growth and development, improve assessment of their students, and instructional planning and strategies. The knowledge in the subjects that, the basic school teachers teach, use of TLM, and improvisation of new instructional materials by the teachers have been enhanced through their participation in the UCC distance learning programme.

**Value added to the Professional Status of Basic School Teachers Through Distance Learning Programme.**

The results of the study revealed that the UCC Distance Education Programme has improved the professional qualification of basic school teachers. The study revealed that 80.3% and 19.7% of the teachers had got Diploma and Bachelor Degrees in Basic Education respectively. Prior to their enrolment in the UCC Distance Learning Programme, 4.1% and 80.0% of these teachers were holders of Post Secondary 3- year Teachers' Certificate or 4-year Teacher's Certificate respectively with none of the them holding Bachelor's Degree in Education. The high improvement in the professional qualification of the teachers can, therefore, be attributed to their participation in the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme.

In addition, the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme has raised the professional ranks of basic school teachers. It was found that none of the teachers who pursued the programme was below the rank of Senior Superintendent II and 4.8% of them were Assistant Directors of Education I, which before the programme was not among the ranks which the basic teachers had attained.

**Contribution of UCC Distance Learning Programme to Basic School Teachers' Competences**

The study revealed that 38% of the teachers' current requisite teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery can be attributed to what the teachers were taught during their initial Training College Education and that of UCC Distance Learning Programme. However, the regression analysis mean score of 72.2 for UCC Distance Learning score as compared to 68.0 of the initial Teachers' Training College mean score suggested that teachers who went through the UCC Distance Learning Programme had acquired more teaching competences needed for effective classroom lesson delivery than those with only initial teachers' training college education.

**Challenges involved in Pursuing UCC Distance Learning Programme**

The challenges encountered by teachers in pursuing UCC Distance Learning Programme can be categorized into material, social, economic and human resources. The content of the modules are difficult for the teachers to read and understand on their own, while some models also have typographical mistakes. The money spent on study materials, transportation expenses, lodging and other miscellaneous expenditures are in most cases beyond the income level of the teachers. Social issues at home and social functions such as attendance to funerals and family meetings take away part of the time available for the teachers to use for their studies. The teachers also face the problem of combining their normal routine classroom teaching with schooling

through distance education. The inability of the teachers to get competent tutors to explain the difficult concepts to them, solve their problems and provide prompt feedback on students' assessment cause anxiety among the students. Time management also posed challenges to students.

## Conclusions

From the study, it could be concluded that the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme has really impacted positively on the professional development of basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis. The programme has been perceived by the basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis as being equal to the traditional campus type of tertiary education. Majority of the teachers confirmed that the programme had created an opportunity for them to upgrade and update their teaching competences and skills and thus, enabling them to offer quality teaching and learning in their schools. The University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme has significantly improved the professional qualifications and ranks of the basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis who patronized it.

The programme has proved beyond reasonable doubt that it is capable of improving the effectiveness and the efficiencies of teachers in the areas of understanding their students' growth and development, subject matter knowledge, instructional planning and strategies, assessment of students, creating supportive learning environments, communication strategies, collaboration abilities and improvisation .Moreover, the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme is meeting the policy of Ministry of Education and that of Youth and Sports to promote quality teacher education as a way of achieving the 2015 Education for All (EFA) agenda.

Despite the high patronage of the  University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme by the basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis, the students  were said to have been confronted by a number of avoidable problems with the chief ones being typographical mistakes in course modules, delays in handing over course materials to students, inappropriate assessment procedures, anxiety resulting from unstructured provision of assessment feedback to students, negative impact of social issues on students performance v and time management.

## Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations if adopted might help make the University of Cape Coast Dinstance Learning Programme more vibrant and attractive to basic school teachers in Ghana:

1. One of the findings of this study is that the University of Cape Coast Distance learning programme has equipped the basic school teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis with the requisite knowledge and skills needed for effective classroom lesson delivery. It is, therefore, recommended to the Government of Ghana and the Ghana Education Service to do away with the policy of study leave with pay which creates unnecessary teaching vacancies at the basic level of education and increases the government's wage bills. Part of the amount spent on study leave could be used as incentives for distance education students as a way of motivating them and encouraging more basic school teachers to patronize the programme. Such financial support would go a long way to

alleviate financial hardships of teachers learning by distance to upgrade themselves and solve the problem of teacher attrition especially at the basic level.

