

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

MENTORSHIP AT POST-SECONDARY TEACHER TRAINING LEVEL IN
GHANA: A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND
EXPERIENCES OF MENTORS, LINK TUTORS AND TRAINEES

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DEDICATION

DEDICATED TO THE LOVING MEMORY OF MY BELOVED SON ERIC
KANKAM-NYARKO WHO PASSED AWAY DURING MY ABSENCE FROM
HOME IN GHANA WHILE PURSUING THIS PROGRAMME

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for the award of a degree in this University or elsewhere.

Signed: 

ABSTRACT

The need to prepare teacher trainees to have a sound grounding in the theory and practice of teaching to make them effective practitioners has long been recognised by teacher educators. This need has given rise to designing and implementing school-based teacher education programmes in both developed and developing countries to help trainees acquire theoretical and professional experience. In Ghana this desire has led to the introduction and implementation of mentorship scheme at the post-secondary teacher training level with the idea of using mentor support and assessment to enhance trainees' professional development.

The purpose of this research was to examine the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana to find out the problems that have to do with the implementation. The research also examined the preparation and training given to the mentors, the guidance and support they provide to trainees and the impact of their support upon the professional development of trainees.

A qualitative case study was conducted in two selected teacher training areas from the months of December 2002-February 2003 and July -September 2003. The selected case study areas were considered to be a fair representation of the teacher training system in Ghana. The field research included interviews with mentors, link tutors, trainees and key officials associated with the post-secondary teacher training system in Ghana. Findings from the multiple-site case study evidence were presented and analysed for their significance.

The findings of the research suggest that problems continue to threaten the implementation process and the benefits derivable from using mentorship as an

approach to initial teacher education in Ghana. The evidence from the findings were used as a basis for conclusions about improving the scheme at the post secondary teacher education level in Ghana.

Recommendations to help improve the mentorship scheme are set out.

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A study of this nature which attempts to survey the experiences of mentors, trainees and link tutors about mentorship at initial teacher training will not be possible without the kind assistance of people.

Often a PhD. programme is one of a solitary scholarly pursuit but my experience was vastly enriched by the discussions which underpinned the supervision I received throughout this study. In particular the regular discussions, the critical comments about my arguments and the assistance with reading materials from my supervisors Dr. Chris Botton and Mr. Chris Brown helped me think through many aspects of the issues and challenges that pertained to the key concepts and themes of mentoring. As such I was able to construct a robust methodology approach for this study.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADP:	Accelerated Development Plan
BECE:	Basic Education Certificate Examination
BERA:	British Educational Research Association
CA:	Continuous Assessment
CATE:	Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
DFES:	Department of Education and Skills
DES:	Department of Education and Science
DIE:	Department for Industrial Education
DC:	District Council
DLM:	Distance Learning Materials
EdSAC:	Education Sector Adjustment Credit

ERP:	Education Reform Programme
fCUBE:	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GAST:	Ghana Association of Science Teachers
GES:	Ghana Education Service
GMOE	Ghana Ministry of Education
GNAT:	Ghana National Association of Teachers
HEIs:	Higher Education Institutions
HMI:	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
IBRD:	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
INSET	In-Service Education and Training of Teachers
ITE:	Initial Teacher Education
ITT:	Initial Teacher Training
JusSSTEP:	Junior Secondary School Step-Up Educational Programme
JSS:	Junior Secondary School
MOE:	Ministry of Education
NPCISR	National Planning Committee for the Implementation of School Reforms
ODA:	Overseas Development Agency
OFSTED:	Office for Standards in Education
OPEC:	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PR:	Professional Artistry
PSTT:	Post-Secondary Teacher Training
SITE:	Schools and In-service Teacher Education
SMCD:	Supreme Military Council
TED:	Teacher Education Division

TR: Technical Rationality
UPE: Universal Primary Education
WAEC: West African Examinations Council
ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The integration of theory and practice in preparing teacher trainees to be effective practitioners has been a major challenge which teacher training programmes face, yet that is what is demanded of teacher training programmes. We must however, recognise the fact that practical knowledge is distinct from abstract knowledge and professionals in their work rely heavily on practical knowledge system.

Since 1987 improving teacher quality has become a key concern in the search for ways of improving teaching at the primary and junior secondary school levels in Ghana. This desire led to the introduction and implementation of mentorship scheme at the post-secondary teacher training level with the idea of using mentor support and assessment to enhance trainees' professional development and to also bridge the gap between theory and practice. A qualitative case study was conducted in two selected teacher training areas in Ghana from the months of December 2002-February 2003 and July -September 2003 to find the effectiveness of the implementation of the mentorship scheme.

