

Rethinking Stakeholder Engagement in Higher Reforms – The case of Colleges of Education in Ghana

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Introduction

- Whether a higher education reform is by adoption or adaptation, it is undeniable that implementation success depends on attention to cultural context and effective stakeholder engagement in the reform process.
- Effective stakeholder engagement produces ownership responsibility and sustainability of reform gains.

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- Using a 'push' and 'pull' engagement framework via qualitative research methods, this study examined the College of Education (CoE) Leadership perceptions about the level of their engagement with the implementation of T-TEL intervention activities in the colleges.
 - The study was conducted in 2017.
 - The rationale of the study was to help all relevant stakeholders to appreciate the college level leadership perceptions on the level of ownership responsibility and commitment to sustainability of the gains made by the T-TEL interventions in their colleges.
 - It was to inform the necessary adjustment to improve the college leadership engagement.

Study context

- As part of its obligation to improve the quality of pre-service teacher education, the Government of Ghana, with funding from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), introduced a reform programme known as Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) to support production of professionally effective and efficient teachers for the country's pre-tertiary education.

Study context cont....

T-TEL reform activities include:

- Support to reform the pre-service curriculum;
- Support to develop more effective student practicums;
- Provide professional development support for the leadership of the CoEs;
- Provide professional development support for CoE tutors;
- Support the Ministry of Education and Regulatory Bodies to strengthen the implementation of policies; and
- Incentivise individual CoEs to carry out innovative initiatives.

Methodological approach of the study

- Qualitative research design using individual and focus group interviews.
- Focus group and individual interviews were used
- 108 College leaders made of Council Members, Principals, College Secretary, Quality Assurance Officers and Heads of Department participated in the study.
- Framework analysis via thematic technique was used to analysed the data.

