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Staff Development Needs at the Colleges of Education in Ghana: Evidence from the Agogo College

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Abstract:

The new mandate given to the colleges of education in Ghana means that the institutions are now expected to pay much attention to issues of staff development as a strategy to achieve their set goals. Given the compelling relevance of academic staff in this shift, this paper investigated the issue of staff development in the Agogo College of Education, with a particular focus on its nature and the existing needs. The study was mainly descriptive. Using census, the 33 Tutors at the College were all involved in the study, with questionnaires and interview guide as the research instruments. Both qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques were employed for the study. The study found the existence of induction and orientation as part of College's staff development program although it was difficult to authenticate its effectiveness. Although the existing staff development policy was beneficial to the staff, it was not comprehensive enough to address the varying needs of the academic staff. In spite of the difficulties associated with accessing some of them, there existed opportunities for short courses, workshops, sandwich, full-time and distance education programs for personnel at the College to develop their professional skills and status. The institution did not conduct proper needs assessment prior to staff development programs coupled with issues of fairness related to staff development opportunities at the College. Some of the staff development needs at the College were in the areas of teaching methodology, institutional skills, management skills and leadership skills. Others were needs in the contents of some courses, information communication technology, research and publication, and mentoring and supervision. It is recommended that staff development policy in the College should be comprehensive, well written and known to the staff in order to achieve its goals and to promote consistency, continuity and understanding within the institution. It is also recommended that the College should provide both financial and non-financial supports to the academic staff who are already in the system but with qualifications below master's degrees to enable them upgrade their skills within the shortest possible time. The College should team up with the government and National Council of Tertiary Education (NCTE) to implement relevant policy and programs that must go with its tertiary institution status.

Keywords: Staff development, college of education, institutional skills, induction and orientation

1. Introduction

Colleges of Education, formally known as teacher training colleges, have gone through several stages in Ghana. The Ghana Colleges of Education Act 847 (2012) provided the most recent change, with colleges of education as the newly official name and with tertiary status. This status now qualifies colleges of education to be included in the list of tertiary institutions and function as such. As tertiary institutions, the colleges of education are expected to play important roles in the socio-economic development of the nation. In essence, the Colleges now have the responsibilities to, among other things, provide teacher education to citizens in the teaching profession; decide on the subjects to be taught based on their special relevance to the needs of the educational system of the country and for national development; expose students to modern and innovative techniques of teaching and learning in order to promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills in the classroom; ensure that basic research and action research form an integral part of teacher education to promote quality teaching and learning in the classroom and others (Ghana Colleges of Education Act 847, 2012).

In order to effectively perform their new mandates coupled with their status as tertiary institutions, the Colleges of Education need to constantly improve the skills and competencies of academic staff to enable them meet the challenges at work place, technological and global trends of development in our contemporary societies as expected from them. They have been asked to educate every student to the best of their ability, maintain high academic standard and perform skillful teaching and realize the implications for their teaching as people accountable for whatever goes on in their field. Such responsibility of educating the masses requires academic staff to be equipped in the skills and knowledge in their subject area, keep abreast of societal demands in education, and be acquainted with research on the instructional process and on new methods of teaching which will promote the attainment of the general educational goals (Rebore, 2007). Teachers play critical role in the determination of quality education at every level of educational sector. They are seen as implementers of whatever policy, intervention and/ or resources a country put in its education system to ensure quality education.

Effective professional learning activities focus on encouraging continuing professional dialogue among teachers and allow for the integration of experiences that are consistent with best practices (Sikora& Alexander, 2004). According to McLaughlin and Talbert (2006), professional development (PD) provides continuous opportunities for teachers to renew their knowledge and skills through the training they receive and teachers' own reflections on the changes that they make to curriculum. However, to obtain optimum effect of PD on students' learning and to ensure effective teaching-learning, the framework of teacher education and PD has to be consistent with the curriculum materials that teachers use, the assessment, and the accountability measures that guide student success (Adu-Yeboah, n.d.; Holly, 2005).

According to Robinson and Latchman (2003), teachers go through five interactive phases of professional development; novice, advanced beginner, competent performer, proficient performer, and expert teacher. Transitions across these phases are marked by some challenges that tend to affect teacher retention and attrition (Boyd et al., 2008). In order to make this journey for teachers smooth, there has been a call on institutions, practitioners and educators place value on effective pre-service and in-service programs for teachers (Robinson and Latchman, 2003). For Siddiqui (1991), and Bagwandeem and Louw (1993), the current national, contextual variables in many developed and developing countries trend must stress the link between pre-service and INSET. A well-planned and articulated teacher education and PD generally follows a triple-I-continuum of Initial, Induction and In-service training.