The purpose of the research was to examine the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana to find out the problems that have to do with the implementation.

The study sought among others to find answers to how adequate the training given to the mentors equipped them with knowledge and skills in providing support to trainees and whether trainees perceive mentor support and assessment as providing them with the needed skills and confidence to teach and to reflect over their practice. It also sought to find out the problems that have confronted the effective implementation of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training in Ghana.

Findings from the multiple-site case study evidence were presented and analysed for their significance. The case study evidence revealed that:

1. In-service training given to the mentors before the start of the mentorship scheme could not provide them with the skills and knowledge needed in providing support to trainees.
2. Mentor support and assessment were not effective, valid and reliable to be used as part of the certification process.
3. Trainees do not have the skills and the confidence to teach and to reflect over their teaching to enhance their professional development.
4. The implementation process is threatened with problems ranging from lack of internal support systems which does not promote co-operate learning among mentors, lack of external support to mentors in the schools; lack of teaching and learning resources in the schools which put limitations on mentor support of trainees and above all high pupil-teacher ratio which makes it difficult for mentors to engage in post-lesson discussions with trainees.

On the basis of the findings the following recommendations were made.

- i. The need to adopt school-focused INSET which will involve mentors in the planning and the delivery to help them own it and equip them with the needed skills in providing support to trainees and to also facilitate co-operate learning.
- ii. Development of mentorship based on the idea of profiling to place value on a wider range of professional learning of trainees by widening the evidential base of mentor support and assessment of trainees and to

facilitate a potential shift of attention from mentor support and assessment just for marks or grades.

- iii. The development of a moderation scheme for mentors' assessment to achieve common standards.
- iv. The adoption of Maynard and Furlong's stage model of mentoring since it takes into account the various developmental needs of trainees and also allows mentors to assume different roles in providing support to trainees thereby providing learning experiences for both mentors and trainees.
- v. Improving teacher education in the two universities in Ghana to support changes at initial teacher education in Ghana.
- vi. Evaluating the teacher education curriculum in the colleges.
- vii. Training circuit supervisors to acquire knowledge and skills in mentorship to help solve the problem of high pupil -teacher ratio in the schools.
- viii. Development of professional support systems for continuing teacher education in Ghana.

It is the contention of this thesis that the mentorship scheme stands a good chance of making a positive impact on the quality of initial teacher education in Ghana by producing good and reflective teachers if the recommendations made in this thesis are adopted and steps are taken to minimize the critical factors which have affected the implementation process.

Part one

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The integration of theory and practice in preparing teacher trainees to be effective practitioners has been a major challenge which teacher training programmes face, yet that is what is demanded of teacher training programmes. Opinion is divided among teacher educators as to the best way of training trainee teachers. One school of thought is of the view that knowledge and for that matter subject matter acquisition is supreme and skills subservient in the training of teachers. The implication of this is that there is an automatic link between the possession of knowledge and competence to teach. Another school of thought argues that skills are supreme which seem to imply that once teachers acquire skills they can teach.

The “tension” or argument between theory and practice in some cases is overlooked and radical positions are at times taken which often create a disharmony between theory and practice in the training of teacher trainees. In some developed countries like Britain, this tension has been debated extensively as there has been a lot of debates and views as to how initial teacher training should be shared between the universities, colleges and the schools. Official policy however, has favoured school-based approach to initial teacher training which thrives on mentoring. Tomlinson (1995) commenting on the tension in Britain indicated that initial teacher preparation has undergone transition from settings and systems dominated by higher education institutions to being situated more in schools to make the training more school-based. In Ghana initial teacher training is more college-based. A feature of basic teacher training in Ghana is that students spend

three years in residential training with only eight weeks or at times a maximum of twelve weeks for teaching practice. We need to realise that in providing initial training for teachers the school environment must not be forgotten for it is in the school that teacher trainees put their knowledge and skills into practice and it is there that the values of their training are tested. We must also recognise the fact that practical knowledge is distinct from abstract knowledge and professionals in their work rely heavily on practical knowledge systems. Underscoring the importance of school environment in teacher preparation Bell in McIntyre et al (1993) has this to say:

It is by attending the school seeing what is going on there, and taking a share in the office of tuition that teachers are formed and not only by lectures and abstract instruction (p.25)

Corroborating the essence of integrating theory and practice in teacher preparation Friedson (1998) stated that:

To assume that textbooks and other publications of academics and researchers reflect in consistent and predictable ways the knowledge that is actually exercised in concrete setting is either wishful or naive (p.229)

The above statements remind teacher educators of the importance of integrating theory and practice in the preparation of teacher trainees. We also need to remind ourselves that teachers as change agents contribute to the social and economic advancement of nations and as such their training must prepare them to perform these functions to help societal advancement. Lewin (1993) and Graham-Brown (1991) are in agreement that education among other things contributes heavily to national identity and cohesion, economic growth and the empowerment of a country's citizenry by helping them to play their part in civil affairs.

Ghana is aware of the importance of education to national development and social advancement and as a result forty-one (41) Teacher Training Colleges have been established to train professional teachers. Since 1987 improving teacher quality has become a key concern in the search for ways of improving teaching at the primary and junior secondary levels in Ghana. . In view of this, an Educational Reform Programme was initiated in 1987 called the New Structure and Content of Education in Ghana which gave birth to the Junior Secondary School concept and changed the system of education from 6-4-5-2-4 i.e. six years primary school education, four years middle school education, five years secondary school education, two years sixth form education, and four years university education to 6- 3- 3 -4. Though the 1987 Educational Reform in Ghana did not specifically target the teacher training institutions it however had some implications for the teacher training colleges due to the expected changes in the curricular at the basic level. For instance the objectives of the revised school curricular as a result of the reforms placed a lot of emphasis on hands-on activities and student-centred interact ional approaches to teaching. In response to the changes which took place at the basic level the Overseas development Agency (ODA) in collaboration with the Teacher Education Division of the Ministry of Education launched the Junior Secondary School Teacher Education Project (JuSSTEP) which was a 4-year project (1989-1993). The project targeted the then 38 teacher training colleges in five subject areas (Mathematics, English, Science, Technical Skills and Education). The thrust of the (JuSSTEP) was to upgrade the professional competence of teachers by organising methodology courses in INSET and workshops in tutor-support instructional materials. The strategy to achieve this main objective was to introduce student-centred, interactive models of teaching in the five subject areas named above.

An evaluation report carried out in 1993 by the Teacher Education Division and the ODA indicated that the project did not have much impact on the teaching of the subjects in the training colleges. The concluding remarks drawn from the executive summary was that:

Tutors (were) positive about the new methodologies and in certain areas (such as) mathematics, Science and Technical Skills were applying a more student-centred approach. However, the study reveals that the impact of JUSSTEP is limited by certain major structural constraints: the main ones being an overload curriculum, excessive student-tutor ratios exacerbated by insufficient tutors per subject, over enrolment, high staff turnover, and lack of classroom facilities. These factors combined with pressure to cover the syllabus and prepare for examinations, present an excessive workload in terms of teaching and assessment requirements and act as a major impediments in the effective implementation and adoption of new methodologies in teacher education in the training colleges (GES/ODA, 1993 p.17).

It is clear from these concluding remarks that problems still persisted after the 1987 reforms in basic teacher training colleges in Ghana. It seems not much attention was given to some critical aspects of the teacher training system for the JuSSTEP to be responsive to the kind of changes that were envisaged. According to Akyeampong (1999) even though innovative instructional/learning and assessment strategies were introduced at the classroom level, the teacher training programme was still narrowly focused on written timed examinations and this had the effect of reducing attention to performance related skill development like teaching practice. Thus, the impact of the JuSSTEP teacher training reforms was limited by the effect of examination on teaching and learning. In fact it is generally felt among Ghanaian educators that most of the products of the current teacher training programme are ill prepared in facilitating effective learning in the basic schools.

For example, the Education Commission (1994) shared the view that the poor academic performance of primary and junior secondary school pupils was largely due to the lack of trained and qualified teachers. Although it is difficult to establish hard empirical evidence to support this view there appears to be good grounds from some studies of pupil learning and achievement in schools to suggest that this could well be an important contributory factor to the problem of poor academic performance. (See Akyeampong et. al, (1998).