2. Another finding of the study is that participants in the study performed better when they were on the UCC Distance Education programme than when they were on the Teacher Training College programmes with specific regard to their teaching practice scores. Based on this, the Ghana Education Service as part of its effort to achieve the 2015 Education for All (E.F.A) agenda, should introduce a policy making it mandatory for all basis school teachers who still hold Post-Secondary Teacher Certificate 'A' and other certificates below diploma level to enrol on the University of Cape Coast Distance Education Programme in order to update and upgrade their teaching competences and skills.

3. The study revealed that study materials are very difficult in terms of content to study. It is, therefore, recommended to the Director of Centre for Continuing Education, University of Cape Coast to appeal to the writers of distance education books to use simple language and a lot of illustrations in writing the books in order to meet the understanding needs of the distance learner.

4. The study also revealed that the Distance Education course modules contain a lot of typographical mistakes. Based on this, it is recommended that the Director of Centre for Continuing Education, University of Cape Coast should arrange to revise distance education books in order to do away with typographical mistakes in the modules.

5. Another finding of the study is that course materials are not handed over to students on time. It is, therefore, recommended to the management of University of Cape Coast Distance Learning programme to have a policy aimed at distributing course materials on time. It is also recommended that all distance education course modules should have their electronic versions on the internet so that students can access them when the need arises.

6. From the findings, it could also be said that the study materials are costly. Based on this, it is recommended to the Government of Ghana to grant teachers learning by distance the opportunity to access the SSNIT loans (scheme) and that the Ghana Education Service should pay part of the students' fees for them.

7. The study also explored and documented that course facilitators lack professional skills in tutoring and also more often than not, fail to solve students' problems. It is, therefore, recommended that the Centre for Continuing Education of the UCC should organize periodic in-service training for the course facilitators in order to sharpen their professional skills and competences. Writers of Distance Education Course modules should be made to play the roles of facilitators during such training sessions so that they can inject competence and confidence in the course tutors as facilitators.

8. It is recommended that counselling services should be provided for students of distance education in the areas of time management,

combining studies with teaching and striking a balance between studies and social responsibilities.

9. Finally, it is recommended that the Centre for Continuing Education of the University of Cape Coast should come out with a policy aimed at making assessment procedures flexible and ensuring that feedback on students' assessment is released on time.

**Suggested Areass for Further Research**

1. Impact of the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme on the BECE Performance of Junior High School graduates in the Kumasi Metropolis.

2. Performance of distance education graduates in teaching as compared to that of teachers or graduates produced by the conventional mode.

3. The role of the electronic media in distance teaching and learning.

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**APPENDICES**

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS OF DISTANCE LEARNING**

**TOPIC:** Impact of the University of Cape Coast Distance Learning Programme  on the Professional Development of Basic School Teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis in Ashanti Region, Ghana.

**Introduction:** This questionnaire is designed to collect data for the above topic, please, respond to each of the items on the questionnaire by ticking the appropriate box in front of the option which is most applicable to you. Any information provided would be kept as highly confidential. Your responses are highly  appreciated.

**A:      Demographic Information of Respondents**

1.  What is your gender?

    a)  Male                                [    ]

    b)  Female                              [    ]

2.  What is your age?

    a)  Below 25 years                      [    ]

    b)  25 – 30 years                       [    ]

    c)  31 – 35 years                       [    ]

    d)  36 – 40 years                       [    ]

    e)  Above 40 years                      [    ]

3. What is your teaching experience?

   a) Less than 5 years            [   ]

   b) 6 – 10 years                [   ]

   c) 11 – 15 years              [   ]

   d) 16 – 20 years              [   ]

   e) Above 20 years            [   ]

**B.**      **Quality of Professional teachers that UCC Distance education has produced**

4. How many years did you teach before being enrolled into the University of Cape Coast distance learning programme?

   ………………………………………………………………………

5. What was your initial qualification before being enrolled into UCC distance education programme?

   ……………………………………………………………………….

6. What is your present academic and professional qualification?

   Academic qualification ……………………………………………........