Academic staff needs development and constantly positive change for members to be abreast of changes and reforms within the education profession. Given the complexity of the roles of the Colleges in terms of the production of future trainers in education sector and with tertiary status, the job requirements of their staff ought to match that of any tertiary institution. The skills and knowledge expected from lecturers and tutors in tertiary institutions are equally expected from tutors in colleges of education due to their status as tertiary institution. Staff development will not only help individual academic staff members to improve their teaching, it will also give opportunities to share with others which help in both personal and professional growth. It is, therefore, important to consider opportunities for educational training and interventions to enhance and improve the skills and competency level of colleges of education academic staff to enable them survive within the tertiary education sector. As the positions and requirements within a school district become more complex, the importance of staff development programs increases (Rebore, 2007). According to Rebore (2007), effective staff development is concerned with providing teachers with the opportunities to maintain a favorable outlook on teaching and improve their effectiveness in the classroom. Rebore maintains that staff development is a desirable activity to which school system must commit human and fiscal resources if it is to maintain a skilled and knowledgeable staff.

2. Statement of the Problem

The upgrading of colleges of education into tertiary status and the revision of their rules and regulations in the Ghana College of Education Act 847 (2012) gives the colleges of education new faces in all aspects. This change affects the name, status, governance, aims, functions, committees to form, caliber of tutors to teach in such colleges and all other aspects of the colleges of education and could be described as a major change. Not only do these changes have implications for the development of the human capital for the transformation of the county, they also present great responsibilities to all the Colleges including Agogo College of Education. As a tertiary institution, the Agogo College of Education is required to position itself to meet the requirements of its new status. Critical among the strategies to be adopted by the College to effectively perform its new mandate is the development of its staff. Academic staff is the key and significant policy implementers in the College and a tool through which the mission and vision of its new status could be achieved. Thus, the College is required to strengthen the knowledge, skills and attitudes of its human resource base. However, as stands there is no evidence regarding the nature of staff development programs, especially to improve its academic staff. There is also no research regarding the structures, policy and programs the College has put in place to meet the new challenges confronting its operations as tertiary institution. It is this knowledge gap that necessitated this study with specific emphasis on the nature of staff development programs as well as the staff development needs at the College.

2.1. Research Questions

Below are the two main research questions that guided the study:

1. What are the views of the academic staff on the nature of staff development at the Agogo College of Education?
2. What staff development needs exist at the College in respect of its change in status?

3. Some Relevant Literature

3.1. *Colleges of Education with Tertiary Status*

Tertiary Education Reform was launched in 1991 with the publication of the Government White Paper on the University Rationalization Committees Report. The White Paper on Tertiary Education saw the redefinition of higher education to include universities, polytechnics, and teacher training colleges (Ghana High Commission portal, 2008). The reform to include teacher training colleges with new name as colleges of education into list of tertiary institutions in Ghana took a relatively long time to be implemented. Eventually, the decision to upgrade teacher training colleges to tertiary status was accomplished in accordance with the Ghana Colleges of Education Act 847. All the Colleges of Education established under this Act were upgraded to tertiary institution status in Ghana. Indeed, the changes colleges of education have undergone were in line with the country's efforts to attain quality in education sector. Educational institutions at all levels depend heavily on teachers for the execution of its programs. Thus, maintaining and improving educational standards is only possible through quality teachers.

In essence, as far as possible, teachers should be carefully trained and supported in order to perform their functions effectively. A vital aspect of the recent education reforms in Ghana has been to improve access and participation in basic school education, and enhance the quality of teaching and learning outcomes (MOE, as cited in Akeampong, 2003). In fact, both issues of access and participation have implications for teacher training. An improvement in access and participation at the basic school level implies that more teachers have to be trained, while enhancing quality of teaching and learning means improving teacher quality through more effective training. Suffice to say that the aims to use education to promote peace and other related social benefits start from basic level of education. Again, the economic importance of education as means to getting manpower to develop the nation starts from grass root. Thus, the colleges of education which have the mandate to prepare teacher for the basic schools have gone through changes with the view to ensuring the provision of quality and competent teachers to facilitate the socio-economic aspirations of the nation. As a critical government policy on the production and recruitment of competent and dedicated teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning at basic education level, the decision to upgrade teacher training colleges to Diploma Awarding Institutions was implemented (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2006). This decision was premised on the assumption that awarding training teachers with diploma certificate could lead to increased efforts in the production of competent teachers to handle basic schools.

3.2. *The Concept and Importance of Staff Development*

Staff development is the process whereby employees of an organization improve upon their knowledge and skills in directions that are advantageous to their role in the organization (Marriss, 2010). The definition of staff development may be approached from the perspectives of the developer, the employer and the person being developed (Marriss, 2010). These perspectives of staff development by Marriss indicates that staff development as a concept is possible to take place if there is teamwork between the developer (person providing development service), and the employee (receiver of the development service) and is geared towards increase in skill, knowledge, and ability that will result in effective productivity. Collett and Davidson, as cited in Marriss (2010) assert that vital component of staff development is to facilitate change on a personal, professional and institutional level. they further see staff development as a planned activity that can contribute to the overall effectiveness and profitability of an institution.