Some of the practices in the teacher training colleges believed to have impacted negatively on pupils' academic performance were emphasis on academic content in the training programme above practical teaching, the lack of exposure to actual schools and work in the classrooms, and the lack of training in classroom methodology. Furthermore, the Basic Sector Assessment Report taken after the reform in 1994 also indicated that there was not much improvement in the quality of teaching. There is the belief that teachers lack important skills and qualities that would make them better prepared to handle the new directions of curriculum reform and practice as envisaged (MOE, 1994).

The teacher education curriculum in Ghana, it would seem, fails to recognise that learning to teach is a complex task and the acquisition of specific pedagogical skills and knowledge though, are important in learning to teach, have little practical value unless they are integrated into the context of real classrooms and the idiosyncrasies of children's learning.

To improve the quality of teaching and learning further reforms were carried out between 1994-1998. The major one was the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) reform programme planned for implementation in a ten-year period starting from 1996-2005 (GES, April 2000). The introduction of the FCUBE programme brought into being a new teacher-training programme dubbed ‘‘IN-IN-OUT’’. That is, a 3-year teacher training programme in which trainees are expected to spend the first two years of their training at college and the last year of their training in schools under mentors who are expected to support trainees and provide guidance to them. The mentors are therefore, the anchorpersons for the trainees in this new approach to initial teacher training in Ghana.

The philosophy behind this is to integrate theory and practice in the training of teachers by exposing them to the school environment with mentors to help them have adequate school experience. It is also meant to use assessment by mentors and link tutors to enhance the professional development of trainees thus, making the training more practically oriented (Teacher Education Division/GES, November 1997). Underlying all these changes, it appears, is the assumption that effective teachers are produced simply by a matter of curricular orientation and practical training. Such an assumption fails to recognise the more complex process of professional teacher development and how teachers’ belief and attitudes interact and shape teaching behaviour. Commenting on mentorship as an approach to initial teacher training Fish (1988) indicated that being a mentor is different from operating as a teacher supervisor or a class teacher receiving a student for teaching practice as it involves taking on the entire role of educating the trainee and also knowing about initial teacher education in much more detail.

Much evidence from research suggests that teachers' classroom practice is more than a function of teacher programmes and that their personal socio-historical past, beliefs and values play a big part in shaping their classroom behaviour and practices (Wideen et al., 1998; Knowles, 1998). Bullough et al. (1997) also claim beginning teachers bring with them into teaching a teaching schema which is formed over years of experience by interacting with teachers in various capacities and perhaps by prior teaching. This schema they conclude reflects a model of what the individual believes that teaching is supposed to be.

Calderhead (1988) also indicates that teachers often look upon their classroom competence as a matter of personality that indicates a belief in the idea that teachers are born and not made. Research into teacher role identity points to a contextualised sense of self that plays a critical part in shaping teaching behaviour. This formulation of one's view of self according to Woods (1987) is essentially influenced by home environment, parents, teachers, marriage and socio-economic and political factors.

Commenting on the influence of previous experience of trainees before entering into colleges Mifsud (1996) argues for primary teacher training to take cognisance of the entering characteristics of trainees as a crucial step in the process of achieving professional expertise in teaching. Similarly, Calderhead & Robson (1991) question whether training courses take sufficient account of student teachers' initial images of teaching in order to challenge misconceptions and develop their expertise. Richardson (1996) in a review of research on beliefs held by beginning teachers prior to entering pre-service teaching programmes also argues that their beliefs about teaching come through personal experience, schooling and instruction.

Furthermore, Wilson & Cameron (1996) and Mahlios & Maxson (1995) in their research of pre-service teachers' beliefs about schooling reported that student teachers primarily emphasise teacher effectiveness in terms of teacher caring, nurturing and imagination. Citing similar evidence, Akyeampong & Stephens (2000) in their study of identity of student teachers in Ghana argue for training programmes to provide more professional opportunities relating to the challenges and conflicts that confront student teachers on teaching practice, and to use that as a basis for engaging trainee teachers in developing critical reflection on teaching. It needs pointing out that making students have adequate school experience with the view to helping them become effective teachers is laudable but as some educational experts have observed, lengthening the training period or introducing school-based approach by themselves do not guarantee effective teaching. Also mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training has some complex issues, which must be addressed before its implementation.