Findings- Push engagement platform

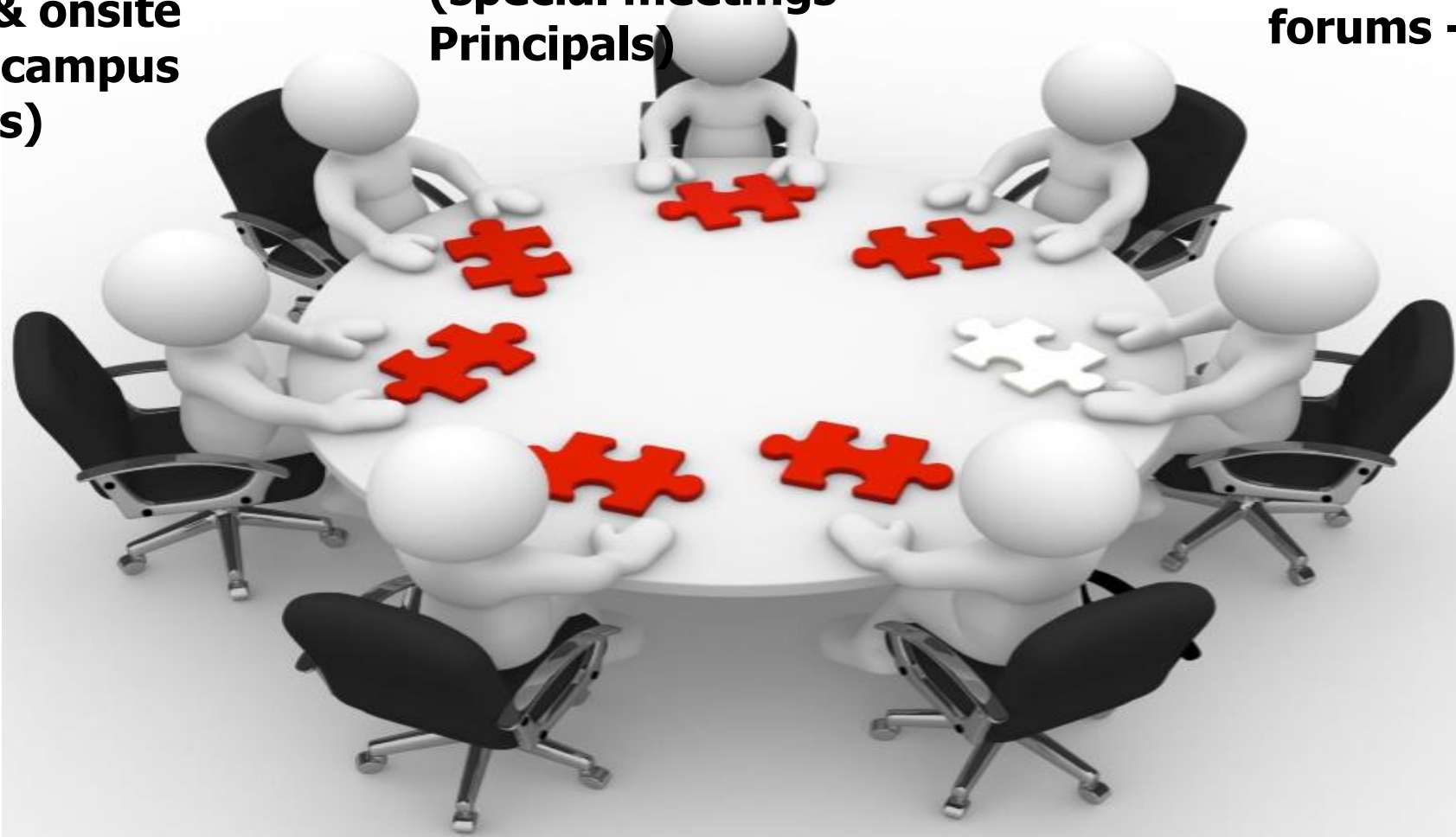


Findings - Pull engagement platform

**Capacity building
(workshops & onsite
coaching) – campus
based leaders)**

**Group Reflections
(special meetings -
Principals)**

**Active seat for dialogue
(national stakeholder
forums - Principals)**

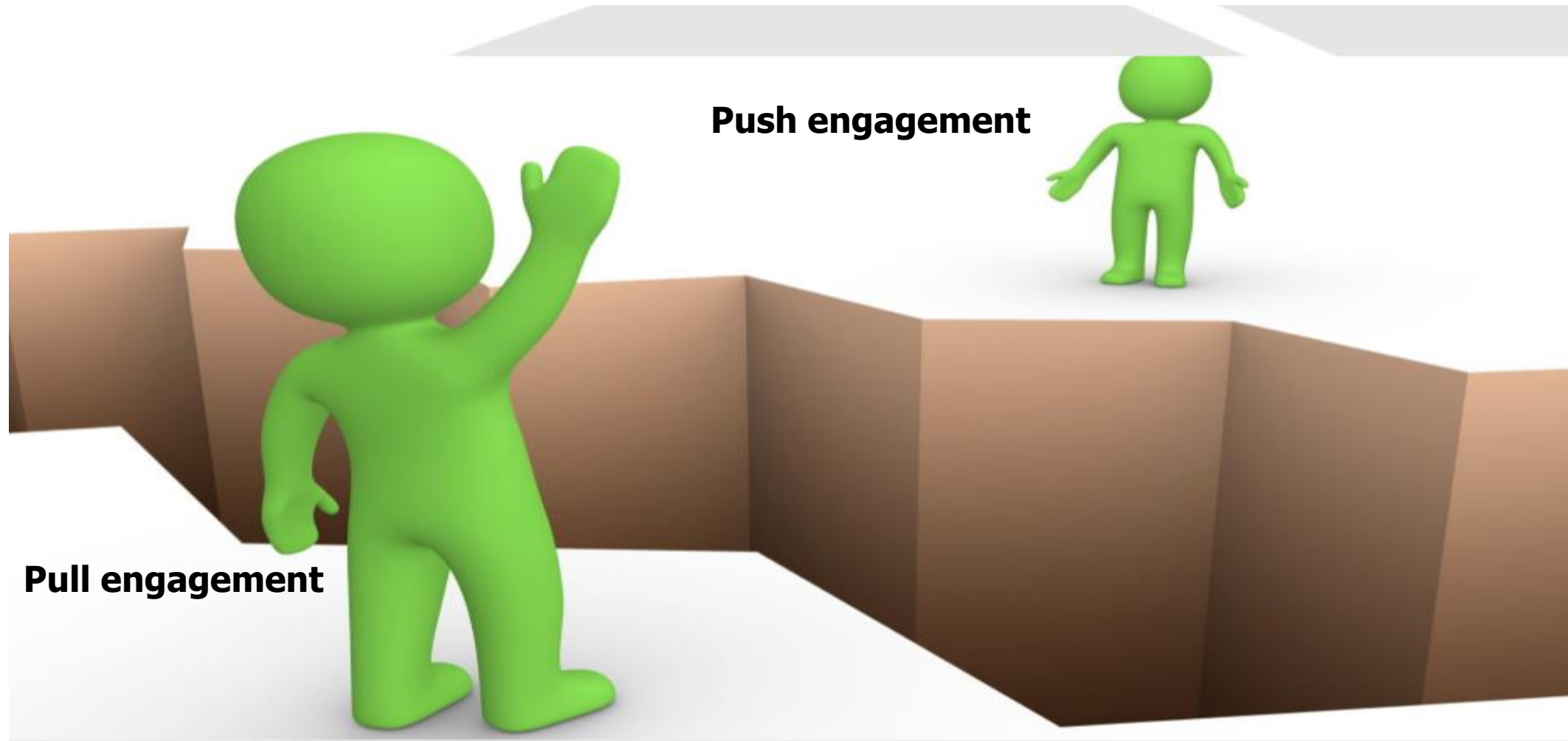


Findings – Ownership responsibility for T-TEL activities

- The study participants perceived minimal ownership responsibility of college leaders for T-TEL activities in the colleges.

Sometimes, T-TEL national office organises workshops in our college and does not involve us in the planning but just informs us of the event, which does not permit us to take full charge of such workshops. When it happens like that, we are not able to demonstrate to our staff members that the project belongs to us".

Discussion - Push and Pull engagement synergy



Discussion - Commitment to sustainability of gains

- It emerged that the leaders of the CoEs have observed visible changes worth sustaining in their operations as a result of the implementation of T-TEL interventions in their colleges provided working conditions are made more favourable.

The leadership and management training workshops have improved managerial skills and competences in [the] management of human, financial and physical resources. All statutory and academic board committees have been put in place and functional so we now see systems working. We need favourable working conditions to sustain the gains”.

Recommendations

- Extended engagement with the CoE leadership should be pursued by the Government and its relevant agencies.
- Particularly focus on the pull engagement platforms.

Conclusion

- T-TEL interventions had not produced sufficient ownership responsibility for the sustainability of the reform gains within the colleges.
- T-TEL intervention activities, for the most part, was centrally controlled from a national office.
- College leaders had not taken full charge of implementation of the programme activities in their colleges.

Thank You