Man by nature is dynamic, and the need to be current and relevant in all spheres of human endeavors makes staff development a matter of necessity in any institution desirous of keeping track with current event and methods. Many societies are engaging in serious and promising educational reforms especially in response to the ever-increasing technological and competitive world. Indeed, the pace of globalization as recognized by societies has made the investment in teacher education and development even more compelling. This is rightly so because teachers are the most significant change agents in any educational sector (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). High quality professional or staff development forms a vital component in every modern institution especially educational institutions (Gruskey, 2002). Teacher learning has become more pronounced in educational literature and is in line with the implementation of planned change (Fullen, as cited in Bakah, 2011). Without the teachers' know-how, educational changes and reforms suffer (Van Driel, Beijaard and Verloop, as cited in Bakah, 2011). Becker, as cited in Laing (2009) believes that staff development enhances the productivity of workers through the impartation of useful knowledge and skills. Staff development enhances an individual's ability to effectively deal with disequilibria in changing economic conditions. According to Cole (as cited in Laing, 2009) training and development of workers can achieve high morale, lower cost of production, lower turnover, change management, and also provide recognition. It also helps to give a feeling of personal satisfaction and achievement, and broaden opportunities for career progression; and also helps to improve the availability and quality of staff. Staff development programs are systematic efforts to bring about positive changes in the classroom practices of teachers and in their other related teaching duties. Staff development for employees empowers them to exercise control on how to operate office equipment, build a budget, facilitate workflow, negotiate contracts and hire employees (Laing, 2009). Staff development can change the attitudes and motivate even the laziest worker to work well. Staff development is critical to teachers who, in particular, are constantly interacting with other education professionals to learn new ways of teaching and different ways students process the information they disseminate in the classroom. Development activities and programs include teachers exchanging ideas in groups, planning lessons together, and discussing school policy, as well as participating in seminars (Villegas-Reimers, 2003.)

3.3. Impact of Academic Staff Development on Institutional Development

Staff development plays a major role in keeping institutions running. In their views, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2000) posit that the emerging trend in human resource management (HRM) is clearly towards the adaptation of human resource approach through which organizations. The benefits are in two significant ways, namely, an increase in organizational effectiveness, and the satisfaction of employee's needs. Academic staff development helps to improve the qualities of academic staff and to make them more productive. The impact or the outcome of staff development is crucial because it determines the designed and content of the development programs. Staff development is on-going process of education, training, learning and supporting activities and is concerned with helping people to grow within the organization in which they are employed (Marriss,2010) The effectiveness and success of an organization depend on the people who form and work within that organization. This means that for employees in an institution to perform their duties and make meaningful contributions to the success of the organizational goals, they need to acquire the requisite skills and knowledge about their work.

According to Olaniyan and Ojo (2008), effective and successful staff development should yield the following results:

1. Increase productivity
2. Improve the quality of work and raise morale of employees
3. Develop new skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes.
4. Use correctly new tools, machines, process, methods or modifications thereof.
5. Reduce waste, accidents, and other overhead costs.
6. Implement new or changed policies or regulations.
7. Bring incumbents to that level of performance which meets (100 per cent of the time) the standard of performance for the job.
8. Develop replacement, prepare people for advancement, improve manpower deployment and ensure continuity of leadership.
9. Ensure the survival and growth of the organization.

The impact of staff of development as pointed out by Olaniyan and Ojo (2008) means that the effectiveness and success of an institution rely greatly on the caliber of people who form and work within the institution. Thus, employees in organizations need to be developed in all aspects to enable them execute their duties for the achievement of the organizational goals. In an effort to strengthen the discussion on the impact the of staff development program, Rebore (2007) opines that the main goal of staff development program is to increase the knowledge and the skills of employees and thereby increase the potentials of the employees in the institutions so as to attain the organizations goals and objective. Rebore added that staff development program must focus not only with the abilities of the individuals currently occupying positions but also with the abilities individuals need to qualify for promotion to positions of more responsibility. Rebore (2007) further outlines opportunities staff development program can offer teachers. They include:

1. Upgrade skills and knowledge in a subject area.
2. Keep abreast of societal demands.
3. Become acquainted with the advances in instructional materials and equipment.
4. Become acquainted with research on the instructional process and on new methods of teaching.

It is lucid from the discussions above that academic staff development has greater impact on the growth and sustainability of any educational institution. Jonas-Dwyer and Pospisil (2004) argue that academic staff development helps teachers to obtain the requirement to increase their technological skill-base, to design teaching and learning activities to meet the change in students' learning styles and expectations. And to students through a range of media and to interact and provide support. It also is viewed as a major factor to the degree to which an organization or institution realizes its goals. It also helps develop capacity of individuals in the institutions to enable them contribute optimally to the development of the institutions. It is therefore pertinent that as a result of Agogo College of Education upgrading to tertiary level, there is the need to upgrade its academic staff technologically and to help them justify their status as tertiary education capable of teaching and performing vital administrative duties.