For the teacher training reforms in Ghana, the introduction of mentoring at the Post-secondary Teacher Training level was intended to achieve two purposes. First it was to strike a meaningful balance between theory and practice in the training of teachers. Secondly, it was intended to use assessment to give emphasis to the practical and professional areas of teacher training, which until then had been given little attention because of the constraining effects of external examinations. (See Ghana Education Service/Teacher Education Division, 1992). Therefore, the issue of formative assessment and profiling for promoting professional development of trainees lies at the heart of the move for introducing mentoring into Post-secondary Teacher Training in Ghana. Mentors are thus expected to assess the competency levels of trainees in relation to agreed criteria and the provision of written and oral feedback on trainees' preparation, teaching and evaluation of pupils' learning (GES 1998). Thus, mentors'

assessment of trainees with the view to helping them improve upon their professional development is crucial in the introduction of mentoring at ITT in Ghana.

Calderhead (1988) commenting on the complexity of assessment in initial teacher training asserts that many constraints within the academic and professional environment will continue to pressure teacher education courses into producing certification rather than learning experiences. One such constraint is the emphasis on statements of expected teacher competencies, or external examination requirements found in the British and Ghanaian teacher education respectively. In the case of Britain for example, the official model of teacher assessment requires certain defined competencies to be met before certification (DFE 1992). This model of teacher assessment has been criticised by many teacher educators. In particular, the British Educational Research Association Task Group on teacher Education has been concerned that the defined competencies lack diagnostic potential. They also argue that the model fails to provide guidance on how the listed competencies are to be developed (BERA 1992).

The issue of assessment in initial teacher training becomes more complex when the mode of assessment is meant to perform both summative and formative functions like it is in the Ghanaian teacher education programme. Sadler (1989) argues that the principles upon which summative assessment operate differ significantly from that of formative assessment and the former has the potential to corrupt the latter. Similarly, Wiliam (1993) commenting on the complexity of mentor assessment of trainees in school-based initial teacher training writes:

The mentor also acts as the student's teacher in some circumstances, perhaps through demonstrating a specific technique with a group of

pupils or perhaps through observing and analysing the student's lessons.... The mentor has the role as the assessor of the student's competencies; a role which is not always easy to reconcile with that of counsellor and supporter (p. 412).

McIntyre et al (1992) commenting on the complexity of mentoring with regard to assessment and support in the articulated teacher scheme indicated that the quality of the school-based secondary initial teacher training in Britain depended crucially upon the work of the classroom teacher in the role of a mentor. This view is supported by the conclusions of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) with respect to the articulated teacher scheme which indicated that the training of the articulated teachers was successful when 'mentors were well chosen and suitably trained' [HMI], 1991).

Interpersonal skills are also important in mentoring as emphasised by Tallez (1992). Tallez (1992) for example suggests that in the context of supporting the beginning teacher, the key to the success of any mentoring relationship is the willingness of the beginner to seek help which demands that she/he feels comfortable talking to the mentor. Corroborating this important aspect of mentoring, Wildman et al (1992) report that in an analysis of 150 mentor/beginning teacher relationships the willingness of the experienced teacher to be a mentor was the most important characteristic in supporting and maintaining the relationship. Shaw (1992) also states that good interpersonal skills like the mentors ability to encourage, empathise, listen, reflect, analyse, organise, be flexible and be approachable are essential prerequisites to effective mentoring.

Therefore, the issue of how mentors were trained in the use of assessment and profiling to enhance the professional learning and development of trainees is important to this thesis. Equally important is the way the mentors and link tutors were prepared to

provide support for the trainees and the willingness of trainees to approach mentors and link tutors with their problems.

These findings suggest that prior to teacher training student teachers would have formed quite strong ideas about teaching due to the long socialising experiences of schooling. It also draws attention to the fact that school-based teacher training is more than designing competencies and training of mentors to use the competency matrix in assessing students. Teacher education programmes therefore, need to take into consideration the background experiences of trainees and the complexities inherent in school-based teacher training (mentoring) and find ways of integrating them into the training to achieve greater relevance and impact.

The de-linking factor in Ghana's Post-Secondary Teacher Training programme, I would argue, is the lack of proper understanding of the conceptualisation of mentoring and the background characteristics of trainees which shape their character and attitude; and other issues which also go with the complex task of teaching and learning and how they can influence the new programme.

This research represents an attempt to find some of the issues that may need reflection in the policy and design of initial teacher training programmes in Ghana.

1.2 Statement Of The Problem

Tabulawa (1997) argues that:

Teaching is not just a technical activity whose solutions require technical solutions. As such when teachers ... fail to adopt certain innovations we should not just concentrate on technical issues associated with the innovation delivery system. We must analyse the proposed innovation in relation to the values and past experiences of those who we expect to adopt or implement the innovation. Where the values embedded in an innovation is incongruent

with the values and past experiences of teachers, the issue of rejection might be inevitable (p. 203).

