

# T-TEL Curriculum Reform Study

Research Report



Prince H. Armah, PhD  
Greenfield Education Group, Accra  
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# T-TEL CURRICULUM REFORM STUDY REPORT

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Dr. Prince H. Armah

Lead Researcher

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AfL	Assessment for Learning
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
CoEs	Colleges of Education
DBE	Diploma in Basic Education
ICT	Information Communication Technology
L1	Language 1
L2	Language 2
JHS	Junior High School
NAB	National Accreditation Board
NCTE	National Council for Tertiary Education
NTC	National Teaching Council
NTECF	National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework
NTS	National Teacher Standards
TLM	Teaching and Learning Materials
T-TEL	Transforming Teacher Education and Learning

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the two past decades, significant policy reforms in teacher education have been pursued with little positive impact on the performance of Ghana's education system. This may be attributed to limited efforts to ensure that teachers are trained with requisite professional knowledge, skills and values needed to make them effective in today's complex classroom settings. There is some evidence to suggest that the Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) curriculum, a programme used to prepare teacher for the basic schools, does not adequately prepare trainees to teach in Ghanaian schools (Transforming Teacher Education Learning (T-TEL), 2015). As part of activities to address the challenges in the teacher education sector in Ghana, this study collected the views of a range of participants (e.g., circuit supervisors, current final-year students and basic school teachers with 2-3 years' experience (in maths, science and English), and newly qualified teachers (maths, science and English) in respect of what the current DBE lacks and what changes should be incorporated in a proposed curriculum for the college of education (CoEs).

Using an interview schedule, data were collected from 105 participants in face-to-face interviews. The data were analysed using the framework of thematic analysis, having entered the transcribed data in Nvivo 11. See Annex I for detailed methodology.

The study revealed that a large proportion of participants generally admired the teacher preparation imperatives of the DBE curriculum. They pointed out various strengths of the curriculum including contributing to overall basic school teachers' effectiveness and considerably supporting inclusive education. The participants mentioned that the DBE curriculum generally affords student teachers the opportunity to master a range of academic content and pedagogies required for classroom success. They also reported an appreciable level of satisfaction for the abilities/efforts of the CoEs tutors and the off-campus experiences of student teachers.

Nevertheless, issues regarding curriculum relevance, overloaded curriculum, little emphasis on language literacy development (especially local language) and a heavy emphasis on passing exams rather than producing a good teacher were identified as major defects of the DBE curriculum. Whilst the content of the DBE curriculum was perceived as not reflecting the realities in the basic schools and thus lacking direct connection with contemporary essentials of successful teacher education, the current curriculum also reflect limited emphasis on assessment for learning (AfL). Assessment for learning is understood as assessment activity intended to facilitate improved learning. Additionally, the DBE curriculum lacks a proper framework that guides the training of teachers in local language development and ensures that teachers are posted to areas where they can render effective lessons in local language literacy.

As a result, a large proportion of the participants wish to see a narrowed and a well-tailored curriculum that suits contemporary needs and aspirations. The participants want a curriculum that reflects the basic school curriculum expectations, places emphasis on depth curriculum and recognizes relevant skill achievements. Additionally, the incorporation of certain courses and learning experiences were suggested by the participants including early childhood courses for all CoEs, communication skills courses, ICT courses, curriculum studies courses, language games, words games, and dot and box games,. The participants also want a proper regulations of on-campus teaching practice across the CoEs and making it a high-stakes exercise to encourage positive attitudes among student teachers. The notion that teaching becomes a 'degree level' profession received significant support from the participants. In sum, the participants want the new curriculum that is being designed to place greater emphasis on the following: curriculum relevance, pedagogy, use of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) and information communication technology (ICT), and language literacy development.

In the light of the results and conclusions drawn, it is suggested that T-TEL should assist the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the team developing the proposed curriculum to explore the opportunities of developing a depth over breadth curriculum which reflect the school realities in the basic schools. T-TEL assist the MoE to strengthen and improve the training of student teachers in developing local language competence. This could be achieved by leading the development of a common language policy that requires all CoEs to teach local language courses in accordance with a minimum credit hour. T-TEL support the MoE to develop and implement a national ICT policy specifically for the CoEs to guide ICT integration in the CoEs.

## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Over the two past decades, significant policy reforms in teacher education have been pursued with little positive impact on the performance of Ghana's education system. This could be a consequence of limited reform strategies that ensure that teachers are trained with the requisite knowledge, skills and professional values to be effective in today's complex classroom settings. Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that the Diploma in Basic Education curriculum does not adequately prepare trainees to teach in Ghanaian schools (T-TEL, 2015). The curriculum seems to have a limited connection with the classroom needs of teachers, although the imperatives of globalization and technological advancement demand that teachers be prepared for responsibilities in and beyond the classroom (T-TEL, 2015). With the quality of the teacher as the single most pervasive in-school influence on a student's academic growth (Dave and Rajput, 2000), efforts to improve the school system may not be successful without significant shift towards training teachers to respond to the changing needs of the school system. The Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) programme, a four-year (2014-2018) Government of Ghana initiative, is designed to play an important role in this regard.

T-TEL is supported by the Department for International Development with the view to transforming the delivery of pre service teacher education in Ghana through support to 40 public colleges of education (CoEs). Over the last three years, the T-TEL has been implemented using an inclusive process led by the Ministry of Education, working collaboratively with other relevant national bodies associated with initial teacher education – National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), National Teaching Council (NTC), National Accreditation Board (NAB), the universities that train teachers, CoEs, and their partner schools. The NCTE, NTC and NAB have received support from the programme. The CoEs have equally received support in the

form of capacity building, tutor professional development and financial support to introduce innovation into the training of teachers. This support structure anchored on high-level collaboration and stakeholder engagements has, particularly, resulted in the development of two important national policy documents: the National Teacher Standards (NTS) for pre service teachers developed by the NTC, and the National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework (NTECF) developed by the NCTE. These two policy initiatives have since received considerable stakeholder buy-ins and cabinet approval, paving the way for a focused attention on the eventual design of a new teacher education curriculum for the training of basic and secondary school teachers in Ghana.

## **1.2 Objectives of the study**

Following the cabinet's approval of a memorandum, in the late 2017, for the implementation of the NTS for pre-service teachers and the NTECF, the development of a new four-year bachelor of education (B.Ed.) degree programme has been activated. In addition, cabinet has, through another memorandum, approved the conversion of CoEs into campuses of selected public universities. As part of efforts to meet these policy imperatives, this study was designed. It examines and explores the perspectives of various participants (e.g., circuit supervisors, current final-year students, basic school teachers with 2-3 years' experience (in math, science and English), and newly qualified teachers (maths, science and English) about the strengths and weaknesses of the current DBE curriculum to inform and shape the decision-making processes leading to the design of the new four-year B.Ed programmes. Specifically, the study:

1. Explores the participants' understanding and expectations of a curriculum that the current DBE curriculum is lacking.
2. Identifies the content that the participants would like to see in a new curriculum, and,
3. Identifies the aspect(s) of the new curriculum that the participants want emphasised.

## **CHAPTER TWO METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 The method**

Using a qualitative approach to research, interviews were conducted to collect data from the study's respondents in five districts including five colleges of education in Ghana. In collecting the data, each interview started with an introduction of the study to the respondents and assuring them of data anonymity, confidentiality. In all, one hundred and five participants volunteered information for the study. Principals agreed to take part in the study, and volunteered information. Data collected was transcribed to texts and subsequently analysed using thematic analysis (Patton, 2015) after transcripts were exported to QSR Nvivo 11.0 for coding. See Annex I for detailed methodology.

## CHAPTER THREE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### **3.1 Overall Effectiveness of the DBE curriculum: what it has and what it lacks**

This section highlights participants' understanding and expectations of a curriculum that the current DBE curriculum is lacking. In order to address this issue in terms of identifying what is lacking, it is important to understand what participants feel about the current programme and what gaps need to be filled. The analysis suggests that, generally, participants have positive perspectives of the DBE curriculum, in addition to several perceived weaknesses. Session 3.1.1 discusses the strengths of the current curriculum, followed by the discussion on its defects in session 3.1.2.

#### **3.1.1 Strengths of the DBE curriculum**

Several strengths of the DBE curriculum were identified and have been categorized into two broad themes: contribution to teacher effectiveness and support for inclusive education. The former theme emerged from participants feeling that the structure and content of the DBE curriculum contributes to enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills and using such knowledge and skills in the classroom to achieve their classroom goals (Medley, 1977). The latter theme was generated from participants' feeling that the DBE programmes offer teaching and learning approaches that considers the successful participation of all kinds of learners (inclusive education).

##### ***(A) Contribution to teacher effectiveness***

Participants perceive the DBE curriculum to provide a collection of experiences that potentially contribute to the overall effectiveness of the basic school teacher. As suggested by the responses of all categories of participants, the structure and content of the DBE curriculum unifies core aspects of primary and lower secondary teacher education to address the broad pedagogical and professional issues among prospective teachers. The participants expressed their impressions of the curriculum

in terms of how it addresses certain key strands of teacher education including content knowledge acquisition, pedagogy, duration of the DBE programme, and language, literacy and numeracy, as well as the tutors' effectiveness. Inferring from the responses, the DBE curriculum, to some extent, appears to contribute to:

- (a) student teachers' professional attitudes and self-belief.
- (b) content knowledge and pedagogical competence.

The current curriculum also provides:

- (c) Fairly satisfactory practicum experience, especially the off-campus teaching practice.
- (d) Satisfactory tutor effectiveness.

*(i) Contribution to teacher effectiveness: professional attitude, content knowledge and, pedagogy*

The participants were of the view that the content knowledge courses have been helpful, affording student teachers the attitude and confidence to deliver and implement the basic school curriculum. Additionally, the curriculum provides knowledge areas that are advanced for the benefit of the prospective teachers, giving them the advantage of being knowledgeable to handle all students' misconceptions, no matter the kind. As some participants, particularly the newly qualified teachers and final-year students, aptly put it:

It has helped me build my confidence level. Before I came to the college it was very difficult for me to address any group of people. Today I can stand before a crowd and address them.

The content has been effective. It has built me up holistically in the sense that I am now able to handle all the various classes due to the knowledge acquired.

...effective because the content is very detailed, and it helped me a lot in teaching every lesson. Detailed in the sense that they gave us a lot of examples that sometimes I chip in when I am trying to explain something to the pupils.

The curriculum has to a large extent provided what we need to teach at the basic schools. We learn both content as well as the

methodology. We apply the content that we have learnt from first to second year to handle the basic school students, so that we teach to their understanding.

The content knowledge of the DBE ensures that I am fully equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge about the basic school curriculum in order to function effectively in my profession.

After my training in the College I got to realized that there are better ways of teaching to get maximum understanding of children which is far more effective than what I was doing as pupils' teacher. For example the use of the methodology and other approaches to teaching topics makes my teaching very effective coupled with the use of the syllabus.

We have been able to acquire some knowledge and skills in teaching due to the introduction of the DBE curriculum

Some basic school teachers with 2-3years experience also hinted:

The content knowledge [courses] has been very effective. Student-teachers are taught courses higher than the level of the pupil.

It is good. When I was in basic school, the way in which we were taught is very different from how we teach now. The focus is now more pupil centered and practical to understand the concepts.