4. Methodological Framework

The design for the study was descriptive survey. Descriptive survey is used to describe studies that involve administering questionnaires or interviews (Gall and Gall, 2003). In support, Sarantakos (2005) explains descriptive survey research as method of data collection in which information is gathered through oral or written questioning. The researchers found the descriptive survey design most appropriate for this study because it had the advantage of helping the researchers obtain unbiased views about the issues understudy (Babbie, 2004). The population of the study comprised academic staff of Agogo College of Education in Ghana. This comprised the Principal, Vice Principals, Heads of Department and Tutors of the College. Using the census method, the 33 academic members at the College were all involved in the study. This was made up of the Principal, the Vice Principal, six Heads of Departments and 25 other teaching staff. Including principal, vice principal and heads of department in the study became necessary especially because of their administrative position and influence in the recommendation of academic staff for staff development programs in their institutions. Essentially, the researchers had the conviction that a population of 33 was relatively small which could permit a proper interrogation of the issues understudy and so preferred to allow all of them to express their views regarding the topic. Besides, the issue of staff development affects all the academic staff, thus their individual inputs would be critical in this regard. The research instruments for the data collection were interview guide and questionnaire. Two sets of interview guides were used to collect relevant data for the study. The first interview guide was used to gather data from the Principal and the vice-Principal while the other interview guide was used for the Heads of Departments. The questionnaire involved likert-scale questionnaire for tutors of the College. The justification for using questionnaire was that it proved to be easy to standardize, because in questionnaire respondents are

asked the same questions in the same way (Milne, as cited in Larbi, 2008). This gave the researchers assurance that everyone in the study answered exactly the same questions (Sarantakos, 1993). Collected data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative analytical procedures. Qualitative analysis took the form of transcribing recorded tapes, content and documentary analyses, whilst quantitative analysis took the form of descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages, means and standard deviations with the aid of the Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 16.0.

5. Results and Discussion

The background characteristics considered in this study included the sex, age, educational qualifications and years of experience of the respondents. Frequency and percentages were used to analyze the background characteristics as shown in Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4. For instance, from Table 1, it is evident that the majority (84.9%) of the respondents were males while 15.1% were females. This implies that in terms of percentage the workforce in the College is dominated by males. In the views of Luddy (2005), certain background characteristics such as sex and educational level influence the perceptions of employees on human resource management (HRM) practices of which staff training and development is no exception.

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	28	84.9
Female	5	15.1
Total	33	100.0

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents
Source: Field survey, 2015

Also, from Table 2, it is clear that the majority (63.6%) of the respondents had ages less than 46 years. Given the retiring age of 60 years as pertains here in Ghana, what the age distribution in the College means is that the respondents have more working years ahead of them and if they are given chance to develop themselves professionally, it would benefit the institution.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 35	4	12.1
36-40	7	21.2
41-45	10	30.3
46-50	8	24.3
Above 50	4	12.1
Total	33	100.00

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents
Source: Field survey, 2015

On the issue of educational qualifications of respondents, the study revealed that 12.1% had first degree, 84.9% had obtained second degree, while 3.0% had a PhD as presented in table 3. This means that more than half of the respondents have obtained master's degree. This finding is in line with the expectation and requirement of National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) which states that the minimum qualification especially for the academic staff in tertiary institutions including colleges of education in Ghana is master's degree. This finding is also a departure from the report of the Committee on the Review of Education Reforms in Ghana, as cited in Adgorlolo (2012). The Committee's Report reveals that among the major challenges that tertiary institutions including the polytechnics face in Ghana is unqualified academic staff. Beyond this, it should be pointed out that academic staff at the College who have only first degree as their qualification ought to be given the needed support to help them upgrade themselves in line with the requirements of NCTE. Without staff development programs to help academic staff to upgrade their skills as early as possible, it would be difficult for the College to justify the continued presence of persons with lower qualifications to teach in the institution with its tertiary status. Rebores (2007) submits that as the positions and requirements within an educational institutions become more complex, the importance of staff development programs increases.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
1st Degree	4	12.1
Master's Degree	28	84.9
PhD	1	3.0
Total	33	100.00

Table 3: Educational Qualification of Respondents
Source: Field survey, 2015

In addition to academic qualification and/or professional training, one needs some level of experience to be competent working at the organization. Thus, Table 4 summarizes the years of experience of the respondents. With regard to the years of experience of respondents, the study found that the majority (60.7%) of them had spent not less than six years at the College. The situation at the

Agogo College of Education is critical because as it provides a demonstrable relevance to the positions held by Gascard (2012). Gascard (2012) maintains that in order for tertiary institutions to ensure proper acquisition of personnel, there is the need to consider additional recruitment requirements such as teaching experience.

