

TITLE

THE DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN  
GHANA FROM THE PASSING OF THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE OF 1925 TO  
1997

AUTHORS

SAMUEL TIEKU GYANSAH AND GABRIEL ESILFIE

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### Abstract

*This paper presents the historical growth of teacher education in Ghana and the various attempts made to ensure that societal demands are met as far as teacher effectiveness and supply are concerned. Since the colonial period, teacher education has received the desired attention. This attention is seen in the manner in which teacher education has been changing both in structure and content. Various governments have been quick to realise that education holds the key to the development of the nation and at the heart of the education system is the teacher. In this Paper, the writers present the development of teacher education from 1925 to 1997.*

### THE BEGINNING

Before 1909 when the first teacher training institution was established in the country by the government, the Basel Mission had seminaries at Akropong and Abetifi that trained teachers. The Akropong seminary was built in 1848, which was followed closely by the Abetifi seminary. Andreas Riis and his successors (early Basel missionaries) realized at that time that a thorough education system depended on the supply of trained teachers. Pupils who had gone through a primary school of a sort and had gone through any one of the three middle schools at Akropong, Christianborg and Begoro for three years and wished to be teachers or catechists had a year's preparatory course before entering the Basel Seminaries. The teachers were then given a two-year course in the Teachers Training School (McWilliams 1962). The 1852 Education Ordinance attempted instituting a training course but death, ill- health and lack of funds did not allow the plan to institute a training course to go beyond the drawing board. A European couple, Mr. and Mrs. Vinall, had been duly appointed to train teachers, but Mrs. Vinall died before the programme could start and bad health did not permit Mr. Vinall to do any serious work in line with the teacher-training programme. This venture was to be sponsored by an annual sum of 1000 pounds, which was to be paid from revenue collected by the government. The government under Governor Stephen Hill had hoped to find the annual 1000 pounds from the proceeds of the Poll

Tax that had been instituted with the agreement of an assembly of chiefs earlier in 1852, but the people were reluctant to pay and this crippled the teacher training programme. Nonetheless, in 1856 the Colonial Chaplain, Rev. C.S. Hassels was appointed Superintendent and Inspector of Schools, charged among other things, to ensure, as far as may be possible, the requisite supply of good and efficient teachers by his own personal training (McWilliam 1962, Pg 28). Some amount of success was chalked in the attempt, as a small number of teachers were posted to start school in Eastern and Western Wassaw and Akim with salaries of one pound a month paid from the Education Ordinance of 1887 which instituted that teachers should hold the re-constituted Education Board's Certificate (either honorary or by examination). Not much is 'heard' about the development and administration of the teaching profession until 1909 when as a result of a recommendation by the Education Committee of 1908; the government entered the field of teacher training. The Accra Training Institution established in 1909 by the government started with a two-year teacher-training course.

The First World War dealt a blow to the humble beginnings of teacher education in this country. As a result of the War, the Basel Missionaries who were Germans were deported by the colonial government, leaving their training college at Akropong in the hands of the government whose reduced staff (as a result of the War) could not manage effectively the Akropong College and other missionary schools. Also as a result of the War, the Accra Training College could not offer accommodation to about eighty students. It must be added emphatically that funds for educational programmes were directed into the war. This situation naturally created the problem of shortage of teachers, which was to be compounded when government failed to assure mission teachers a fixed salary and as a result of unattractive pay and poor conditions of service, many teachers, particularly the more senior and experienced ones resigned. It is on record that many of the senior and experienced Akuapem teachers resigned and went into the then booming cocoa industry.

These resignations led to a fall in educational standards and targeted improvements expected in the 1909 Governor Rodger Reform on education were not realized.

It was against this background of decline in education, and as a matter of course decline in teacher education development and administration that the 1925 education Ordinance was passed. At the word go the Ordinance, among other things sought to arrest the general downward trend of education in Ghana, which also meant attending to teacher education. Since 1925, several changes have occurred to improve the quality of teacher education and to meet urgent pressing demands in relation to the teacher and his work. The ordinance tackled the issue of quality teachers and the maintenance of professional standards.

Qualified teachers were registered and given registration numbers and the unqualified teachers were sacked from the teaching profession. However, the experienced, and the older teachers were allowed to register and remain in the service.