It appears that the curriculum offer student teachers the opportunity to experience a wide range of academic content, for which some of the participants were concerned about (see Section 3.1.2 “defects of the DBE curriculum”).

The participants pointed out some favourable impressions on pedagogical issues relating to classroom management competence, assessment competence, and motivational competence. According to the participants especially final-year students and experienced basic school teachers, the DBE programme exposes student teachers to a variety of teaching techniques, classroom management and organization techniques, assessment techniques, and motivational techniques to enhance teachers' capacity to deliver in the classrooms. In the words of some of the final-year students:

Through the DBE curriculum, I have come to know some techniques in teaching. I haven't taught before but through the DBE curriculum, I can now teach with the skills I have learnt.

Principles and methods of teaching basic schools has a chapter which talks about how to motivate students at various levels using

terms such as excellent, very good, you can do better, giving gifts and other forms of appreciation.

Similarly, some basic school teachers (with 2-3 years' experience) surmise:

Classroom management- I may say that it was good because I was able to learn different means of classroom management and control such as you the teacher keeping quiet and staring at the pupils. You will realize they will also be quiet, going round from corner to corner, asking them to be quiet and writing the subject on the board, asking them to do an activity when you realize they are not paying attention or feeling sleepy. You can ask them to stand for some time and I learnt this in my [educational and professional studies] EPS courses, so I will say it has been effective in equipping with classroom management skills.

... [I have] learnt how to use energizers like a motivational message or a short motivational story, advice, encouragement when they answer a question right or even if they get it wrong, you still encourage them to keep trying.

***(ii) Contribution to teacher effectiveness: practicum and mentor support***

Practicum and mentor supports were also areas that appear to undergird the contribution of the DBE curriculum in promoting teacher effectiveness. First, most of the participants positively valued the teaching practice component of the DBE curriculum saying it offers a first-time opportunity for most student teachers to practice teaching. Student teachers acquire so many things during teaching practice including identifying their strengths and weaknesses as teachers, how to master the skills of planning lessons and writing lesson plans, a practical opportunity to apply the theories they learned in college and advance their confidence. Some tutors had these to say:

The mentee gets the experience before they are posted.

It's a ground for mentees to develop themselves adequately for the task ahead.

I believe through the teaching practice, students have been adequately prepared to support pupils because they use right teaching methods and [teaching and learning materials] TLMs during teaching practice and this stays with them so when they are finally posted, they are already accustomed to using right TLMs to teach.

...also, the lesson notes preparation is one key activity they do during teaching practice and this is something they won't stop doing when they are posted so all in all.

Whiles some final-year students also clarified:

The teaching practice has equipped me with the skills on how to prepare lesson notes, deliver lessons and use the right TLMs that will enhance teaching and learning and identify pupils and their needs and have the competence in addressing them. Assessing pupils' competences using various forms like question and answer and written exercise.

This teaching practice has been a learning opportunity for me. I am learning and observing a lot during this teaching practice especially from my mentor.

Some basic school teachers (both newly qualified and experienced) explained:

My teaching practice experience was very, very good. In fact, I really enjoyed it.

The challenges I faced during my teaching practice have really helped me to solve some of the challenges that I face in my current school.

I had a lot of experience during my teaching practice. I was an introvert person so during teaching practice I was able to overcome it and master the courage to teach [well].

The participants, notably the final-year students and the newly qualified teachers, appear to admire the kind of warm and accommodating learning opportunities afforded them by the basic school environment during practicum. Majority of the final-year and newly qualified teachers hinted that mentors in the various basic schools offer cordial relationships with mentees, provide solicited and required professional support to mentees, in terms of lesson planning and lesson note preparation, TLM use, professional advice and recommend ways of improving lessons. The circuit supervisors also provided support for this assertion, citing the good relationships that they observed between mentors and mentees anytime they went on supervision. The final-year students and newly qualified teachers hinted:

...We were monitored well and where we went wrong, our mentors corrected us and put us on the right path. I established a friendly relationship with my mentor and he helped me by imparting knowledge.

He [mentor] sits with me to plan for the day's activity in terms of the content of the subject we will teach and provision of TLM at times.

My mentor helps me to plan my lessons, guides me in preparing lesson notes, observes while I teach and giving his comments after my teaching.

This may go a long way to determine the kind of professional identity that student teachers form, given that beginning to teach could be a complex stage (Botha and Onwu, 2013). In fact, all categories of the participants feel good about the structure, and duration of their practicum experiences especially the off-campus teaching practice, pointing out some benefits associated with it. Inferring from these responses, the off-campus teaching practice is beneficial to a number of stakeholders including the CoEs, mentors, mentees, and the partner basic schools.

To the mentor:

Since the student teacher is fresh from college, his teaching methods may differ from the mentor. The mentor therefore takes the opportunity to learn new teaching methods.

I prepared my lesson notes in Ewe language and not in English he [i.e., the mentor] was impressed, and so he also started recommending that to other teachers. He also learnt to be on time since we the student teachers are always in school on time.

To us the mentees:

It helped us to learn basic class work like closing the register, marking exercise, entering the school base assessment (SBA) into its register and others. It also helped us to teach properly since the mentor always supervised when I teach so she guided me.

It gives us fore knowledge [i.e. initiate experience] about how the teaching work is done since we observe for a while during teaching practice before we assume the role of a teacher.

It boosts your confidence. Some of us are shy but after teaching practice you realize it's nothing to talk to people.

Colleges of Education:

It's an opportunity for the college to assess its student teachers better. As the tutors go around the partner schools to supervise the student teachers they get to assess them better and the mentor also guides the student teachers to become better teachers for the college.

Partner schools:

The teaching staff is enhanced. The presence of the student teachers enhances the teaching staff and so classrooms are filled with two or more teachers to teach.

***(iii) Contribution to teacher effectiveness: tutors' effectiveness***

Tutors constitute an important element of the DBE curriculum delivery. As teachers in the CoEs, the tutors are the final implementers of the DBE curriculum. Their abilities and efforts are essential to successful curriculum delivery. The participants alluded that the tutors deliver well with regards to the subjects they teach, although some teachers are not adequately responsive to the needs of student teachers. Some final-year students remarked:

The teachers have been very effective in delivery quality instruction by teaching us what we are supposed to know, teaching us about what it takes to be a good teacher, how to be a good teacher, they deliver their lessons well, they are time conscious.

The college tutors are very effective in delivering quality instruction. Most of the tutors make sure the course outlines are given out to students early enough so that they have fair idea of what will be taught and make the work early for us. They make sure after teaching a course questions are solved in order to know the trend of the examination questions. They make extra time to teach when other activities interrupt their teaching. However, some of them are not punctual and regular and will not bother even to check how students are doing. But on the whole the tutors are very hard working.

Similar views were shared by some basic school teachers (with 2-3 years' experience):

They were effective in providing us with learning materials, shaping our behaviours, and characters and correcting us when need be and lastly, they came for observation during teaching practice, so I will say they were effective.

Some of the tutor are very strict and insist on the right things to be done especially when preparing lesson notes.

***(B) DBE curriculum supports inclusive education***

Most of the participants reported that the DBE curriculum provides essential components of teacher education for inclusive education and recognizing and addressing individual differences among pupils. Large portions across all categories

of the participants appear to be confident that the current curriculum provides adequate training to student teachers to render them capable of supporting learning of all pupils irrespective of their age, background, aptitude and ability. As some participants put it:

With the knowledge that children are different and have peculiar needs, we attend and handle them individually. We were also taught that their development goes with their age, so we do not pressure them if we know the age is not up to.

In college, as a teacher, you are taught to be all round and be able to read and understand everything and break it down to the understanding of pupils so this being done, you are adequately prepared to support pupils.

...because we were given all the necessary methodology and skills to teach all manner of children regardless of their background, age and abilities. Example, I teach mathematics and per the training I went through, I can help even a Kindergarten (KG) pupil with a difficulty in mathematics because I have and know the right techniques to use to teach mathematics.

Acquired the skills in handling pupils with special needs, controlling classroom and given the necessary skills in handling subjects that are challenging

The issue of inclusive education and handling individual differences among pupils is more important today than it was few decades ago, given current policy efforts not to leave any child out of school instruction opportunities. Therefore, this revelation about the DBE curriculum offers lessons for a continuous focused attention on inclusive education.

### **3.1.2 Defects of the DBE curriculum: What is lacking?**

Even though the participants expressed positive opinions about the DBE curriculum and its delivery, they also shared important defects of the curriculum which they want any future curriculum reform to address.

#### ***(i) DBE curriculum is not well-matched with realities in the schools***

Analysis of the responses of participants suggested that the DBE curriculum is not well-matched with realities in the schools. This relates to what could be described as

curriculum appropriateness and covers an array of issues related to whether the curriculum is adequately serving the purpose for which it was intended. As suggestive of the responses of most of the participants (across all categories), some courses the student teachers study in CoEs may lack practical relevance and direct connection with contemporary imperatives of successful teacher education, creating a considerable level of challenge for newly qualified teachers. This issue of curriculum relevance appeared to raise disquiet concerns from almost all the participants, including a majority of final-year students who were just undertaking their off-campus teaching practice. The students remarked:

Although the curriculum is good, I have some challenges concerning it, because some of the content courses are not broken down to the student understanding as most of the courses are theoretical and not practical example in mathematics; the topic linear equation is taught more theoretically.

For me, it hasn't been effective, looking at the things we studied in school and the output expected from us. It is good we study things above what we are coming to teach at the basic school but sometimes, some of the things we studied in school are either above [the content needed at the basic schools] or are not relevant.

I don't think it is good because there is no correlation between what we are taught there and what we experience here. I did early childhood; what they taught us at the training college is different from what we do here, so I think they should send the KG curriculum to the training colleges for tutors to use.

Some teachers (both newly qualified and experienced) also lamented:

There is too much confusion and disconnect in the system. The students are taught different things while different things are happening on the field, so the students are not given the right information and tools to work with when they come out of school to make them effective.

...the content student teachers learn is only a build on at the college. In actual fact, it [i.e., the content] had no connection with the basic school curriculum at all. However, few courses (about 40 percent) are related to the basic school curriculum.

Further, some of the participants (majority of which are final-year students and basic school teachers) intimated that some courses including teaching materials have become irrelevant, and not appropriate to contribute to a meaningful and responsive

teacher education and professional learning in modern times. Some other courses were also identified to be more advanced and above what is needful at the basic schools. As captured by the responses of some teachers (both newly qualified and experienced):

Some of the subjects are not relevant, like HIV [human immune virus] so it doesn't make it that effective.

Some of the courses that we are taught at the college are not necessary since we won't be teaching it to basic school pupils. An example is probability and statistics which is far high for a basic school pupil.

Most of the content knowledge acquired at college which included further algebra, trigonometry and calculus had no link with what is in the basic school curriculum and didn't benefit him at all.

As for the content, I think it's enough except that some of the things they learn here especially in mathematics does not have a direct bearing on the syllabus at the basic level.

The content knowledge of the DBE course has not equipped me completely to be able to deliver the basic school curriculum. This is because most of the course are not relevant to the basic school curriculum. Courses like calculus, trigonometry and further algebra. Such courses are not taught at the basic level, yet they are compulsory at the college level.

Most of the things learnt don't make sense. Take for example a terminology like "Paleto Aviola" does not have any bearing on the course yet it is taught.