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than a year	4	12.1
1-5	9	27.2
6-10	12	36.4
Above 10	8	24.3
Total	33	100.00

Table 4: Years of Experience of Respondents

Source: Field survey, 2015

On the issue of the nature of staff development programs at the College the researchers observed that induction and orientation, on-the-job training programs, and study leave existed there. Induction and orientation are the staff development program opportunities at the College for newly recruited academic staff to develop professional. The mean score of 3.20 confirms the existence of such program and this is vital because irrespective of the employees' level of experience and academic qualification, newly employed staff ought to participate in staff development program. The mean score of 2.67 also depicts that indeed, newly employed staff participate in on-the-job training outside of the institution. Staff development program enables newly recruited personnel to acquaint themselves with the existing institutional measures and structures (Rebore, 2007). Strong and innovative staff development programs for newly staff is one strategy which guarantees the quality and relevance of higher performance in the institutions. It is believed that developing new staff physically, socially and intellectually is very important not only to increase productivity but also the development of personal in the institution (Noe, 2005; Rebore, 2007). However, this study could not confirm the observation made by Rebore (2007) to the effect that induction is often neglected or poorly organized in many educational institutions as compare to industrial and business communities which place high priority on induction program.

With respect to the benefits obtained from staff development policy, the mean score of 3.0 indicated that there were some benefits. Results from the open-ended questions established that creating opportunities for staff to upgrade and update their knowledge and skills personally and professionally for attainment of the institution's goals and objectives indeed benefited the staff. This was largely confirmed by the results from the interviews. For instance, one key informant stated, "It is always good for staff to attend programs to develop their skills." Another remarked, "At least, the policy enables us to attend workshops and seminars occasionally, which is good". However, as to whether or not the policy has positive impact on their overall development as staff, the results from both the open-ended questions and the interview guides generally showed an entirely different picture. For instance, one head of department questioned, "Is staff development only about attending workshops and seminars? Don't you think the policy over-concentrates on workshops?" When the respondents were asked about their involvement in staff development, it was generally observed that they were not involved. This means that there is a need for a comprehensive staff developments policy in the College. This will benefit staff who are the direct implementers of any package their transitional change and also attain its goals and objectives. In order to make professional development more consistent with the guiding principles, policy makers ought to be clear about the conditions under which teachers are expected to change their practices. Policies on staff development should be more concern about the quality and character of experiences provided for teachers (Corcoran, 1993). Hope (2002) found that teachers are the main implementers of educational policies and will generally resist change when they: (a) do not understand the implications of the policy, (b) have not received sufficient information regarding the policy's purpose, and (c) do not know how it is to be implemented. These challenges during policy implementation process can be overcome when educational policies come with staff development package to help get affected personnel informed about what is expected from them as key implementers in educational policies and reforms (Hope, 2002). Good governance finds expression in transparency in policy decisions, contracts, appointments and activities. This will not only keep the system honest but also creates an informed public for increased participation (Wangwe and Rweyemamu, 2001).

From Table 5, the mean scores of 3.20, 2.93 and 3.00 respectively indicate that the respondents recognized the existence of sandwich, full-time and distance education programs as options for personnel at the College to develop their professional skills and status. However, further open-ended questions showed that though these options exist in the institution it is not easy for personnel to access them. Interviews with the key informants pointed out the financial constraints made access to staff development very difficult. Some of the respondents were of the opinion that the institution has not been receiving the needed financial support from the government and relevant partners to adequately address issues of staff development. Dasimone and Harris (1998), as well as Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2000) established that staff development models can take either on-the-job training or away-from-the-job training. They indicate further that away-from-job training includes any form of training perform away from the employee's immediate work area. This is normally conducted in accredited institutions and such training and development programs are considered as part of formal education. In Ghana, formal education as a model of staff development for academic staff in colleges of education can take the form of full time courses, sandwich courses, and distance learning.

Statements about Academic Staff Development in the College.	Tutors (n=25)	
	Mean	SD
Induction and orientation form part of the academic staff development programs in the College.	3.20	0.775
Newly employed staff in College participates in on- the –job training outside their institution.	2.67	0.816
Staff get some benefits from staff development policy in College.	3.00	1.069
Staff enrolls in Sandwich program as avenues for academic staff development.	3.20	0.676
Staff enrolls in Full Time program as avenues for academic staff development.	2.93	0.884
Staff enrolls in Distance Education program as avenues for academic staff development.	3.00	1.069

Table 5: Views of Tutors on the Nature of Staff Development Programs at the College

Source: Field survey, 2015

Rebore (2007) maintains that the critical aspect of all staff development program is the implementation and delivery phase. In his view, the very best intentions or plans may fail unless attention is paid to workers with appropriate incentives to participate, satisfactory time arrangements are made and ordinary organizational problems are handled properly. This means that some training needs are best met by short courses and on-the-job training, while others demand formal training in certified institutions. In support, Desimone and Harris (1998) argued that one of the best methods used in academic staff development is formal education. This entails activities designed to help academic staff to widen their conceptual knowledge and skills in formal classroom situations, typically in accredited institutions such as universities, colleges and polytechnics. Despite its importance, the difficulty associated with enrolling on full-time programs while working makes the consideration of sandwich and distance programs particularly relevant. Sandwich courses are now available in an ever-increasing range of program and courses. These courses were designed to give opportunities to academic staff to develop professional in accredited institutions like those who have access to grant of continuous study leave and admission in full time courses. Besides, with access to tertiary education constrained by insufficient infrastructure in institutions of higher learning and quota system of the study leave policy limiting the number of teachers leaving classrooms, the need for Distance Education facilities which has been proposed in Ghana Education Act, Act 778 (2008) becomes important. Distance education enables academic staff to upgrade their professional and academic competence while working.