The implementation of the new school-based teacher-training programme that hinges on mentoring which was introduced to create a meaningful balance between theory and practice in the preparation of teacher trainees in Ghana is certainly in its formative stages. Mentoring as an approach to teacher training is also relatively new in Ghana's educational system as compared to college-based training. There is, therefore, a lot to be learnt about the programme; and a lot more to be put in place in order to achieve the desired effect. It appears classroom teachers' conceptualisation of mentoring will not have as yet crystallised.

Again, on account of the relatively new emergence of mentoring on the Ghanaian teacher educational scene we are yet to have a cadre of classroom teachers who have had pre-service teacher education in mentoring as a teacher training approach. Although there has been an in-service training for headteachers and some experienced teachers in the primary schools to expose them to mentoring their effectiveness might not equal that of a pre-service training in a special area like mentoring. It, therefore, appears that the mentors may not be equipped with the requisite expertise to handle mentoring as a teacher training process in the schools. It also appears that students might have some difficulty in the way the training programme is shared between the colleges and the schools.

1.3 Rationale For The Study

This research has come about as a result of my long experience as a teacher in the basic schools in Ghana from (1978-82), and as a secondary school tutor from (1987-1993)

and also as a university Lecturer and a teacher educator from 1993 to date. Teaching has been my career and since 1994 as a member of the Department of Education of the University of Education of Winneba charged with designing pre-service teacher education programme in Ghana, I have been involved in designing pre-service teacher training and in-service programmes for primary school teachers. From my interactions with teachers during in-service workshops it became increasingly clear that some teachers were seemingly ill- prepared for many aspects of the day-to-day problems which crop up in the classroom and in the school environment. With the introduction of mentoring as an approach to teacher training in Ghana I had frequent interactions with mentors through conversations and saw that though most of them appeared enthusiastic with the programme they never anticipated some of the problems associated with mentoring and in staying with trainees in the classroom. Conversation and informal discussions though do not in themselves merit the claim for valid and reliable scientific research there was clear indication that mentors were having problems in assisting trainees in the schools. I therefore, decided to research into the area by finding the opinions, perceptions and experiences of mentors and trainees on the implementation of mentorship programme at the Post-Secondary Teacher Training Level in Ghana.

1.4 Purpose Of The Study

The study is to find out how the mentors perceive the programme in relation to its effectiveness, as to whether they have the needed skills and knowledge to support trainees and whether sufficient materials and time have been provided to make the implementation effective. Essentially, the study seeks to find out from mentors about their confidence in taking charge of trainees supervision, their experience of various mentoring roles and about their perceived training needs.

The study also seeks to find out from the trainees the extent to which their training or mentoring has assisted them to have the confidence to teach.

Furthermore, the research seeks to investigate whether generally mentors assessment and interactions with trainees in the school system could be said to act as a catalyst to the professional development of trainees. Awuku a teacher educator writing for a reform of teacher education in Ghana argued that:

For a teacher to be knowledgeable and reflective, he/she must have an opportunity to study in a programme which relates knowledge and performance to his expected responsibilities, and which provides the teacher opportunity for learning subject-matter in the context of its anticipated use (Awuku, 1996, p.20).

It can be argued that the introduction of mentoring should provide opportunity for trainees to develop and reflect over their teaching. The question that arises is: To what extent is this thing happening in the schools as trainees stay with mentors in the classrooms?

The research also aims at exploring the problems that have emerged with the introduction of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training in Ghana.

Yet another, the research seeks to find answer to the question: To what extent does the practice of mentoring in the schools reflect the official policy as the interaction between policy and practice has been a central issue in educational change process as Fullan (1992) has noted; often most policy change has concentrated on paper changes. With the introduction of mentoring the issue is whether the change has gone beyond what is on paper to attain the objectives set for the programme or not. The research thus, seeks to examine the issues that emerge with regards to the translation of policy into practice.

Finally, the rationale for the overall study is the need to carry an analysis or evaluation of the school-based provision of initial training introduced by the mentorship scheme to provide research-based advice to schools, colleges and the Teacher Education Division in Ghana, about the development of appropriate strategies for supporting trainees for school-based learning. Of particular interest is the role of the mentor who fulfils a pivotal role, in theory, between the practical classroom experience and the reflective analysis of that experience which lays the foundations of a continuous process of development (Schon, 1987; Gilroy, 1989; Elliot, 1991).