Inferring from the responses, a greater emphasis is placed on these perceived “irrelevant” courses to the neglect of important basic school topics. For this reason, some of the participants revealed that they end up not exposed to the complete DBE curriculum by the time they graduate. Some tutors reported:

The content knowledge does not cover all the areas the teacher needs before he/she will be able to teach in the Basic School

...with the basic school curriculum, they don't know. I don't think they are taught everything in the curriculum. There are some topics they can't teach. At a cluster in-service training last month teachers who are currently posted requested to be taught some topics.

From the foregoing, it appears that the DBE curriculum is not directly tied to the basic school syllabus, mostly diverging from the issues it is expected to address in the

schools. The overall content is not well-matched with effective provisions to facilitate desired learning outcomes in the schools, in terms of teacher effectiveness and improved learning outcome.

*(ii) DBE curriculum is overloaded*

The issue of overloaded curriculum comes at the back of concerns expressed by some of the participants that the duration of the DBE curriculum is insufficient. Granted the duration is enough for some other participants, the curriculum is still perceived to contain too many courses resulting in a lack of focus, clarity and consistency in the basic approaches to educating teachers. Potentially, an overloaded curriculum makes significant impact on tutors' effectiveness, learners' understanding and ultimately educational outcomes. Consistent with the position of Majoni (2017) the participants identified overcrowding in the DBE curriculum in the following dimensions; number of subjects, volume of content and teaching time (length of semester). Some final-year students and newly qualified teachers, mostly, intimated:

If you look at the time frame, the contents of the curriculum and the syllabus at the same time, I think the time is not enough. The period for achieving these goals is not enough and the target cannot be achieved.

... the number of courses we take in a semester is too much and this puts a lot of pressure on us the students and makes us learn just to pass the exam and not for the world of work which is bad.

We didn't cover everything we ought to.

The number of subject we take in a semester should be reduced so that we can have enough time for other courses.

Personally, the three years is not adequate because we are unable to cover all aspects of the curriculum, we don't cover all the content materials of our courses and the curriculum is loaded.

No because in the current DBE curriculum, we do more of content and less of practice and methods of teaching.

At the moment, the content is very packed and whether we understand it or not we have to prepare to take exams. Because of this situation I would say we are not well equipped with all we need to go out and teach.

*(iii) DBE curriculum is heavily centred on passing exams rather than making a good teacher*

The DBE curriculum is perceived by many of the participants (especially the final-year students, and basic school teachers), to place focused attention of students' ability to pass exams rather than developing essential professional skills and attribute for teaching. This impression is tied to concerns of participants that the curriculum does not provide enough contexts to standardize and assess the practical and relevant skills portfolio of student teachers. Pen-and-paper examinations remain a popular means of assessing students' professional performance in the CoEs. The current curriculum offers limited avenue to assess students' professional competence, overly relying on the writing of examination to gathered data on professional competence. Collecting data on teaching abilities mainly through this means may only be intellectual and, may obfuscate the other socio cognitive abilities of student teachers. The task of teaching transcends measuring knowledge to include essential skills and values to achieve the desired instructional goals. Some newly qualified teachers stated:

I think the content knowledge is only to test the knowledge level of the student to see whether he is ready the teaching profession. In effect the content knowledge of the DBE curriculum prepares students for external examination to check how ready they are to pursue the DBE program.

With the content, I had issues with it. It was more of teaching us to write and pass our exams. For example, my course which is science had practical components, but we never got to do any practical. It was all theory so that was a problem.

In agreement, some tutors added:

The content knowledge does not cover all the areas the teacher needs before he/she will be able to teach in the basic school rather the only content knowledge to prepare them to write and pass exams rather than developing their competencies.

The DBE curriculum has been made an examination drill and that more content is done [i.e., covered] while the teacher's competencies have not been assessed. The little competency assessment is done on teaching practice.

...rather the only content knowledge to prepare them to write and pass exams rather than developing their competencies.

Because of the examination in mind teachers don't focus on grabbing the concept in order to teach pupils but rather passing their examination.

#### *(iv) Little emphasis on language development*

The DBE curriculum appears to reasonably emphasize the development of language, literacy and numeracy competence among student-teachers, as reported by a majority of the participants across all categories. Whilst a few of the participants were confident that the curriculum prepares student teachers to teach and develop language (L1- first language and L2- second language), literacy and numeracy regardless of the grade level (early grade, upper primary or junior high school), a majority of them thought otherwise because they were of the view that the curriculum offers limited language courses. Those who disagreed perceived some defects with the emphasis put on local language and literacy development. Inferring from their responses, the situation leads to teachers limited ability to teach and develop strong local language literacy, especially under conditions where they are posted to localities in which the pupils speak different language understood by the teacher. As some teachers (both newly qualified and experienced) put it:

...as for English, we were adequately prepared because I don't think English is a barrier and we were taught English methodology and I believe it was okay in helping us teach English.

In school, we do English methodology and through that course I am adequately prepared to teach and develop learners' language and literacy.

I can't help them because at that level they can't speak English apart from their local language and since their local language may be different from mine, I can't help them.

Student teachers have not been adequately prepared to teach at early grade classroom to develop learners' language and literacy because the courses offered at college does not provide them with skills to be able to develop learners' language.

...there are few colleges in the country who offer such courses. Akatsi College of Education is not one of those colleges. Therefore, students

who graduate from the college may not be prepared to teach at early grade classroom.

### **3.2 New things participants wish to see in the new curriculum**

In this section, the perception of participants in terms of the new things they wish to see in the new curriculum are examined. The responses of the participants were mildly spread but common, and thus were labelled under the following themes: (a) curriculum relevance; (b) new things in terms of courses and learning experiences; (c) new things/changes in terms of general pedagogy; and (d) new things/changes in terms of teaching practice and improved mentor support.

#### **3.2.1 Curriculum relevance**

The issues of curriculum relevance appeared as important to the participants (across all categories), as they consider it as a key step to enhancing quality and stimulating high-level confidence in the teachers' professional lives. The issues reflecting curriculum relevance, as identified in the responses of the participants, were varied, involving the need for a well-tailored curriculum that suits current needs and a more narrowed curriculum that pursues depth and recognizes skills achievements. Given that teaching is an art and arguably not an academic activity (Marzano, 2007), the participants contended that any future endeavour to amend the curriculum should shift focus away from passing academic exams. In this regard, the participants appealed that the content of the curriculum be reduced and be made practice-oriented, whilst ensuring that the new curriculum aligns with and is informed by the basic school syllabus. They also appealed for a consistent curriculum experiences in the CoEs, after highlighting that some CoEs offer early childhood whilst others do not. Some final-year students and basic teachers suggested:

Some of the courses are too loaded. Some needs to be taken out and the teachers should be trained according to their abilities so that when they come out, they teach what they are competent in

[the curriculum] must meet modern standard in terms of content

I wish most of the training be done through practice but not through exams. When training is done through exams, students don't take the methodology and competencies seriously, but are always focused on passing exams.

[the curriculum be made] more practice than content

More marks for practical because teaching is about delivery not bookish things

I am not proposing any major change but reduce some of the course content, so we can finish everything.

Further, the participants stated concerns pointing to the claim that a relevant curriculum addresses the needs of all students. Therefore, they asked that the curriculum should be sufficiently capable of stimulating student teachers to be able to handle pupils of different social, personal and economic brackets. They even provided a suggestion for the introduction of certain courses to support student teachers to teach all students regardless of their age, background, aptitude and ability. Associate with this is the need to improve the amount of emphasis placed on development of local language literacy in the CoEs, as suggested by some participants. In the words of some experienced teachers and tutors:

They need language development skills in order for them to be able to develop learners' language and literacy.

Local language comprehension should be critically looked at. We should blend local language with English in teaching in the college so that through our interaction the students can learn thing outside the normal lessons

...more detailed methodology and content in the language subjects and not rushed through it.

Practical knowledge in teaching language

### **3.2.2 New courses and learning experiences**

In what appears as providing support for a relevant curriculum, the participants, especially the final-year students and basic school teachers, shared concerns regarding the kind of courses and learning experiences they would like to be incorporated in the new curriculum. The courses and learning experiences suggested by the participants follow the need to address and strengthen certain areas of the teacher preparation,

including pedagogy, early childhood education, ICT, language and literacy development as shown in Table 2.

**Table 1: Suggested courses and learning experience**

Course/learning experience to be considered	Area of teacher education to address
Early childhood course	Early childhood education
Communicative skills	Language literacy
ICT courses	Technological pedagogical content knowledge
Curriculum studies	Basic school curriculum knowledge
Methodology courses	Pedagogical skills
Language games	Language literacy
Dot and box games	Handwriting/literacy
Word games	Pedagogy

Beyond the new introductions they wish to see, they also want learning experiences in the CoEs to be guided by modern school relevant technologies, otherwise called “EduTech”. Some other participants also suggested that some courses be made core for all CoEs students. For example, as some final-year students and basic school teachers stated:

We learnt research and assessment as a course. However, they are two broad courses, and this made it difficult to understand them.

ICT should be emphasized and make it more practical based

Because of technology, a lot of things have changed so I want them to include things that make us learn with technology. It wouldn't be to just pick a book and learn, write your exams and go.

The special needs should be a core subject because when you come to the field you meet a lot of challenges concerning special needs children. So at least if it becomes a core subject and you encounter such a problem you will know how to solve it.

Early childhood education is one of the courses I think when introduced in the DBE curriculum will have a great impact on the student teacher by enabling them to handle any class in the basic.

Psychology should be taught into details to give us enough knowledge on how to deal with children.

We must be exposed to the usage of some materials and tools especially with science when we go to the laboratory.

Whiles some tutors also added that:

I will suggest communication skills. This is because teachers should be able to communicate very well to their pupils to enable effective teaching and learning to take place.

I think that they should reintroduce communication skills and critical thinking as a general course for all students.

Training in managerial positions because some colleagues are made headmasters depending on the situation in the schools they are posted to and they lack skills and training in management.

They [i.e., student teachers] need the four basic skills in English language: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

We have to introduce presentation, developing good question skills, distribution of questions

### 3.2.3 General pedagogy

General pedagogy comprises all other things beyond the issues of curriculum, courses and learning experiences, which were suggested by the participants. It includes the strategies and techniques used to deliver the DBE curriculum in the CoEs. Amidst a general impression that the tutors in the CoEs are doing well in their job, the participants highlighted certain deficiencies with some tutors, including inability to use practical approaches to teach their subjects. Majority of the final-year students, teachers and almost all the circuit supervisors noted some of these deficiencies:

...the remaining 20%, some struggle to teach their subjects to the students understanding

Some were okay, and others were not. I specifically had a problem with my mathematics tutor. When she comes to class to teach, she will pass a comment like everything she is supposed to teach is in her head and will not explain things to you into detail

Some of the tutors have not been effective because when you go and observe them in the colleges teaching, they actually don't teach but lecture and rush through the subjects, so it is difficult for the students to grasp whatever they are teaching...

To be honest with you, I know some personally and they are not doing their best.