Besides, frequencies and percentages obtained from other issues on the nature of staff development revealed that for instance while the majority (74.5%) of the respondents stated that the did institution did not conduct proper needs assessment prior to training programs 25.5% held a contrary view. However, interviews with the key informants generally indicated that some needs assessment exercise is done before embarking on staff development programs. The interviewees were however skeptical about the effectiveness of the assessment. They all conceded that the exercise has not been frequent. Needs assessment refers to the systematic process of identifying the person, task and organization gaps. Specifically, task needs will help to tell the difference between desired and actual performance so as to design appropriate staff development models to address them while person needs will identify the skills required to perform the set targets. Investment in staff development programs will not yield the desired outcomes if proper needs assessment is not conducted (Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 2000). Jeppesen (2002) also cautions that staff development can only be seen as an investment, not a cost, if it involves proper planning.

Also, as regards the issue of whether or not the College provided them with information regarding staff development programs, the study established that while 66.7% stated that there was, 43.3% disagreed. However, when asked whether the information given was adequate and regular, 82.7% indicated that it was not. The key informants generally said that though the institution gave regular information on staff development to the staff, they could not tell the adequacy or otherwise of the information provided to staff. Clear, responsive, open and two-way communication is vital to human resource development. On their part, Gopinath and Becker (2000) contend that a culture of open communication enforces loyalty among staff and builds their trust. Information sharing tends to keep employees informed on key issues. Most importantly, they need to know that their opinions on issues that concern them matter and management is totally interested in their inputs. In the views of Taylor and Cosenza (2002), communicating the values, directions and activities of an organization effectively to its staff is important to increase their level of consent, participation and motivation, and trust which crucial in goal accomplishment.

Again, frequencies and percentages of the data from the questionnaire showed that while the majority (76.8%) of the respondents were of the opinion that there was no fairness in staff development opportunities at the College, 23.2% believed there was. Results from the open-ended questions showed that not all the staff had equal opportunities in respect of staff development. One respondent retorted, "Some people can be selected for training programs as many times as possible while others will not. This can't be fair, my brother." The respondents who were interviewed in this study however believed there was fairness. One key informant said, "We try to be fair to all persons. We are human but we do not take delight in just denying people the opportunities when they are due."

More so, it was observed that on the job training did not meet the expectations of the respondents. For instance, while 78.9% believed that it did not meet their expectations, only 11.1% held a contrary view. The results from the interviews generally indicated that the training falls short of the expectations of the respondents. One respondent intimated, "The training is too marrow and not broad-based." Another respondent remarked, "It does not cover the peculiar needs of the different departments over here. Sometimes, the contents of the programs are inadequate." According to Sparks (2002), high-quality staff development program focuses on deepening teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Thus, any staff development which does not pay attention to the contents of the issues discussed is a suspect.

Respondents were also asked on whether there were any conditions attached to opportunities for staff development. With this, the study found that there existed some conditions since all the respondents conceded there was. Among the conditions were staff having to serve for a number of years to qualify for especially study leave with pay coupled with the need for the program one intends to enroll on at the College. However, when asked whether they were satisfied with the conditions it was found that 75.6% were not while 24.5% were satisfied. Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) argue that “terms and conditions at the workplace play a significant role in staff retention but jobs which are satisfying along with career development opportunities are often more important” (p. 170). They further commented that training opportunities improve commitment to an employer on the part of individual employees, making them less likely to leave voluntarily than they would if no training and staff development were offered.

The study further examined the staff development needs at the College. The data generated through the questionnaire were analyzed using means and standard deviation. Table 6 presents the mean score and standard deviations of responses for each set of items measuring the existing staff development needs. From the table it is clear that the mean score of 3.13 indicates that the respondents agreed that there existed some deficiencies in teaching methodology. This implies that the institution has to put in place measures to forestall the existing situation in order to achieve their set goals as a tertiary institution. The results from the interviews generally revealed that there was the need to improve upon the teaching methodology of personnel in the College. In the views of Rebore (2007), staff development at educational institutions should enable personnel to become acquainted with the current instructional process and new methods of teaching. Elmore (2002) contends that given the relevance of quality teaching skills to student achievement, effective professional development should be evaluated continuously and primarily on the basis of effect it has on student achievement. Research on effective instructional practice indicates that staff development program for tertiary education staff should include the study of pedagogy or a combination of knowledge and skills required for effective teaching (Stockton, 2007). Stockton (2007) adds that the interest of job embedded professional development is to improve teaching and learning.