For quality performance and sound professional training of teachers, this ordinance abolished the 2-year post primary teacher-training course and replaced it with a three-year teacher-training course and shortly after 1927 introduced the four-year teacher-training course. Other significant major developments on teacher education that were effected by the 1925 Education Ordinance included the following:

1. The Accra Teacher Training Institution was absorbed into the new Achimota College for effective management and administration.
2. The training college at Aburi was transferred to Kumasi and named Wesley College.

3. The 1848 buildings of Akropong College were found to be weak so new ones were built and opened in 1928, which caused an increase in enrolment into the college.
4. The opening of two more colleges in 1930 saw the number of teachers in training college rising to 600 (McWilliam 1962)

In 1939 the World War II started and conditions at that time rather heightened the demand for education and at the same time made it difficult to satisfy. Communities built their own schools to satisfy the increased demand for education by the people. Conditions in these schools were rather appalling as W.E.F. Ward reported that the teachers of these schools were ill trained and poorly equipped. At the request of the then Board of Education, a committee was appointed in 1937 to examine the existing educational system in the Gold Coast and to make recommendations where necessary for its modification.

The report of this Committee had great impact on the development and administration of training colleges in the country. The Committee recommended that primary education should be organized first on the basis of a six-year infant-junior work. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase, the senior primary was to be four years and was to have agriculture, fishery or craft incorporated into the curriculum with emphasis on domestic science for girls. The Committee also recommended that teachers should be trained in a 2-year course for infant-junior primary and 4-year course for senior primary schools. Successful students were to be awarded Certificates 'B' and 'A' respectively. The Committee suggested that there should be special training for secondary and middle boarding schools teachers. These recommendations and the fact that primary schools had increased from 340 in 1930 to 467 with a total pupil enrolment of 61,832 meant more teachers had to be trained, but the financial situation of the government served as a serious constraint on the bid to train teachers. The urgent need for teachers brought the creation of a 2-year teacher-training course leading to a Teacher's Certificate 'B'. This existed side by side with the 4-year course for

teachers, which led to Certificate 'A'. The invention of the 2-year course was to produce a great number of teachers in a relatively shorter time to man the ever-growing number of primary schools and at the same time reducing the cost of training teachers. McWilliam puts it clearly when he says: "certainly the new course allowed twice the number of teachers to receive training for the same cost, and the new Certificate 'B' teachers has been the backbone of the present expansion of primary education". (McWilliams, 1962, Pg 70). Some period after the war, the two-year initial courses were replaced with four-year courses, alongside which were two-year post-secondary programmes. The four-year courses were intended to extend and complete the general education of teachers who had received their education in elementary schools only. Emphasis in the first two years was on a general education, which in content was very similar to that of the courses in the academic secondary schools. In the last two years some professional courses and student teaching practice were provided.

### **The 1957 Accelerated Development Plan**

Before 1951 there were nineteen pre-university training colleges offering a variety of courses leading to the award of: 2-year Post-Middle Teacher's Certificate 'B', 2-year Post 'B' Teacher's Certificate 'A' and 4-year Post-Middle Teacher's Certificate 'A' and 2-year Post-Secondary Teacher's Certificate 'A'. The launching of the 1957 Accelerated Development Plan called for the recruitment of more teachers. 'The rapid expansion of primary education was the most striking feature of the Accelerated Development Plan' (McWilliam 1962), even though there was some expansion in the middle and secondary school. The Convention Peoples Party (CPP) government then launched this programme to speed up the process of getting children of school going age into school. The great expansion in primary schools called for the need to train teachers to man them, the planners of the Accelerated Development Plan rightly observed that the key to the whole problem of education expansion in the Gold Coast was the production of as many trained teachers as possible and as fast as possible and rightly observed too that guidance was