The participants advised that, the tutors should use effective teaching approaches that facilitate greater learning outcomes for student teachers. This becomes necessary especially when student teachers are not acquiring the teacher preparation for their

own sake, but for the benefit of pupils at the basic schools. Therefore, even though as the participants concurred earlier that the tutors are mostly effective, some of the participants stated that the tutors should make it a priority to ensure that student teachers acquire greater understanding of the content they are served at the CoEs. The participants also requested that the modes of assessment in the CoEs may be re-structured to measure not only content domain knowledge (i.e. cognitive domain) but also skills (e.g., psycho motor domain) and values (e.g., affective domain). Another thing the participants wish to be considered is an assessment model that confines examination to only the content learned within a particular semester. The production and utilization of TLMs during teaching and learning also appeared as one issue of importance to the participants. Some experienced teachers appealed:

Teachers should take their time when teaching and not assume we are matured so we should know some things and they should teach instead of lecture.

They should introduce different ways of assessment. For instance, if it is PE [physical education], we play football and you give us marks. We wouldn't get a fair idea of the whole thing if we are just writing it. It wouldn't give us the actual thing. Someone may not be able to write but may be able to do the physical thing, like in PE and ICT. In ICT, we can either type or do practical work for marks, rather than just writing exams.

Changes in how mathematics is taught in the various CoEs. Make it more practical. Teachers should model everything, so trainees understand exactly what is being taught.

The final-year students and newly qualified teachers also added:

The assessment method is not helping. It should be based on what you have been taught.

Assessment should be directed more towards learning and not evaluation.

More emphasis should be on skills acquisition and not knowledge based. I would love it when the college now becomes more practical oriented.

The government through the colleges should provide us with teaching and learning materials. Without the TLMs, teaching is not effective, and no impact could be made. It is difficult for the child to learn without concrete objects.

### 3.2.4 Teaching practice and improved mentor support

In respect of teaching practice (on-campus and/or off-campus), the participants expressed concerns that the curriculum should ensure that the teaching practice is effectively delivered and managed. This includes incorporating certain activities such as assigning tutors to the various basic schools and encouraging frequent visits to the schools by setting minimum visiting standards. Inferring from the responses of the participants, it appears they did not have much to say about the off-campus teaching practice except that they wish that other activities such as workshops, seminars and peer interaction (e.g., learning conversations) be introduced to augment the off-campus experiences. As some final-year students put it:

Beside teaching practice, I think peer teaching and on-campus teaching should be emphasized more.

Workshops for trainees, where we are taught different strategies of teaching.

Some teachers (2-3 years' experienced) also supported the suggestions as follows:

It will be nice to expose them [the student teachers] to some kind of seminars or workshops on teaching.

Workshops for teacher trainees to build on their knowledge and refresh themselves on what they know and also learn from other colleagues.

Workshops for teacher trainees to build on their knowledge and refresh themselves on what they know and, also, learn from other colleagues

Nevertheless, the participants especially the newly qualified teachers and college tutors, shared few concerns about the on-campus experiences. They requested for proper regulation of the on-campus teaching practice, where a well-established framework that ensures consistency in on-campus teaching practice activities in the CoEs and encourages participation of all student teachers. Inferring from their responses, the activities designed to be undertaken as part of on-campus teaching practice should be the same for all CoEs. Some of the participants hinted that some student teachers dodge the on-campus exercise, and so, proposed that teaching practice be made a high-stakes exercise to encourage positive attitude. They also

suggested that the timeframe of on-campus teaching practice be extended to allow significant practicum before the off-campus teaching practice. As some newly qualified teachers explained:

The period of teaching prior to teaching practice should be formalized and integrated into the mainstream curriculum.

The on-campus teaching practice should be well-organized by giving students enough notice [rather] than impromptu. There should be enough TLMs for us to use during the exercise and lastly extend the time for teaching. We are given limited time to teach.

Some tutors also entreated:

I would recommend what we call link tutors. We the tutors will be assigned to the various schools so that once a in while we visit them to check if they are practicing what we trained them for and also to give advice.

For the on-campus, I will wish student teachers would get more time to practice.

The OCTP [on-campus teaching practice] should be effective. I remember during my time I was made to teach only once which is not effective. The number of times student teach should be extended.

In terms of mentor support, the participants wish to see improved supervisions by the mentors and lead mentors. This is necessary to boost the skill development and the role acquisition of the student-teachers. Invariably, teaching practice supervision should stimulate the professional development of student teachers in all critical or focal areas of teaching (Ngara, Ngwarai and Ngara, 2013). Consistent with the aforementioned assertion, the participants wish that the mentors extend their role to include guiding the student teachers during extracurricular activities, supporting them to produce and utilize relevant teaching and learning materials. Some final-year students remarked:

They should always be present while we are teaching to correct us when we go on the wrong path or get a concept wrong.

Our mentors can also help us outside the class during extra curriculum activities.

[The mentors and lead mentors should] involve themselves in extra curricula activities.

Some basic school teachers also clarified:

I would have wished he helped in getting appropriate TLMs and was around to direct me more by pointing out my mistakes and areas I was doing well but he wasn't always around, and I handled the class by myself most of the time and it was a large class.

I wish they [i.e. mentors and lead mentors] involve themselves more in extracurricular activities.

In the words of some circuit supervisors:

To sit in the classroom, see the lesson notes the mentees have prepared and guide the mentees to deliver the lesson, note the positives of the mentees and encourage them to maintain or keep it up and suggest ways of improving on their weaknesses.

...they [i.e. mentors] should teach for them [i.e. student teachers] to observe, they [i.e. mentors] should correct them, lesson notes preparation. The only problem is when at times they [i.e. mentors] don't leave the class for them.

### **3.2.5 Raise minimum qualification for teachers**

A greater proportion of participants across all categories supported the notion that the teaching profession be made a “degree only” profession. Even though a few of the participants, especially the tutors thought the CoEs may not be ready to offer degree programmes, most of the participants thought that the idea is welcome. The participants shared the view that raising teacher education to a degree profession will help address the situation where teachers abandoned the classroom in pursuit of degree qualifications at the universities. As evident in the responses of some of the teachers (with 2-3 years' experience):

...this will prevent us from going to spend more time after our diploma to acquire a degree. And this can easily be done because most of the things are treated in the diploma, so it is just a matter of adding a few to top-up a degree.

If it's going to be a straight four-year thing, it's going to be helpful.

Acknowledging that a degree qualification has a four-year duration, the participants reckoned that the move will ensure that the curriculum in the CoEs is completed within a flexible timeframe. Some final-year students and newly qualified teachers made the following submissions:

...So that we can cover everything we need to cover and also have time to do our teaching practice and not think about course work and project work while we do teaching practice.

So, we can have more time to cover a lot and do more teaching practice.

Well looking at the current curriculum and with the coming in of T-TEL and various suggestions as to how teaching should be done, I think we need more time.

Some of the participants also mentioned that when teaching is made a degree profession, it would contribute to ensuring parity of esteem among student-teachers in the CoEs. As a few of the experienced teachers (2-3 years' experience) aptly put it:

...so, we are also respected like the degree holders are.

It will also increase the love for the profession and the necessary respect will be accorded.

...Just so we maintain consistency with the universities.

### **3.3 Aspects of teacher preparation to emphasise in the new curriculum**

This section explores areas of teacher preparation that the new curriculum should emphasize. It highlights the key issues and concerns that emerged as important to the participants. Four themes emerged, namely curriculum relevance, pedagogy, use of TLMs and ICT and language policy.

#### **3.3.1 Curriculum suitability**

The curriculum drives all school activities in the CoEs. For this reason, the participants appeared not to mince words anytime they spoke about the curriculum. Issues regarding the content of the curriculum generated common concerns pointing to the lack of relevance of the DBE curriculum. As suggested by the responses of the participants, the curriculum should emphasize and promote learning content that has direct application in the basic schools and real life. In expressing their desire to see a curriculum that responds to the needs of both the student teachers and the pupils in the basic schools, the participants want future reforms to focus on addressing the suitability of the DBE curriculum. The participants suggested that issues such as the

breadth of the curriculum and assessment models in the CoE should be given a critical consideration. Examples of this assertion are provided by the basic school teachers (both newly qualified and experienced):

It should be reduced because too much pressure is on the student to cover a lot within a short period. (i.e.) two years for content and one year for teaching practice.

The curriculum must be reviewed so that they can introduce only courses that will enlighten the teacher

I prefer the content knowledge be more specific to the basic school curriculum so that student teachers will be comfortable teaching them at the basic schools.

Similar perspective was expressed by some final-year students:

They should let us go through the syllabus of the primary school, their topics, so that it won't be a tough thing for us if we are to use them.

Review curriculum to respond to needs of the basic schools. Reduce course outline load.

### 3.3.2 Pedagogy issues

Pedagogy, which most of the participants referred to as methodology, emerged as one focal area with significant implication on school activities, and ultimately school outcomes, and which the curriculum must emphasize. As evident in the answers of the participants, methodology helps in the overall stock knowledge including the essential skills of the teachers needed to facilitate and foster learning and intended school outcomes. The implication is that the curriculum should consider exposing student teachers to various contemporary teaching skills and devising activity-based learning experiences for student teachers such as presentations, cooperative learning etc. As some tutors surmise:

We have to look at both content and methodology. Everything they do here should be able to equip them adequately to handle what they need when they start teaching at the basic level.

We have to introduce presentation, developing good question skills, distribution of questions, group discussions and learning.

Streamline the course structures to include more methodology and practical

Emphasis on methodology and practice

Align the curriculum and emphasize on ICT and methodology of teaching,

### 3.3.3 Use of TLMs and ICT

The issues of TLM and the application of relevant technologies to teaching and learning were dominant in the interview responses. The role of teaching aids within the context of visual, auditory and kinetic learning cannot be overemphasized, given that learning can take place through seeing, hearing/reciting and doing. Recognizing this perspective, the participants spoke about the absence of adequate TLMs in the colleges, which leads to low utilization of TLMs by tutors in the colleges. Additionally, the participants mentioned the lack of ICT use in the colleges. As some of the participants suggested, this may have huge implications on student teachers' competence to produce and utilize TLM when they are posted to schools. In view of this, the participants rendered various suggestions to the effect that the use of TLMs and ICT in the colleges have become imperative to drive the kinds of change desirable in the teacher education sector. Some final-year students have these to say:

Teachers in the colleges should adopt the use of teaching and learning materials because without it teaching is very difficult, let alone to understand it. If we don't get the concept well, we can also not impact to the pupils.

Teachers should use more ICT in their teaching and preparing lesson notes and learn the use of appropriate TLMs.

Teachers should take their time to teach and use TLMs.

Also, some basic school teachers offered the following submissions:

Kids learn through tangible and concrete thing, so I believe student teachers should be exposed to how to use concrete and real objects to teach and not abstract things.

Tutors should use more ICT in their style of teaching.

Apart from this, there should be more exposure to ICT and modern libraries and lecture halls with projectors to make the whole learning experience modern and by extension, a better teacher is produced.

### 3.3.4 Language issues, especially Ghanaian languages

Teaching and promoting the acquisition of language and literacy in the basic schools appear not to have generated the needed level of attention, as per the responses of the participants. It would appear a well-structured framework to guide the teaching of language, especially Ghanaian languages in all the colleges has been absent. Subsequently, the teaching of local languages varies from college to college and posting of student teachers to the field is done in a manner that does not, at all times, pay attention to graduate teacher's local language competence in relation to the areas they are posted to. For instance, some teachers who were interviewed indicated that they studied their native languages but are expected to teach and develop in students a different language. The situation poses challenges to teachers when they get on the field. As some basic school teachers (especially the experienced teachers) put it:

I haven't been all that prepared. The Ghanaian language I did in school wasn't that detailed like English. I can't even read or write well in the Ghanaian language.