   Professional qualification …………………… ……………….......…

7. What grades did you obtain during your in and out of campus teaching practice?

   i)        On-centre grade ……………………………….......………

   ii)       Off-centre grade............................ ……………………………

8.  What is your present position in your school?

    a) Classroom teacher                     [    ]

    b) Headmaster / Mistress                  [    ]

    c) Circuit supervisor                     [    ]

    d) Assistant headmaster / mistress        [    ]

    e) Any others, please specify             [    ]

**C:     Enhancement of Professional Development through Distance**

     **Education**

Indicate the extent to which you Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)
Agree (3) and Strongly Agree (4) with the following statements on
professional development of teachers through distance education. Statement
Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA).

| Statements | SD | D | A | SA |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9.  Teachers should be given the opportunity to further their education through CCE distance education. | | | | |
| 10. The Ghana Education Service should sponsor teachers to further their    education through Distance Education. | | | | |
| 11. CCE distance education has improved my subject matter knowledge in the subject I teach. | | | | |
| 12. Through the UCC distance education programme I have | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| understood better my students' human growth and development. | | | | |
| 13. My instructional planning and strategies have improved considerably since my completion of UCC distance education programme. | | | | |
| 14. Assessment of my pupils has improved since my completion of UCC distance education programme | | | | |
| 15. My ability to create supportive and respective learning environment for my pupils were acquired through the UCC distance learning programme. | | | | |
| 16. My communication strategies in the classroom and use of TLMs are better now than before being enrolled into the distance education programme of UCC. | | | | |
| 17. My present collaboration abilities are due to what I leant in the UCC distance education programme. | | | | |
| 18. My refining of instructional materials in the classroom is due to what I was taught at the UCC distance education programme. | | | | |
| 19. My ability to improvise and develop new instructional materials is attributed to what I learnt at the UCC distance education programme. | | | | |

| 20. Distance education is an affordable way for teachers to further their education. | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21. Distance education helps teachers to upgrade themselves at the comfort of their homes. | | | | |

<br>

**D:     Challenges and Problems of Pursuing Distance Education**

State the extent to which you Disagree (1), uncertain (2) and Agree (3) about the following statements concerned with challenges and problems of pursuing distance education Statements Disagree (D), Uncertain (U) and Agree (A).

| | D | U | A |
|---|---|---|---|
| 22. Study materials are very difficult in terms of content to study. | | | |
| 23. Study materials are full of typographical mistakes. | | | |
| 24. Study materials delay before they are handed over to students. | | | |
| 25. The costs of the study materials are too expensive. | | | |
| 26. Study materials are broad in terms of scope. | | | |
| 27. Tutors lack professional skill in tutoring. | | | |
| 28. Tutors fail to solve students' problems. | | | |
| 29. The distance education programme is very expensive. | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 30. It is difficult to combine teaching and schooling through distance education. | | | |
| 31. Assessment procedures adopted by the distance education programme are in appropriate. | | | |
| 32. Feedbacks on students' assessment are not prompt and cause anxiety to students. | | | |
| 33. Social issues greatly interrupt with students studies and affect their performance. | | | |
| 34. Time management is a major factor which negatively affects the students' learning. | | | |
| 35. Administrators always fail to act on students' problem. | | | |

**E:     Measures to improve the Programme and Solve Students' Problem**

State your opinion on these statements by indicating whether you disagree (1), uncertain (2), or agree (3) about these statement on pursuing distance education. Statements  Disagree (D), Uncertain (U) and Agree (A).

| | D | U | A |
|---|---|---|---|
| 36. More centres should be established for the Post-Diploma in Basic Education programme. | | | |
| 37. SSNIT loans and bursaries must be offered to students pursuing distance education. | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 38. Allowances and scholarships must be given to students just like their counterparts in regular education to lesson their financial problems. | | | |
| 39. Student materials should be made available right from the beginning of the semester. | | | |
| 40. Students' results should be released promptly to serve the needed feedback required. | | | |
| 41. Extend the duration of the courses so as to provide students with more time and reduce pressure on them to complete the courses. | | | |
| 42. The 3-hour duration for the face to face meeting for the courses should be extended for thorough discussion of the units. | | | |
| 43. Some residential courses should be provided for at least one week for students before they write their end of semester exams. | | | |
| 44. Students should be taught time management skills to improve their studies. | | | |
| 45. Provide intensive pre-entry counselling on choice of courses, writing and answering of examination questions. | | | |