needed for the army of pupil teachers who had to be recruited to man many of the primary classes until enough teachers could be trained. In February 1953 an Emergency Training college was opened at Saltpond and 'by the end of that year it had conducted five courses of six weeks and 298 pupil teachers had passed through its cocoa-sheds' (McWilliam 1962, Pg 91). This Saltpond 'experiment gave birth to ten Pupil Teachers' Centres scattered in various parts of the country. Each ran six courses a year for about sixty students. In this manner about 3,000 pupil teachers attended the six-week course each year. By 1957 the number of pupil teachers in approved primary and middle schools had fallen to 9,688 from its peak of 11,055 as the output of the two-year training colleges began to overtake new primary and middle school openings. This 'project' for training teachers in six weeks was 'critically' criticized but the organizers of the Pupil Teachers' Centres claimed they were not attempting to train the teachers in six weeks but they, 'sought to teach the pupil teachers enough for them to realize how little they knew and to appreciate that education means more than literacy' (McWilliam 1962, Pg 91). The staffs of Assistant Education Officers were specially trained for these 'projects' and the curriculum of the 'projects' emphasized English, Arithmetic and Pedagogy. The ultimate effect was that many of those pupil teachers who attended the courses and had themselves come from inadequately staffed primary and middle schools received perhaps for the first time the valuable example of thorough and effective teaching. When qualified teachers were sufficient in the early 1960s both the Teachers Certificate 'B' and the emergency training programmes were phased out in 1962.

The expansion in primary schools in the Accelerated Development Plan necessitated the expansion in secondary education, which was really the case in 1950s and 1960s. As a result of this expansion in secondary schools, many secondary school leavers entered the Teacher Training Colleges for a two-year post-secondary Certificate 'A' courses. In the 1940s government's attention was on the expansion facilities for 2-year Post-Secondary Teacher's Certificate 'A' courses, which had just been launched. Same time in Achimota, specialist courses in housecraft,

art and craft, music and physical education were established. In 1957 when Achimota Training College was phased out, the specialist and the two-year Post Secondary Teacher's Certificate 'A' courses were transferred to the Kumasi College of Technology and thence to the specialist Training College in Winneba in 1957. By the beginning of 1960, out of 4,427 teachers in training 340 were products of secondary schools (McWilliam 1962). The Accelerated Development Plan gave a new encouragement to those entering the profession by allowing for the payment of salaries to teachers in training.

### **CERTIFICATION**

The administration of examinations and the award of certificates to teachers changed as the number of training colleges increased in the country. Before 1926, the three teacher training colleges in the country, Wesley College, Accra Training College and the training college at Akropong were given permission to conduct their own final examination, mainly because these colleges were strongly staffed, however the Education Department still issued the certificates. This mode of administration of final exams and certification worked well while the number of colleges remained small but when the great post-war increases took place it inevitably became more and more difficult for this mode to operate. The Minister of Education, Mr. C. T. Nylander, at the time told parliament in 1957, 'it has become apparent that there is a clear need for guidance in this matter of certification and in some cases for control, if standards in teacher training colleges were not to deteriorate' (McWilliam 1962, Pg 93). For efficiency and uniformity in the setting and conduct of examination and for final certification the National Teacher Training Council (NTTC) was established in the 1958. Apart from this function, the NTTC was to advise the Ministry of Education (and later the GES) on procedures necessary to implement programmes related to teacher education. It was also to advise on the length of term, allowances for students and colleges, material needs, and physical development of the colleges. It was also to serve as a common platform for the principals of training colleges to discuss issues affecting the training colleges and to search for solution. This in the development of teacher education was the period

of the CPP government, which ably demonstrated that it was not only interested in the effective co-ordination and control of examination and certification in training colleges, but also the general management and supervision of colleges. This interest from the CPP government brought into existence the 'device of the body corporate', which had originated in Uganda (McWilliam). This was the Board of Governors system, which has existed not only in training colleges but also in secondary schools. The Board appoints the Principal of a college subject to the approval of the Minister of Education. On discipline, the consent of the Board is necessary for the type of punishment to be meted out to defaulting students. Thus in the day-to-day administration of the college on the ground, the Principal is in contact with the Board to ensure the smooth running of the colleges.

### **EXPANSION**

The 1961 free and compulsory education brought some developments in the running of training colleges. There was an increase in enrolment in the training colleges, 4,427 in 1960 to 5,452 in 1961 (McWilliam), and the basic course for teacher training for middle school leavers was extended from two to four years. As far as accommodation was concerned every available space was made use of and in some cases extra temporary buildings were provided in existing colleges. It was decided to do away with the Certificate 'B' course at the end of 1961. It was to be replaced by a continuous four-year course leading to the award of Certificate 'A'. This was intended to be special. It should be 'not merely a resurrection of the old four-year course, nor a secondary education, but a course designed in response to the educational needs of contemporary Ghana, a worthwhile course in its own right in which there will be ample specialization' (Odamtten, Pg 35).