Early grade classroom use Ghanaian language and I did Ga [a local language spoken by the natives of the Greater Accra region] but find myself in Dangme land, so I don't think I can or was adequately prepared in school to teach at the early grade classroom.

No because we are taught only Dangme in the CoE so if you find yourself in a non-Dangme area, you can't instruct the pupils in their language and that will be a problem.

If I find myself in a school or community that speaks my L1 [first language/mother tongue], that is when I can use my Ghanaian language as a means of instruction.

we speak the Ghanaian language, but we are not adequately prepared at the college to use the Ghanaian language as a means of instruction and the teacher trainee also takes the Ghanaian language for granted

A majority of the basic school teachers agreed that they can teach and develop literacy in the English language with ease. Given that English language is largely the medium

of instruction in the colleges, it was not surprising that the participants were confident that student teachers possess the competence to develop English language literacy in the upper primary and junior high school. Additionally, they mentioned that they had studied some courses to equip them to teach English. Some teacher said:

Yes. English was taught well, and I am conversant with the structure of the language and so with the methodology, I can use English as a means of instruction when posted to upper primary and JHS.

We are okay with it. I am adequately prepared because I can use simple English Language to teach. We did English methodology that includes [English] grammar, [English] comprehension and all the others. The methods of teaching ICT was in English and all words of ICT are in English so with that, I think I can teach.

Inferring from the responses of the participants, it is important to have a framework that guide the training offered to student teachers in respect of local language development competencies and how postings are done. In the opinions of some of the newly qualified and experienced teachers, the development of local language competencies among the student teachers should be given utmost priority, given current policy directions which puts local language at forefront of pupils' language literacy development. Some experienced teachers explained:

I think they should approach the language issues with the local language first. Now they've introduced the Ghanaian language with the notion that when the child is able to read in the Ghanaian language first, it helps them to read in the English Language. So, I think they should focus more on the Ghanaian Language.

The Ghanaian language shouldn't be optional they should have exposed us to all of them. In most colleges the Ghanaian language is Twi, so I think the language part should be more.

### **3.4 Summary**

This chapter has presented the analysis and findings of the study. Over one hundred transcripts were obtained from the audio recordings of semi structured interviews conducted with the various participants with a number of important issues emerging. The participants included circuit supervisors, current final-year students, basic school teachers with 2-3 years' experience (in maths, science and English), newly qualified

teachers (maths, science and english) and CoE tutors. Table 3 provides the summary of the results of the themes and sub themes that emerged from the analysis, comprising the overall effectiveness of the DBE (strength and defects), new things to see in a new curriculum, and emphasis in the new curriculum.

Table 2: Summary of study findings

Overall effectiveness of the DBE (strengths and defects)	New things to see in a new curriculum	Areas of emphasis in the new curriculum
<p><b><u>Strengths of the DBE curriculum</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic school teacher effectiveness.</li> <li>• Good content knowledge.</li> <li>• Effective general pedagogy.</li> <li>• CoEs tutors are more effective in their teaching</li> <li>• Effective practicum and mentors support</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Defects of the DBE curriculum</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBE curriculum is not well matched with realities in the schools</li> <li>• DBE curriculum is over-loaded</li> <li>• DBE curriculum is heavily centred on passing exams than producing good teachers</li> <li>• Little emphasis on language and literacy development</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Curriculum relevance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrade curriculum standards</li> <li>• Reduction of courses in the new curriculum</li> <li>• More content and practice in the new curriculum</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Courses/learning experiences</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early childhood courses</li> <li>• ICT courses</li> <li>• Methodology courses</li> <li>• Languages games</li> <li>• Literacy/Communication skills</li> <li>• Curriculum studies</li> </ul> <p><b><u>General pedagogy</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquisition of new skills</li> <li>• Assessment methods</li> <li>• Introduction of Teaching models</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Beside teaching practice</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops for student-teachers</li> <li>• Seminars for student-teacher</li> <li>• Peer teaching among student-teachers</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Raise minimum qualification for teachers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure consistency in CoEs and university</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Curriculum suitability</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote curriculum relevance</li> <li>• Learning content align with school realities</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Pedagogy issues</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective methodologies</li> <li>• Professional development of tutor</li> <li>• Devise school-based learning activities</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Use of TLMs &amp; ICT</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporation of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) in teaching and learning.</li> <li>• Integration of ICT in teaching and learning activities.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Emphasis of local language development</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote use of local language on CoEs</li> <li>• Post teachers on the basis of their background and proficiency in local languages</li> </ul>

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.1 Conclusions

Following relentless commitments to address the challenges in the teacher education sector in the country, T-TEL commissioned the Curriculum Reform Study as part of the activities to finalise the development of a new CoE curriculum. Per the study, it can be concluded even though the DBE curriculum has not sufficiently addressed the needs of the various participants, they generally valued the teacher preparation imperatives of the curriculum. The participants pointed out several strengths of the DBE curriculum, which provides lessons for the new curriculum and thus, must be sustained. These strengths include the DBE curriculum contributing to overall basic school teacher effectiveness and considerably supporting inclusive education. By implication, the new curriculum should continue to afford student teachers the opportunity to master a range of academic content and pedagogies required for classroom success. This requires a sustainable improvement in the effectiveness of the CoEs tutors to develop and foster in student teachers' essential skills to promote learning of all pupils irrespective of their age, background, and ability.

On-campus teaching practice needs to improve, as the functionality of teaching practice experiences and mentor support especially during on-campus teaching practice in the CoEs are key drivers to making effective teachers. Additionally, addressing issues relating to curriculum load and relevance, language literacy development (especially local language) and producing good teachers with essential skills are critical to the success of the impending curriculum reform. Keys issues highlighted for consideration in developing the new curriculum:

- i. Reduced curriculum
- ii. Suitable curriculum that meet the imperative of the basic school classrooms

- iii. A curriculum that awards skills achievements and builds teaching portfolio
- iv. A paradigm shift in assessment policy towards assessment for learning
- v. Tutors effectiveness: pedagogy issues in the CoEs
- vi. Increase emphasis on on-campus teaching practice
- vii. Improved mentor support in the schools
- viii. Increased utilization of ICT
- ix. Increased development and use of TLMs

## **4.2 Recommendations**

Based on the results and conclusions, the following recommendations are made for consideration;

1. In leading the development of a new curriculum for colleges, T-TEL working in partnership with NTCE may explore the opportunity of developing a depth over breadth curriculum and a curriculum that reflects the content taught in basic schools.
2. The new curriculum should consider the use of varied assessment approaches particularly teaching portfolio as a means to rewarding skills achievements of student teachers.
3. The NTCE, the national teaching council and the national accreditation board, working collaboratively, must make on-campus teaching practice a high stake in-school activity and in a well-coordinated manner so that teachers can have sufficient support during off campus teaching practice.
4. In designing a new curriculum, T-TEL in collaboration with relevant teacher education service providers should review and recommend contemporary teaching and professional development approaches such as cooperative learning, peer tutoring and community of practice.
5. MoE should incorporate into the existing language policy a requirement for all CoEs to teach local language courses for a minimum credit hour.

6. The MoE should consider developing a teacher recruitment, deployment and retention and to guide the posting of teachers to schools on the basis of their background knowledge, ability or proficiency in a particular local language. Otherwise, teachers who are posted to localities where they do not understand the native language should teach at the upper primary or JHS where the local language policy of medium of instruction terminates.
7. Ghana Education Service should strengthen efforts in the provision of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) in the CoEs and schools, as access to resources is limited for beginning teachers.
8. The MoE to develop and implement a national CoE 'ICT policy' to guide the integration of ICT in CoEs.
9. The MoE should strengthen investment in ICT infrastructure in the CoEs, following a framework that ensure a consistent CT infrastructural growth in the colleges.
10. The MoE through the Ghana education Service and District Assemblies should encourage school-based workshops to sensitize and educate mentors and lead mentors on emerging models of supervision.

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## Annex I

### DETAILED METHODOLOGY

#### Research design and sample

The study employed a qualitative research approach to research. Interviews were the main source of data. Interviews allow people to discuss issues from their own perspective and in their own words (Armah, 2015). This can help the researcher to understand a given phenomenon from the participants' points of view and to uncover the meaning of their experiences. The interviews were structured according to an interview guides (see Annex II) that outlined themes to be covered during the interview. Although the interview guide specified questions in advance, a reflective approach was taken to explore emergent themes and ideas depending on responses and reactions of the participants. Prior to administering the final interview schedules, they were subjected to extensive reviews to ensure that the items or questions would be interpreted in a manner intended. In addition, the interview schedule was reviewed by other senior education consultants working with T-TEL.

The study reflects the perspectives of a range and diversity of stakeholders, so some key criteria were used to build variation into the sample. This included using a purposive sampling approach to select participants who possess the relevant depth of knowledge and understanding of the issues under investigation. Prior to selecting the groups of participants, convenient sampling technique was used to select the study locations (i.e. districts) including the CoEs. In all, 105 participants from five districts were involved in the study. The participants were given a consent form to read and sign. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the participants.

**Table 3: Characteristics of the respondents**

District Name	College Name	Final-Year students	College tutors	Newly qualified teachers (NQTs)	Basic school teacher (1-3	Circuit supervisors
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		years' experience)				
Akatsi south	Akatsi CoE	5	5	5	5	1
Akwapim South	Presbyterian CoE (Aburi Akwapim)	5	5	5	5	1
Damgbe East	Ada CoE	5	5	5	5	1
Yoli Krobo	Mount Mary CoE	5	5	5	5	1
New Juaben	SDA CoE	5	5	5	5	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>

### 2.1.2 Data collection procedure

Five data collectors were trained and assigned to each of the five participating districts (see Annex III for the list of data collectors and collection sites). The data collectors conducted interviews with the participants, focusing on key issues that could address the three research questions identified above. The interviews highlighted issues related to curriculum design, and overall effectiveness of the DBE curriculum in addressing specific aspects of teacher education,. Each interview began with the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality and a brief introduction to the purpose of the interview, with the view to stimulating a cordial and formal learning conversations within a predefined ethical framework. This was done to invite participants to feel unrestricted to provide useful information. The interview questions were generally similar among the categories of participants, although there were slight variations to some of the questions for some participants. For instance, some questions were meant for newly qualified teachers whilst others were meant for circuit supervisors. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed following key decisions on data representation, data reduction and interpretation. The data collection lasted two weeks, from 20<sup>th</sup> November to 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2017.

### 2.1.3 Data coding and analysis

Subsequent to data collection, the interview transcripts were exported to the QSR NVivo 11.0 programme and a comprehensive process of data coding and

identification of themes was undertaken<sup>1</sup>. For example, the main theme “new curriculum” emerged from the responses of some of the participants regarding the new things they want to see in the new DBE curriculum. Sub themes such as courses and experience, curriculum appropriateness, general pedagogy, improved mentor support and teaching practice were generated under the main theme.

In this study, NVivo<sup>2</sup> was used principally as a coding support tool rather than a project management tool as is often the case in qualitative data analysis (Davidson and Jacobs, 2008). The overall analytical approach adopted largely followed the conventions of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), where the researcher identified, analysed, and reported patterns (themes) within data. Thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool, that can provide a rich and detailed yet complex account of data.