There was also the existence of institutional needs as confirmed by the mean score of 3.20 and standard deviation of 0.561 in Table 6. Interviews with the key informants generally supported the above observation. One interviewee bemoaned, “The College does not make much effort to provide us with the needed institutional skills. One in a while some short courses are provided but they are extremely inadequate” Institutional skills expose staff to effective evaluation and supervision for the instruction process which includes providing curriculum leadership and securing instructional resources (Elbert and Hatfield, 2000; Rebore, 2001). In essence, if personnel at the College lack the requisite institutional skills, it will be uneasy for them to effectively evaluate and supervise social, educational and career-focused activities of teacher trainees. This will basically challenge the very essence of the College as an effective tertiary institution mandated to produce quality teachers for the basic schools in Ghana. Collett and Davidson, as cited in Marriss (2010), submit that staff development essentially helps to facilitate and implement changes on a personal, professional and institutional level. Griffin, Ajibade, Adeniyi and Arkewuyo, as cited in Olaniyan and Ojo (2008), have drawn the attention of institutions to the inestimable value of staff development in institutional growth. The new mandate of the Agogo College of Education as a tertiary institution means that there is the need to provide advanced academic and professional instruction and conduct research in effective teaching (National Accreditation Board, 2008). To achieve this requires a serious attention to issues of staff development at the College. Indeed, the practice of developing staff to enable educational systems achieve a wide range of goals that make substantial impact on teacher trainees’ learning requires much more intensive and effective professional development than has been available in the past.

Furthermore, it could be seen from Table 6 that there were some deficiencies in the management skills of personnel at the College as the mean score of 3.13 suggests. Similar mean score was obtained for the political and cultural awareness needs. Some of the responses from the open-ended questions and the interview guides were quite revealing. One respondent said, “Management skills are only given to the big men over here. It is assumed that they need it but we do not.” Another respondent commented, “We are all managers in our own right who have to be given the needed skills to undertake effective planning to achieve our goals but it does not happen.” When asked whether or not they had been learning individually some of the management skills they need, the respondents conceded that their efforts have to be complemented by the institution. Management skills are needed to establish job objectives and be able to assess the needs of the staff. As the name suggest, it is skills that enable staff to identify problem areas and to plan towards an effective solution. It covers unit budgeting and reviewing priorities in the efficient use of scarce resources (Armstrong, 2001; Rebore, 2007). According to Rebore (2007) political and cultural awareness skill deals with the ability to identify the leaders within the community/institution and to involve them in school level decision making to address with positive techniques of resolution of conflicts between the school and community and to work towards meeting the needs of all clients of the school through school programs. Thus, if tutors at the College lack these skills it would be very difficult for them to effectively involve them in the institution’s activities. Beyond this, the existence of these needs presents a demonstrable challenge to the conceptual intention of Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield’s (2000) training and staff development. Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2000) identified at least seven reasons for conducting training and development for staff. These are to improve performance, update employee’s skills, avoid managerial problems, orient and socialize new employees, prepare for promotion and managerial succession and to satisfy personal growth needs of employees.

Additionally, the mean score of 3.27 and the standard deviation of 0.594 indicate that there existed some defects in the leadership skills of personnel. Interview with the key informants however showed that the institution expected the tutors themselves to make some efforts to develop their leadership skills. One interviewee stated, “As a tutor you are a leader in the true sense of the world and so you have to develop yourself to meet the challenge that comes with it.” Other respondents conceded that the institution has to make the development of leadership skills as an integral aspect of its staff development programs. Tutors are the heads of departments,

committee chairs, and team leaders. Again, whether they assume traditional leadership roles or not, tutors often work as managers of classrooms and so must be given the needed skills to lead. It is believed that the acquisition of leadership skills will enhance classroom performance (Lieberman and Miller, 1990). They also require leadership skills to effectively undertake any new roles associated with the status of tertiary education (Howey, 1988). Leadership skills can be obtained through planned self-development programs to current advances in the field of education. Tutors at the College are also expected to possess relevant leadership skills in order to relate well with other professionals, parents, teacher trainees and the larger public. As role models in society their inputs in decision making are critical for the good of the institution, students, parents and the larger publics. Thus, beyond the self-directed efforts, a comprehensive approach towards the development of leadership skills at the institution will be helpful.