### **KWAPONG'S COMMITTEE**

In 1966 there was a change of government from CPP, civilian government to National Liberation Council {NLC} military government. Among other things, the new government was not pleased with the educational programmes of the government it had overthrown and so set up a 31-

member Educational Review Committee under the chairmanship of Prof. A. A. Kwapong, then Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Legon. The Review Committee had a section of its report on Teacher Education particular on pupil teachers, and the Government white Paper on it reveal the recommendation of the report. It said, ‘the recommendation that a pupil teacher who repeatedly fails to pass the college entrance examination should continue to teach for five years before having his appointment terminated is not accepted. Government considers that in the interest of efficiency and to enable the misfits and academically weak to move on to other jobs quickly, a pupil teacher’s appointment should be terminated if after three years of teaching he fails to gain admission to training college’ (Odamtten Pg 40). During the 1968/69 academic year out of a total teaching staffs of 47,866 in the Primary and Middle schools, 47.0% were trained 53.0% were untrained. By the 1970/71 academic year out of a staff of 46,960, 65.0% were trained and 35.0% untrained. This dramatic change was partly due to the systematic growth in teacher training colleges and partly due to the ‘order’ to pupil teachers to better their lot.

### **IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON TEACHER TRAINING**

The introduction of the New Structure and Content of Education for Ghana in 1972 had its effect on teacher education. Among other broad objectives, the New Structure was to generate in the individual an awareness of the ability of man using the power derived from science and technology to transform his environment and improve the quality of his life. The programme was to be science, technical and vocational bias and that is why, it needed the provision of a new type of teacher, who shall be specialist of a sort in one or more subject areas and whose academic and professional training shall be such as enable him to teach and function effectively at the level at which he works. As a result an ad hoc committee on Teacher Education carried out a review of the Teacher Training programme in April 1975 and it proposed a new structure of Teacher Education, which was to provide teacher education at the levels to commence in the 1975-76 academic year:

- I. The four-year post-middle colleges to continue to train teacher for primary schools and that implied the suspension of the proposed phasing out of the four-year post middle training course as envisaged in the New Structure and Content of Education. Student in this area had the option in the final year to specialize in either nursery or kindergarten, infant or upper primary work. In-service training was to be organized for those already trained primary and middle teachers to adapt them to the requirements of the kindergarten and primary school curriculum of the new structure.
  
- II. 3-year Post 'O' level Colleges which will train teachers for the junior secondary schools and were grouped into three categories with specialization in one of the following areas: Group1 = Mathematics, Science, Agriculture/Home Science. Group2 =Social Studies, English, Ghanaian Languages. Group3 = Practical and Vocational Subjects, Home Science, Commercial Subjects, Art, Music Agriculture.
  
- III. 3-year post 'A' Level Colleges would produce diploma teachers for the senior secondary schools and the post 'O' level training colleges to supplement the graduates from the universities. The diploma training was to be done in a new college formed by the merging of the fire existing specialist training institutions.

### **BEYOND TEACHER TRAINING**

The new college was to be known as the Advanced Training College for Diploma Studies to be sited at Winneba. The component institutions were the school of Physical Education, Home Science, and Art the School Mathematics, Science and Business Education, the School of Music,

the School of Ghanaian languages, and the St. Andrews Agricultural Training College. These were the major proposals of the ad hoc committee however it must be stated that even though the major broad outlines of the proposal exist today, a few changes have been made. For example, post 'O' level training colleges have been divided into two categories of subject areas. Group 1 training colleges offer science, maths, Agric science, technical skills, and technical drawing. Students are expected to specialize in two areas such as science and maths or science and Agricultural Science, or Maths and Agricultural Science, Science or Technical Skills and Technical drawing. Group 2 training colleges offer Social Studies, literature-in-English, Vocational Skills and lifeskills. In the final year, group 2 final year students are to specialize in either social studies or literature-in-English and one of the skills. However, for all students in training college, in addition to their specialized areas, English Language, Education, Long Essay and Supervised Teaching Practice must be taken. In addition, to broaden the academic scope of teachers, all college are to take Basic Maths, Basic Science, Agric Science and Cultural Studies as Part I examination at the end of the first two years. Another change in this proposal has been with the admission of Post 'A' level students and run the same courses for the same number of years.