A process of reflexivity, where interpretation of the data was devoid of the researcher’s presumptions and standpoints, was duly observed during the data analysis. Whilst the process of reflexivity satisfies ethical requirements, it also provides transparent and rigorous benefits to the data analysis process (Armah, 2015).

## **2.2 Trustworthiness of the Analysis and Results**

The validity and reliability (or trustworthiness) of qualitative research generally cannot be addressed in the same way as in quantitative studies. A series of strategies were used to reduce the potential for subjective bias associated often with qualitative research and to establish trustworthiness. The trustworthiness and authenticity of this

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<sup>1</sup> The process includes sorting the different codes (or nodes) into themes and bringing together all the relevant coded texts under identified themes. Sub-themes were equally developed from the data and related codes were labelled under them within the main themes to code the texts and break them down into more manageable chunks.

<sup>2</sup> NVivo is one of several computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) that helps a researcher to examine features and relationships in texts and organise their data (Gibbs, 2002)

study can be judged in terms of its credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability (Guba, 1990).

### **2.2.1 Credibility**

Credibility is the ability of the study to demonstrably reflect the phenomena under study or to ensure the results reflect the views expressed by the participants through accurate recording of events (Armah, 2017). A proportion (10 percent) of the participants were telephoned, requiring them to confirm the transcribed data as an accurate account of the information they had shared during the interviews. This is often referred to as member-checking and ensures that the findings are accurate from the perspective of both the lead researcher and the participants (Creswell, 2003). Credibility was also enhanced through the researcher's reflexivity described earlier.

### **2.2.2 Dependability**

Dependability refers to whether the procedures and processes used to collect and interpret the data can be tracked (Merriam, 2009). In this study, the logic used for selecting participants to interview including the procedures, processes and methods has been clearly presented. This includes the research design and its implementation and the operational detail of the data collection process. Such information allows readers to assess the extent to which proper research practices have been followed as well as enabling them to develop a thorough understanding of the methods applied.

### **2.2.3. Transferability**

Transferability can be demonstrated by showing that the findings have applicability in other contexts since generalisability in the manner prescribed by quantitative studies is impossible to achieve in qualitative findings. In this study, efforts were made to enable transferability of the findings by providing a rich and detailed description of the context and the phenomenon that was investigated. By describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail, one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the

conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

#### **2.2.4. Conformability**

Conformability reflects the extent to which findings could be confirmed by others (Opie, 2004). Thus, reference to literature and findings of other authors that confirm the interpretations, in addition to perspectives and interpretations by data collectors were used to strengthen the conformability of the study (Opie, 2004).

## Annex II

### Interview schedule

#### Curriculum Reform Study

#### Interview with Year 3 Students

##### Pre-discussion tasks:

1. Welcome participant
2. Assure confidentiality
3. Confirm consent for participation and tape recording or take note (confirm that they have signed the consent form)
4. Establish permissive environment (no wrong answers)

##### Introduction:

Thank you for taking part in this research and for agreeing to be interviewed. I am an independent consultant working on behalf of T-TEL. This interview will not last more than an hour. The aim of the interview is to;

1. Seek your understanding and expectation of a curriculum which the current DBE curriculum is lacking
2. Examine what you will like to see in a new curriculum
3. Explore which aspect of the new curriculum you want emphasised and why

Please remember there are no correct or incorrect responses; so please feel free to speak your mind and be as honest as possible. We hope that your opinions and reflections will help towards writing a new curriculum. Just to confirm, all information that we collect during this discussion will be confidential. If we quote anything you say in a report, your name, position or college will **not** be used – you will only be identified as ‘a basic school teacher’.

This interview will be recorded and transcribed; but all of the information will be kept in a secure place and only members of our research team will be able to access it. *(Allow for questions and begin recording).*

<b>Central discussion questions:</b>	
Thematic Questions	Probes
<b>A. How effective has the training/preparation of student-teachers through the DBE curriculum been with regards to equipping them to teach basic school curriculum</b>	
1. Overall, how effective has the DBE curriculum been in equipping you to teach the basic school curriculum?	
2. How effective has the content knowledge courses of the DBE curriculum been in ensuring that you are well-prepared to deliver the basic school curriculum?	
3. How does the structure of the DBE Curriculum align with modern and effective models to preparing teachers to teach the basic schools?	
4. How effective has the educational and professional studies courses been in equipping you in the following areas:  i. Classroom management ii. Assessment competencies iii. Knowledge of the basic school curriculum iv. Motivational competencies v. Reflective practices vi. Knowledge of children develop and learn	

5. Have you taken some course in pedagogy? If yes can you give us the name of one or two courses you took in pedagogy? If no why?	
6. Is the duration of DBE curriculum adequate in ensuring that you are well equipped with the needful knowledge and skills? If yes, why? If no, why not?	
7. With regards to preparing you with the DBE curriculum to teach at the basic school, how effective has your tutors been in delivering quality instruction?	
<b>B. How effective is the support from mentors to mentees during internship/teaching practice</b>	
1. Generally can you describe your teaching practice experience especially with regards to your mentor/lead mentor	
2. What specific activities does your mentor do to support you during teaching practice?	
3. Are there any other activities you would have expected your mentor/lead mentor to support you with during teaching practice?	
4. What other options will you recommend besides teaching practice?	
5. Would you say through the teaching practice programme you are adequately prepared to support pupils	
6. Is the current timeframe for teaching practice enough? If yes why? If no why?	
7. What are some of the benefits to be derived from teaching practice?	<b>Interviewer</b> probe benefit to (mentors, mentees, College of Education, partner schools and pupils)
8. Would you say you are adequately being prepared to support all pupils learning regardless of their age, background, aptitude and ability? If yes, can you give me some examples of how this is being done? If not, why do you think this is so?	
9. Have you been taken through some course/preparation prior to embarking on teaching practice? If yes what does it entail? If no why?	
10. Kindly share with me some course(s) that you think should be introduced in the curriculum for training teachers to enable them support pupils learning regardless of their age, backgrounds and abilities.	
11. What other experiences do you think student teachers should be exposed to during their training to prepare them adequately to support pupils learning?	

<b>C. How well prepared do you think CoE student-teachers are for teaching and developing learners' language and literacy</b>	
1. As a student-teacher, do you think you have been adequately prepared to teach and develop learners' language and literacy? Probe for reasons for answer.	
2. What content knowledge do you think you need to teach and develop learners' language and literacy?	
3. What pedagogical skills do you need to teach and develop pupil's language and literacy?	
4. What activities do you think student-teachers should be exposed to equip them teach and develop learners' language and literacy?	
<b>D. In what ways can the training of CoE students be strengthened to improve the preparation of teachers (if KG to P3 to use Ghanaian language for instruction; if P4 and above English as language of instruction)</b>	
1. As a student teacher, do you think you have been adequately prepared to teach at early grade classroom to develop learners' language and literacy? Probe for reasons for answer.	
2. Are you adequately prepared to use Ghanaian language for instruction when posted to early grade classroom? If yes, can you describe how? If not why do you think so?	
3. Are you adequately prepared to use English language for instruction when posted to upper primary and JHS classroom? If yes, can you describe how? If not why do you think so?	
<b>E. How well prepared do you think trainee-teachers are for teaching and developing numeracy skills of pupils</b>	
<sup>31</sup> 1. Are you adequately prepared to teach and develop pupil's numeracy skills? If yes, can you give me some examples? If not why do you think so?	
<b>F. Overall what are/were the positive things about your training as a student-teacher?</b>	
<b>G. What things do you want to see changed in the existing DBE curriculum for training teachers</b>	
1. Please tell me three things you want to see introduced/emphasised in the structure of DBE curriculum?	

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<p>2. What changes do you wish to see introduced in the DBE programme in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Curriculum</li> <li>ii. Pedagogy</li> <li>iii. Assessment</li> </ul>	
<p>3. What are the changes you wish to see in the on- and off- campus teaching practice?</p>	
<p><b>H. What areas of teacher training do you want to see improvements to make someone a better teacher</b></p>	
<p><b>I. What ideas do you have regarding the curriculum for training-teachers at the CoE and the Universities</b></p>	
<p>1. Tell me the issues of concern with regards to the differences/similarities in the curriculum for training teachers at the CoEs and Universities?</p>	
<p>2. In your opinion how can we ensure consistency in the curriculum being offered at the CoEs and Universities</p>	
<p>3. In your opinion how can we ensure competition in the teacher training curriculum being offered at the CoEs and Universities</p>	
<p>4. What strategies should be employed by both the CoEs and Universities that train teachers to ensure the training of quality teachers</p>	
<p>5. Please tell me the two most important ideas that should be emphasised in the curriculum of teacher training if teacher preparation should become a degree only profession</p>	
<p>6. In your opinion, will you prefer that teaching is made a degree only profession? If yes why? If no why not?</p>	

### Annex III

#### List of data collectors and associated districts

Name of Data Collector	Name of College	District
Geoffery Horkpo Fummey	Akatsi CoE	Akatsi South District Assembly
Dr. Kwame Butakor	Presby Woman's CoE, Aburi	Akwapim South Municipal Assembly
Francis Amos Wahajah	Ada CoE	Dangbe East District Assembly
Mary Kporwodu	Mount Mary CoE	Dangbe East District Assembly
Abdul- Ghafar Adam	SDA CoE	New Juaben Municipal assembly

## Annex IV

### Dataset (Sample – Tutor interview)

#### Curriculum Reform Study

#### Interview with College Tutors

##### Pre-discussion tasks:

5. Welcome participant
6. Assure confidentiality
7. Confirm consent for participation and tape recording or take note (confirm that they have signed the consent form)
8. Establish permissive environment (no wrong answers)

##### Introduction:

Thank you for taking part in this research and for agreeing to be interviewed. I am an independent consultant working on behalf of T-TEL. This interview will not last more than an hour. The aim of the interview is to;

1. Seek your understanding and expectation of a curriculum which the current DBE curriculum is lacking
2. Examine what you will like to see in a new curriculum
3. Explore which aspect of the new curriculum you want emphasised and why

Please remember there are no correct or incorrect responses; so please feel free to speak your mind and be as honest as possible. We hope that your opinions and reflections will help towards writing a new curriculum. Just to confirm, all information that we collect during this discussion will be confidential. If we quote anything you say in a report, your name, position or college will **not** be used – you will only be identified as ‘a basic school teacher’.

This interview will be recorded and transcribed; but all of the information will be kept in a secure place and only members of our research team will be able to access it. (*Allow for questions and begin recording*).