On the issue of information communication technology, the study revealed that the personnel did not have adequate skills to properly use ICT in teaching-learning. Indeed, they respondents believed that although the College has its own ICT Lab the facility lacks the needed tools and equipment to meet the contemporary requirements of ever-increasing technological world. This is confirmed by the mean score of 3.27 as found in Table 6. They submitted that low development of ICT infrastructure, and ICT-based curriculum and evaluation systems which are virtually non-existing within the colleges of education are responsible for the plights they face. Others attributed the situation to the low skills they possessed to perform ICT-related activities. This, they believed, makes it very difficult to properly integrate ICT into their teaching-learning activities. Interviews with the key informants supported these views as some of the called for more ICT based programs and instructions in the colleges of education in Ghana. Some respondents stated that the College expects them to use projectors during teaching but wondered how possible that demand can be met in the absence of requisite skills in ICT coupled with inadequate ICT tools and equipment. The situation in Agogo College confirms the views expressed by Otto and Albion (2004) who reported that although ICTs are available in schools, it does not fully integrate into teaching-learning. In an attempt to deepen the need for ICT in teaching-learning, Sheingold and Hadley (1990) found that integrating ICT is not about helping people to use computers but it is about helping teachers to integrate technology as a tool for learning.

Moreover, the mean score of 3.27 and standard deviation of 0.458 from Table 6 indicate that there existed some deficiencies in the skills tutors possessed to conduct and publish research findings. All the interviewees also agreed that there was the need to develop the skills and knowledge of tutors on research publication issues. One informant stated, "We are expected to publish research papers but we lack to requisite skills when it comes to publication." Another respondent commented, "The new educational reform enjoins us to pay attention to research publication yet no attempt has been made to prepare us to meet this new challenge." The seriousness of this need found expression in the views of a key informant who apparently bemoaned that the requirement of some published work for promotion at the College will make it very difficult for some personnel to ever be promoted.

Staff Development Needs	Tutors (n=25)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation
Needs in teaching methodology	3.27	0.594
Needs in management skills	3.13	0.640
Needs in institutional skills	3.20	0.561
Needs in human relations skills	3.27	0.458
Needs in political and cultural awareness skills	3.13	0.516
Needs in leadership skills	3.27	0.594
Needs exist in the contents of courses taught	2.80	0.775
Needs exist in the use of I.C.T in teaching	3.27	0.594
Needs exist in conducting and publishing research	3.27	0.458
Needs exist in skills for mentoring and supervision	2.93	0.594

Table 6: Views of Tutors on the Staff Development Needs at the College

Source: Field survey, 2015

Other key needs were in area of contents of some courses taught. The mean score of 2.80 confirms that there were some existing needs in terms of the contents skills required to handle some courses. The results from the interviews also showed that some deficiencies existed in handling some courses at the College. One respondent intimated, "The new education reform introduced new courses some of which are difficult to be properly handled by tutors." Other respondents commented that courses such as Early Childhood Education and ICT are courses with increasing emerging trends and concepts which pose some difficulties for tutors to handle with ease. The study also found that there was some deficiency with the skills and knowledge personnel possessed for mentoring and supervision of teacher trainees' work. Mentoring is a vital initiative in the development of academic staff at initial stage. In addition to the role it plays in corporate survival, mentoring has good things to offer the participants. For the mentee it can be central to the career development, thus mentors guide and nurture the career growth of their "protégés" (Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 2000). The above identified needs ought to be addressed by the institution because according to Noe, as cited in Odoom, Kyeremeh and Opoku (2014), if organizations fail to identify and address the factors that impede the successful execution of their responsibilities then they will equally find it difficult to understand and appreciate the factors that are responsible for the attainment of their goals and aspirations.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The new status of colleges of education as tertiary institutions implies that the roles of their academic staff are multi-dimensional. This demands a newer appreciation of the challenges the academic staff face and so must be equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and other competencies required to teach in tertiary institutions. However, to ensure the acquisition of the necessary skills, knowledge and other dispositions requires a well-established staff development programs. From this study, it was observed that induction and orientation program forms part of the Agog College of Education's staff development program although it was difficult to authenticate its effectiveness. Although the staff in the institution derived some benefits from the existing staff development policy, the policy was not comprehensive enough to address the varying needs of personnel. In spite of the difficulties associated with some of them, there existed short courses, workshops, sandwich, full-time and distance education programs as options for personnel at the College to develop their professional skills and status. The institution did not conduct proper needs assessment prior to staff development programs coupled with issues of fairness related to staff development opportunities at the College. Some of the staff development needs at the College were in the areas of teaching methodology, institutional skills, management skills and leadership skills. Others needs were skills in contents of some courses, information communication technology, research and publication, and mentoring and supervision. It is recommended that staff development policy in the College should be comprehensive, well written and known to the staff to in order to achieve its goals and to promote consistency, continuity and understanding within the institution. It is also recommended that the College should provide both financial and non-financial supports to the academic staff who are already in the system but with qualifications below master's degrees to enable them upgrade their skills within the shortest possible time. The College should properly collaborate with other institutions of higher learning to provide short courses on research publication-related issues to the staff. The College should collaborate with corporate bodies as a way of exploring new avenues of funding or sponsoring academic staff development programs. The College should team up with the government and National Council of Tertiary Education to implement relevant policy and programs that must go with its tertiary institution status.

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