The economic slump of the late 1970s was still in session by the early 1980s and this had serious consequences on teachers, who had to abandon their classrooms to seek greener pastures outside the borders of this country. There was a shortage of teachers as a result of this exodus of teachers. This situation called for a solution and the government had to introduce the modular system of training teachers during the 1982-83 academic years. The term 'modular' is a descriptive term for the syllabus of the first two years which is divided into individual units or groups of lessons called 'modules', each of which is designed to cover three hours of work by the student at home (M. K. Antwi, 1992). This system apart from improving the professional and academic status of pupil teachers, reduced government's heavy expenditure on Education since the nation's economy was not sound.

The regular students spent 33 weeks in residence and were fed at the rate of thirty cedis a day while the modular student spent 12 weeks in residence and was fed at the rate twenty cedis a day, the extra ten cedis borne by the student himself. In the period when the Ghanaian teachers in Nigeria were flushed out and had to return to their motherland and as a result of a seemingly improved economic conditions, which favoured all workers, the modular system was discontinued.

### **TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND EXAMINATION**

Technical Education in general had not been popular over the years and this unpopularity affected training teachers in this area, however in 1959, the Tarkwa Technical Institute was followed by a 2-year Handicraft course for Certificate 'B' teachers at Ashanti-Mampong. In 1960 the Kumasi Technical Teacher Training Centre was established under a Director and three experts placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Education for a period of five years by the United Kingdom Government. The Kumasi College of Technology established in 1952 provided courses in technical and vocational training but was later transferred to Winneba Training College. With the increasing number of training colleges it became necessary to re-examine the co-ordination, conduct of examinations and certification. As had already been stated by 1975 the NTTC conducted the examination for the training colleges. However in 1975, the Ministry of Education, through the NTTC requested the Institute of Education at University of Cape Coast to be the final examining body for all 3-year Post Secondary and to be the overall custodian of standards. Presently the institute does not only conduct exams for Post Secondary Teacher Training Colleges and Diploma-awarding institutions but also it is the intermediary between the universities, the Ministry of Education and all agents of Education in the interest of the continual improvement of further professionalism of teacher training in Ghana. Most academic secondary school teachers in the country have received and there are some still receiving their education and

training in the universities. Before 1964 intending teachers took an undergraduate degree and after one year's post graduate teaching experience then attended a year's professional training at the University of Ghana to acquire the Postgraduate Certificate in Education or Diploma in Education. From 1964, the University College of Cape Coast began to offer three-year concurrent course sequences professional studies and supervised teaching practice, which led to the BA or Bsc (Education) Degree. These professionally trained graduates were to staff the secondary schools, polytechnics, technical institutes and teacher training colleges. Since 1975, the University of Cape Coast has been running a new structure of four-year undergraduate courses consisting of general and special subjects, professional studies and supervised teaching practice. Successful candidates are awarded a first degree in addition to a Diploma in Education. Graduates from other recognized universities who want to stay in the teaching profession are expected to acquire a year's professional training by taking the Postgraduate Diploma in Education Courses at the university, these days commonly referred to as 'sandwich programme'. In addition to these, the University of Cape Coast runs a two-year post diploma course for non-graduates with at least three year's teaching experience following a course of specialist training after the initial training course. The 'story' of teacher education in the University of Cape Coast is now different from what existed before 1995. Now the Diploma in Education is not running concurrently with the degree course; students who wish to study with the education component are allowed, in the process completing after three years. This is not to say that the University has ceased to be a 'teaching university'. The Faculty of Education is expected to admit 60% of the total freshmen intake at the beginning of each academic year. The 60% admitted read subjects that equip them with teaching skills and are expected to go back to the secondary, training colleges and polytechnics to teach.

## **CONCLUSION**

The development and administration of teacher education in Ghana has really responded to national “expectations” of the various times. The seemingly overloaded history of teacher education might be indications that over the years attempts have been made to improve teacher efficiency and supply. This is the right spirit in the right direction of national progress, for teacher education is one of the good props of the human resource development of the nation. Since society is dynamic and there seems to be a forward march towards the ultimate, the necessary apparatus should be set in motion to identify conditions for change in the arena of teacher education. If conditions demand change, change must occur. It is only by this that we can adjust to the fast pace of change in all human endeavours.

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