<b>Central discussion questions:</b>	
Thematic Questions	Probes
<b>B. How effective has the training/preparation of student-teachers through the DBE curriculum been with regards to equipping them to teach basic school curriculum</b>	
8. Overall, how effective has the DBE curriculum been in equipping student teachers to teach the basic school curriculum?  <i>Response- On the whole, I will say it has been effective because this current curriculum has helped in preparing students with what it takes to be a teacher. However, my issue of concern is that we have limited time to complete the curriculum as a result, we are unable to take them through everything and other areas like project work and presentations. Lastly, the curriculum is too theoretical for my liking</i>	
9. How effective has the content knowledge courses of the DBE curriculum been in ensuring that student teachers are well-prepared to deliver the basic school curriculum?  <i>Response- On the content I will say it is the best. For example, in English, it covers every aspect of the English language at the basic school level like literature, grammar, comprehension and writing</i>	

<p>10. How does the structure of the DBE Curriculum align with modern and effective models to preparing teachers to teach the basic schools?</p> <p><i>Response- By the appropriate use of TLMs and using modern technology like laptop and projectors when teaching. I use a laptop and projector during teaching. Again, I use the internet to search for materials and information on my courses so I stay relevant and use and cite current examples when I am teaching. I also use PowerPoint during my presentations which I teach the students as well</i></p>	
<p>11. How effective has the educational and professional studies courses been in equipping student teachers in the following areas:</p> <p><i>Classroom management- With classroom management, they learn what we call good primary practice which entails knowing and teaching them what to do before, during and after lessons and managing multi-level classes. This entails teaching the students to recognize the differences in the backgrounds of pupils and knowing how to teach them accordingly</i></p> <p><i>Assessment competencies- With assessment, we teach them profile dimension .Emphasize the use of certain verbs when assessing pupils during setting of exams questions. We teach them to assess pupils on three things, which is (1) knowledge. They asking them to recall, define, list, name and mention, second is understanding where they should ask question on explanation, asking pupils to summarize, rewrite and give examples. Thirdly, Application. Which is requiring pupils to read a text, write, compare and compose</i></p> <p><i>Knowledge of the basic school curriculum- Knowledge of basic school curriculum is a course we teach them. It is called curriculum studies. Again, we teach them to understand that English is a language across every curriculum in the basic school so that they understand that whatever subject they teach, English is the medium of instruction</i></p> <p><i>Motivational competencies-Teach them to use both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation mechanisms. With intrinsic, they learn how to use what is inside the child to motivate them and for the extrinsic, it involves teachers appreciating pupils in class like giving of rewards like pencils, erasers etc which goes a long way to motivate the pupils.</i></p> <p><i>Reflective practices- In teaching good primary practices, we encourage them to do reflective practices and infact take them through how to do it because it will serve as a guide in knowing what to do right at every stage be it before, during and after lessons</i></p> <p><i>Knowledge of children develop and learn- In teaching them how to manage multi level classes, we teach child psychology as well so students learn and acknowledge various developmental stages of children and the characteristics of every stage and what to expect when teaching pupils at these various stages</i></p>	
<p>12. Have student teachers taken some course in pedagogy? If yes can you give us the name of one or two courses you took in pedagogy? If no why?</p> <p><i>Response- Yes they have. That is method and skills in teaching English</i></p>	
<p>13. Is the duration of DBE curriculum adequate in ensuring that you are well equipped with the needful knowledge and skills? If yes, why? If no, why not?</p> <p><i>Response- The duration is not adequate because they do OCTP and that takes part of the 2 years meant for content so we will need more time to complete the content so that they can get enough from us before going to the field to do their</i></p>	

<p><i>teaching practice. It is because the duration is not adequate that is why after teaching practice, they have to come to school to write their exams. If the time were to be adequate, this wouldn't be the practice so I propose they do 4 semesters on campus, go for teaching practice for one semester and come back to school to do another semester</i></p>	
<p>14. How effective have you been in preparing student teachers with the DBE curriculum to teach at the basic school?</p> <p><i>Response- I teach my subject well. That is English, I give assignments, group presentations, use laptop and projector to teach, I use the right TLMs, I give them professional advice and how to comport themselves in the society as a teacher and be a role model</i></p>	
<p><b>B. How effective is the support from mentors to mentees during internship/teaching practice</b></p>	
<p>12. Generally can you describe teaching practice experience especially with regards to mentor/lead mentor</p> <p><i>Response- The teaching practice has a good aim but some of the students take it as playing ground because there is no regular and proper supervision. It is only when they hear we are coming for monitoring that they try to do the right thing and be serious. Additionally, their mentors are not empowered to assess them and the tutors who are suppose to assess them, don't do it regularly so as it stand nobody know what they are doing on the field because this whole semester, we have not gone for monitoring</i></p>	
<p>13. What specific activities do mentors mentor do to support student teachers during teaching practice?</p> <p><i>Response- Take them through the marking of register, preparation of continuous assessment which we don't do here at the college and setting of exams questions.</i></p>	
<p>14. Are there any other activities you would have expected mentor/lead mentor to do to support student teachers with during teaching practice?</p> <p><i>Response- See to it that mentees come to class regularly and punctually</i></p>	
<p>15. What other options will you recommend besides teaching practice?</p> <p><i>Response- I think so far so good with the teaching practice. We only have to strengthen the monitoring aspect. It will be better if we go for monitoring say every two weeks</i></p>	
<p>16. Would you say through the teaching practice programme student teachers are adequately prepared to support pupils</p> <p><i>Response- Yes I will say so regardless of the challenges, it is helping to prepare the students to support pupils.</i></p>	
<p>17. Is the current timeframe for teaching practice enough? If yes why? If no why?</p> <p><i>Response- It is more than adequate. A whole year is just too much. It gives them the opportunity to fool about. If it is just for a day and there is proper monitoring, I believe that is better than giving them a whole year for them to fool about without proper monitoring.</i></p>	
<p>18. What are some of the benefits to be derived from teaching practice?</p> <p><i>Response- The benefits are enormous. To the mentees, they get to put into practice whatever that they have learnt in school. They also get practical experience in teaching. To the pupils, they learn new things and new methods of learning from the mentee. Again, they are motivated by the presence of the</i></p>	<p><b>Interviewer</b> probe benefit to (mentors, mentees, College of</p>

<p><i>mentees. The mentees serve as a supplement for the mentors as they reduce the workload on the mentors. The mentors also learn new methods and skills in teaching from the mentees. For the college of education, there is space created for the new students and less pressure on the facilities on campus</i></p>	<p>Education, partner schools and pupils)</p>
<p>19. Would you say student teachers are adequately being prepared to support all pupils learning regardless of their age, background, aptitude and ability? If yes, can you give me some examples of how this is being done? If not, why do you think this is so?</p> <p><i>Response- I believe so because the curriculum equips them with practical skills and methodology to teach so I believe they are being prepared adequately but we need time to complete the curriculum</i></p>	
<p>20. Have student teachers been taken through some course/preparation prior to embarking on teaching practice? If yes what does it entail? If no why?</p> <p><i>Response- Yes. The OCTP is a preparatory programme for them prior to teaching practice.</i></p>	
<p>21. Kindly share with me some course(s) that you think should be introduced in the curriculum for training teachers to enable them support pupils learning regardless of their age, backgrounds and abilities.</p> <p><i>Response- Syntax. Syntax will expose the students to the structure of the English language and secondly, grammar. Even though grammar is taught in the college, it is not adequate in equipping and preparing students because the grammar they are taught is more like communication skills so they need a grasp on the grammar.</i></p>	
<p>22. What other experiences do you think student teachers should be exposed to during their training to prepare them adequately to support pupils learning?</p> <p><i>Response- Well for the English department, I can't think of any other experience. Maybe tutors from the other departments will have some ideas</i></p>	
<p><b>C. How well prepared do you think CoE student-teachers are for teaching and developing learners' language and literacy</b></p>	
<p>7. As a tutor, do you think student teachers have been adequately prepared to teach and develop learners' language and literacy? Probe for reasons for answer.</p> <p><i>Response- Yes I believe so to some extent because they are taught content and methodology in teaching English with the exception of syntax</i></p>	
<p>8. What content knowledge do you think student teachers need to teach and develop learners' language and literacy?</p> <p><i>Response- Syntax, listening skills, speaking skills and writing skills</i></p>	
<p>9. What pedagogical skills do student teachers need to teach and develop pupil's language and literacy?</p> <p><i>Response- Our emphasis is on these 3 things. That is listening, speaking and writing skills so skills that will enhance them is what I think they need</i></p>	
<p>10. What activities do you think student teachers should be exposed to equip them teach and develop learners' language and literacy?</p> <p><i>Response- I can't think of any activity.</i></p>	

<b>D. In what ways can the training of CoE students be strengthened to improve the preparation of teachers (if KG to P3 to use Ghanaian language for instruction; if P4 and above English as language of instruction)</b>	
4. As a tutor, do you think student teachers have been adequately prepared to teach at early grade classroom to develop learners' language and literacy? Probe for reasons for answer.	
<i>Response- Yes I believe so because we teach them content and methodology of the early grade curriculum and how to handle pupils at such level</i>	
5. Are student teachers adequately prepared to use Ghanaian language for instruction when posted to early grade classroom? If yes, can you describe how? If not why do you think so?	
<i>Response- Yes. Every student selects a Ghanaian language and I believe they are adequately prepared to teach it at the early grade classroom provided they find themselves in an area the Ghanaian language is spoken</i>	
6. Are student teachers adequately prepared to use English language for instruction when posted to upper primary and JHS classroom? If yes, can you describe how? If not why do you think so?	
<i>Response- Sure. We equip them with knowledge in the English language and the methodology in teaching it and also sensitize the students that English cuts across all curriculum in the basic school and upper primary hence they need to really develop themselves in it because every subject is taught using English at that level. We also emphasize on speaking, listening and writing skills in the English language and with mastery over this, they can handle English at that level so that is the preparation we give them</i>	
<b>E. How well prepared do you think trainee-teachers are for teaching and developing numeracy skills of pupils</b>	
1. Are student teachers adequately prepared to teach and develop pupil's numeracy skills? If yes, can you give me some examples? If not why do you think so?	
<i>Response- I am not in the mathematics department so can't speak authoritatively on it. But I believe they are doing their best</i>	
<b>F. Overall what are/were the positive things about your training as a student-teacher?</b>	
<i>Response- The colleges of education are character training institutions so we mould the students character to be a better citizen when they come out of school so that is a ppositive thing on their training</i>	
<b>G. What things do you want to see changed in the existing DBE curriculum for training teachers</b>	
<i>Response- I want to see more ICT and more practical thing. Secondly, I want the duration of the curriculum to be extended</i>	
1. Please tell me three things you want to see introduced/emphasised in the structure of DBE curriculum?	
<i>Response- First, ICT, second, practical models and third the extension of the duration of the curriculum</i>	
4. What changes do you wish to see introduced in the DBE programme in terms of:	