**D:** In this section, the researcher would like to know your perception of the distance education programme. Please tick (√) one column to indicate the degree to which you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree.

| Statement | SA | A | D | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Distance education is better than conventional education | | | | |
| Distance education is only good for candidates who are not academically good. | | | | |
| Studying for degrees and diplomas through distance education is inferior as compared to traditional mode. | | | | |
| The distance education programme has the potential to reach people in isolated areas and to increase access to the education. | | | | |
| Distance education will enable adults to learn in the comfort of their homes. | | | | |
| I wish I were a resident student at the university | | | | |
| I feel more comfortable learning at home | | | | |
| Pursing education will help me to achieve my ambitions of higher academic laurels. | | | | |
| Distance education helps in reducing pressure on facilities in our universities. | | | | |
| Distance education has a brighter future in Ghana | | | | |
| Distance education students are inferior to conventional education students | | | | |
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I felt a sense of accomplishment after completing the UCC distance education programme. | | | | |
| But for distance education, I would not have been able to upgrade myself professionally. | | | | |

# APPENDIX B

## UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

### FACULTY OF EDUCATION

### Department of Arts & Social Sciences Education

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OUR REF: DASSE/ED/CSP/10/0010
YOUR REF:

University Post Office,
Cape Coast, Ghana.

Date: 6th September, 2011.

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The bearer of this letter Mr. Kwame Nkrumah 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 as requirement of M. Phil Degree Programme.

I should be grateful if you would kindly allow him to collect the information from your institution. Kindly give the necessary assistance that Mr. Nkrumah requires to collect the information.

While anticipating your co-operation, I thank you for any help that you may be able to give.

KANKAM BOADU
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS &
SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
CAPE COAST GHANA

# APPENDIX C

## DUCATION

### UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

### TEACHING PRACTICE UNIT

### TEACHING PRACTICE ASSESSMENT FORM A

NAME of student:…………………………………STUDY CENTRE …………………......

REGISTRATION NO: ………………………….. SCHOOL OF PRACTICE ………......

SUBJECT…………..…FORM/CLASS…………………DATE………….TIME………...

LESSON TOPIC: ………………………………………………………………………......

DIRECTION: Indicate by means of a circle the degree to which the student-teacher measures up to eh area described below.

| Areas of development | X1 – Absent with permission |
|---|---|
| | X2 – Absent without permission |
| | 0.5-1 Weak |
| | 1.5-2 Below Minimum |
| | 2.5 -3 Minimum |
| | 3.5-4 Good |
| | 4.5-5 Outstanding |
| A. LESSON PLAN Objectives | |
|    (clear, measurable, appropriate) | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| Logical presentation of lesson | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| Subject knowledge (demonstration in lesson plan) | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| B. INTRODUCTION | |
| Interesting and captivating | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| Linked to appropriate previous knowledge | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| | |

| | |
|---|---|
| C. MASTERY OF SUBJECT MATTER | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| (demonstration through teaching) Relevant subject matter Accurate information | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| D. SUBJECT DELIVERY (in relation to teaching and | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| learning) Appropriate teaching methods and strategies Clear | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| logical steps in lesson delivery Good pacing/timing | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| E. Teaching /learning resources (TLR) Use of adequate and appropriate TL.R (component) Use of TLR, including chalkboard | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| F. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT & | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| ORGANISATION Individual, group and whole class management Class control | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| G. STUDENT PARTICIPATION Involving students in lesson | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| verbally and non-verbally Competent handling of students' Questions/Contributions | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| H. COMMUNICATION Correct use of language Clear and | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| audible voice | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |
| I. CLOSURE Tidy, interesting, linked to | 0 0.5 1   1.5 2   2.5 3   3.5 4   4.5 5 |

| | |
|---|---|
| objectives (s) | |
| J. LESSON EVALUATION<br><br>Lesson objectives (s) achieved | 0 0.5 1    1.5 2    2.5   3    3.5   4    4.5   5 |
| K. APPEARANCE<br><br>No destructive mannerism | 0 0.5 1    1.5 2    2.5   3    3.5   4    4.5   5 |

TOTAL SCORE …………………………………..RECOMMENDED SCORE AND GRADE

GENERAL REMARKS …….......……………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………….........................................................................

NAME OF SUPERVISOR ……....................………………… SIGNATURE .........................