<p><i>Curriculum- The duration should be extended so we cover all aspect of the curriculum, reduce the duration of the teaching practice and include more practical courses</i></p> <p><i>Pedagogy- The pedagogy is okay</i></p> <p><i>Assessment- We assess base on character, class attendance, contribution in class, project work, presentation and mid semester exams. I believe assessing students on these is okay. So the assessment is fine by me</i></p>	
<p>5. What are the changes you wish to see in the on- and off- campus teaching practice?</p> <p><i>Response- With the off campus teaching practice, I want the duration reduced and there should be more and effective monitoring system put in place. Example, the term is almost ended and we haven't gone for monitoring so we don't know what the students are even doing on the field. For the OCTP, it should be moved to the last year so that the last year is used for only teaching practice instead of the second year where we will be doing content courses. This will ensure uniformity</i></p>	
<p><b>H. What areas of teacher training do you want to see improvements to make someone a better teacher</b></p> <p><i>Response- ICT and more practical lessons</i></p>	
<p><b>I. What ideas do you have regarding the curriculum for training-teachers at the CoE and the Universities</b></p>	
<p>1.Tell me the issues of concern with regards to the differences/similarities in the curriculum for training teachers at the CoEs and Universities?</p> <p><i>Response- In the university, emphasis is not placed on the OCTP while do place a lot of emphasis on it. Secondly, we do one whole year of the teaching practice while the university do only one term of teaching practice, thirdly, the university students are made to answer exams questions by giving short answers while in the college, students are made to write full essays , fourthly, in the university, the students learn syntax while in the training colleges, the students don't learn syntax, lastly, during teaching practice, the university students are visited once while we visit the students several times. For the similarities, we all teach communication skills</i></p>	
<p>2.In your opinion how can we ensure consistency in the curriculum being offered at the CoEs and Universities</p> <p><i>Response- Introduce syntax in the curriculum of the CoE, the university should place emphasis on the OCTP and the colleges of education should reduce the duration of the teaching practice</i></p>	
<p>3.In your opinion how can we ensure competition in the teacher training curriculum being offered at the CoEs and Universities</p> <p><i>Response- I don't think competition is necessary. We should all aim at the same results which is producing quality teachers for the country</i></p>	
<p>4.What strategies should be employed by both the CoEs and Universities that train teachers to ensure the training of quality teachers</p> <p><i>Response- Align the curriculum to reflect the same things in terms of content of courses, methodology of teaching, the duration of the curriculum and emphasizing discipline</i></p>	

<p>5. Please tell me the two most important ideas that should be emphasised in the curriculum of teacher training if teacher preparation should become a degree only profession</p> <p><i>Response- Align the curriculum and emphasize on ICT and methodology of teaching, extend the duration and increase the monitoring of students on teaching practice</i></p>	
<p>6. In your opinion, will you prefer that teaching is made a degree only profession? If yes, why? If no, why not?</p> <p><i>Response- Yes we are adequately qualified to teach degree courses because most of us tutors have Mphil . We even have an upper hand because we are more practical oriented. We teach the students while in the university, the students are lectured so I will prefer teacher training is made a degree only profession</i></p>	

## Annex V

### Term of Reference

#### Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL)

#### In-depth Interview with year 3 students and newly qualified teachers on Curriculum Reform

#### Terms of Reference for Researchers

##### **Background information**

In the past 20 years, there have been numerous minor reforms in teacher education in Ghana. These have had very little positive impact on the performance of Ghana's school system. The current three-year Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) curriculum, which is used for the initial training of teachers in the Colleges of Education (CoEs), has not adequately responded to the need to improve children's outcomes in the Basic School System. There are several other challenges faced by our school system because of the kind of training offered to pre-tertiary teachers in Ghana including:

1. Teacher time on task and teacher absenteeism
2. Low performance in learning outcomes at primary and secondary levels

To resolve these problems, the government of Ghana designed the Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL), a project, four-year Government of Ghana programme supported by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). The programme's goal is to transform the delivery of teacher education in Ghana by improving the quality of teaching and learning through support to all public colleges of education. The T-TEL programme has been implemented through using an inclusive process led by the ministry, working with the national bodies associated with Initial Teacher Education – National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), National Teaching Council (NTC), National Accreditation Board (NAB), the universities which train teachers, CoEs, and their partner schools.

The NCTE, NTC and NAB have received support from the project. The Colleges of Education have also received support in the form of capacity building, tutor professional development and financial support to introduce innovation into the training of teachers. This level of collaboration and national level stakeholder engagement has resulted in the development of two national policy documents: The National Teacher Standards (NTS) for pre-service teachers developed by the National Teaching Council; and the National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework (NTECF) developed by the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE). These two policy initiatives have received massive stakeholder endorsement and created the momentum for the comprehensive transformation of the policy environment, for teacher education and the eventual design of a teacher education curriculum for the training of teachers for the basic and secondary education in Ghana.

##### **Objectives of the study**

In September 2017, the government of Ghana through cabinet approved a Memo for the implementation of the National Teacher Standards for pre-service teachers and the National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework. The Cabinet Memo paved the way for the Ministry of Education through T-TEL to develop a 4-year Curriculum leading to the award of Bachelor of Education degree by Colleges of Education. Additionally, the Cabinet Memo approved the conversion of the Colleges of Education into University College of Education.

As part of the implementation of the approved Memo, T-TEL seeks to conduct a study from the 16<sup>th</sup> of November to 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2017, aiming to seek what the following categories of persons will like to see in a new curriculum for Colleges of Education.

1. College tutors (English, Maths, Science and Teaching practice coordinators)
2. Newly Quality Teacher (NQTs) posted to begin teaching in basic schools (those who have just been posted).
3. Basic School Teachers (those who have 1-2 year years' teaching experience)
4. Circuit supervisors

5. The current 3<sup>rd</sup> year (final-year) students of colleges of Education

The study will also seek their perspective on;

1. Their understanding and expectation of a curriculum which the current DBE is lacking
2. What they would like to see in a new curriculum
3. Which aspect of the new curriculum do they want emphasised and why

### Scope of Work

Given the aim to provide comprehensive feedback to the curriculum writing team, an in-depth interview will be used to add rigor, complexity and depth to the study. Thus, in-depth interviews will provide an overarching data collection strategy and will also entail spending time at the sites of research in order to facilitate detailed understandings of participants' views on the subject matter.

### Selection of College

Five colleges and district assemblies have been conveniently sampled based on their location for the study. Below is a table listing all five colleges and districts

Name of College	Name of District
Akatsi College of Education	Akatsi South District Assembly
Presbyterian Women's College of Education (Aburi Akwapim)	Akwapim South Municipal Assembly
Ada College of Education	Damgbe East District Assembly
Mount Mary College of Education	Yoli Krobo Assembly
SDA college of Education	New Juaben Municipal assembly

### Proposed sampling and methods (5 CoEs and district assemblies in total)

<b>10 college tutors from each CoE</b> (English, Maths, Science and TPC)	<b>10 year 3 students from partner schools</b> (Maths, Science, English)	<b>10 Newly Qualified teachers</b> (Maths, Science, English)	<b>5 Basic school teachers (1-2 years' experience)</b> <b>partner schools</b> (Maths, Science, English)	<b>1 circuit supervisors</b> (from selected district)
Semi-structured interview	Semi-structured interview	Semi-structured interview	Semi-structured interview	Semi-structured interview

### Respondents and data collectors at each CoE

Given the main focus of the study is to collect data from selected players in the education sector, it is envisaged that the successful qualitative researchers will each be deployed to a college/district to work with these respondents. Each qualitative researcher will be based at a college/district for approximately two weeks (14 days). At each college/district, 2 days will be spent doing preparatory work (collecting list of

respondents and scheduling interview time),110 days will be spent on data collection and 1 day will be spent conducting analysis.

Name of College	Year 3 students	College tutors
Akatsi College of Education	5	5
Presbyterian Women’s College of Education (Aburi Akwapim)	5	5
Ada College of Education	5	5
Mount Mary College of Education	5	5
SDA college of Education	5	5
Total	25	25

Name of District	Newly qualify teachers	Basic school teacher(1-2years’ experience)	Circuit supervisors
Akatsi South District Assembly	5	5	1
Akwapim South Municipal Assembly	5	5	1
Damgbe East District Assembly	5	5	1
Yoli Krobo Assembly	5	5	1
New Juaben Municipal assembly	5	5	1
Total	25	25	5

### Implementation strategy

T-TEL M&E/Research team will lead in the activities needed to initiate this research, the M&E/ Research team will also provide the technical, logistical and financial support that is needed for implementation. For example, T-TEL’s M&E/Research officer, will aim to provide the terms of reference, leadership, training, supervision and quality assurance for this. In addition to this, opportunities to collect data will be given to five carefully selected qualitative researchers with experience in education to collect data at the 5 selected colleges/Districts.

### Roles and responsibilities

Activity	T-TEL responsibility	Independent researchers’ responsibility
1. Preparation for data collection	Draft research tools, data collection protocols, recruitment of independent researchers. Provide letters to district assembly and Colleges of Education.	Review and provide feedback on research tools and data collection protocols. The team leader will be responsible for

		coordinating the researchers' work.
2. Pre data collection procedure	Draw a sample of year 3 students and beginning teachers to be interviewed.	Collect list of year 3 students from assigned College and beginning teachers from district assembly
3. Implementation of data collection	Provide support and quality assure interviews conducted.	Conduct 2 interviews a day with selected sample of year 3 students and beginning teachers. Type out interviews conducted at the end of each day and send to T-TEL team and team leader.
4. Analysis and report writing	Review the draft and final reports for quality, accuracy, and comprehensiveness	Conduct thematic analysis of the data and writing of report. Provide quality-assured draft and final reports to T-TEL. The final report must respond to all comments received from T-TEL

### Timeframe for activities

<b>8 November</b>	Deadline for researcher applications
<b>9-10 November</b>	Interviews for shortlisted applicants; research team selected. T-TEL will create the team and designate the team leader based on the individuals selected
<b>10 November</b>	Evaluation team to review and provide feedback on team leader, who will then discuss with T-TEL team
<b>13 November</b>	Preparatory meeting with researchers and lead
<b>20 November-2<sup>nd</sup> December</b>	Two weeks data collection at 5 Colleges/districts
<b>15 December</b>	Team leader submits draft report to T-TEL
<b>18 December</b>	T-TEL provides comments on draft report
<b>20 December</b>	Submission of final report

### Terms and Conditions

The selected researchers will be contracted to work full-time with T-TEL's core research team from 13<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2017. Travel may occur during the weekend. All travel and accommodation will be arranged and paid for by T-TEL.

### Criteria for selection – Independent Evaluators (up to five)

This call for applications is open to all qualitative researchers. The criteria for selection include the following:

- 1) **Qualification:** MA required
- 2) **Data collection experience:** experience as a data collector for interviews and focus groups on at least 2-3 research projects is required.
- 3) **Analysis experience:** experience in conducting analysis for qualitative research on at least 1-2 research projects is required. Thematic analysis is a plus, but not mandatory.
- 4) **Sector experience:** experience in conducting research in the education sector is a plus, but not necessary.

### Criteria for selection – Team leader

This call for applications is open to all qualitative researchers. The criteria for selection include the following:

- 1) **Qualification:** MA required (a PhD or partial completion of a PhD, is a plus)
- 2) **Data collection experience:** experience as a data collector for interviews and focus groups on at least 3-5 different research projects is required.
- 3) **Analysis experience:** experience in conducting analysis for qualitative research on at least 3-5 research projects is required. Thematic analysis is a plus, but not mandatory.
- 4) **Sector experience:** experience in conducting research in the education sector is a plus, but not necessary.
- 5) **Report writing experience:** experience in producing high-quality, publishable reports

### Application process

Applicants are required to submit the following soft copy documents by **Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017** to [abdul.karim-kadiri@t-tel.org](mailto:abdul.karim-kadiri@t-tel.org) indicating whether they are applying to be an independent evaluator or the team leader.

- 1) A CV that provides details for the above criteria
- 2) A cover letter that provides a detailed explanation (and examples) of how you meet and/or surpass the criteria

Shortlisted applicants will be asked to **interview at the T-TEL office in Accra on 3<sup>rd</sup> November – 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2017**. If you have any questions, please feel free to email [abdul.karim-kadiri@t-tel.org](mailto:abdul.karim-kadiri@t-tel.org) or call at 0241515808.