1.5 Research Questions

The study attempts to find answers to the following questions:

1. How adequate was the conceptualisation of mentoring policy for the teacher education context and how does it affect the implementation?
2. As a process of change what experiences and structures were required for the implementation of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training?
3. How do mentors perceive their training with regards to how well it prepared them in providing support for trainees during teaching practice?
4. How do trainees perceive the training programme in helping them acquire the skills and confidence expected of them to teach in the schools?
5. How do trainees perceive the support and assessment of mentors in enhancing their professional development?
6. What problems if any do trainees face by studying in the colleges and in the schools and how are they striving to overcome them?
7. What problems have confronted the effective implementation of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training in Ghana?

Answers to these research questions were to be found through the perceptions of mentors, trainees, college tutors and Link Tutors beliefs about mentoring and the operating guideline document.

1.6 Significance Of The Study

The modern trend in education is that there must be some form of accountability in its provision. This means that some accomplishments and gains must be provided in return for public support and tax investments (Gibson & Mitchell, 1992). The idea of accountability implies that all phases of educational programmes must justify their existence through evidence of their acceptability by society.

Education constitutes a major source of manpower training in Ghana. As a result government spends about 40% of its annual budget on education. With the introduction of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Programme (FCUBE), teacher education in Ghana faces a lot of challenges as the FCUBE seeks among other things to improve the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools. Improving the quality of teaching and learning at the basic level demands curriculum review and development, provision of text books, teaching and learning materials, the development of assessment system for teacher trainees and pupils' performance and above all quality teaching force. In Ghana as of now many people have noted with disappointment the disproportion between the huge public investment in education and the drastic fallen standards. It is proposed that education should abandon its didactic approach in favour of a practical orientation, which recognises individual differences as basic to learning and development.

Several reasons have been cited as reasons for the fallen standards in education some of which are inadequate textbooks, equipment and others but more importantly poor teaching methods.

Mentoring which was introduced to provide trainees with adequate school experience and to improve teacher efficiency is relatively new in Ghana. The study is, therefore, meant to be diagnostic and formative. Relevant information for the improvement and realisation of the benefits of mentoring as a teacher training process will be generated and put at the disposal of teacher educators, and the Teacher Education Division for further action. The study will thus, unearth the strengths and weaknesses in the system, which will call for interventions to help improve quality of teacher training. The findings of the study will also be particularly useful in pre-service and in-service preparation of teachers to make them more competent in the classroom.

Yet another, the research will help improve policy on teacher education in Ghana. The absence of hard research or concrete evaluation evidence on the reform will leave it prone to theoretical considerations, which will lack informed backing of research. The research thus aims at providing insight into how a new approach like mentoring has been implemented and the lessons for future improvement.

Finally the study may expose areas for further research for the improvement of teacher trainees which will impact positively on teaching and learning in the schools. The study therefore, acts as a supplement to the on going attempts to reform the educational system to make it more relevant to the needs and aspirations of individuals and society at large in Ghana.

1.7 Definition Of Terms

For the purpose of this thesis the following operational definitions have been used:

Mentorship: A formalised process whereby a more knowledgeable and experienced person actuates a supportive role of overseeing and encouraging reflection and learning within a less experienced and knowledgeable person, so as to facilitate that person's career and personal development (Roberts, 2000).

Mentor: An experienced and knowledgeable classroom teacher who encourages a teacher trainee to learn the art and craft of teaching by allowing the trainee to bring his/her experience to bear on the teaching learning process.

Lead Mentor: A Headteacher or an experienced school teacher who is responsible for all the mentors and trainees in a school.

Mentee: A teacher trainee learning the art and craft of teaching with the support and encouragement of a classroom teacher.

Link Tutor: A college tutor working jointly with a mentor in a school to help teacher trainees to learn the art and craft of teaching.

Curriculum Tutor: A college tutor in charge of the subject-matter and methodology teaching of a particular subject to teacher trainees.

Basic Education: The first nine years of schooling in Ghana which is compulsory and fee free.

Junior Secondary School: The sixth to the ninth year of basic education after which pupils enter secondary school.

1.8 Structure Of The Thesis

The thesis is made up of six chapters which have been logically arranged to provide insights into the issues raised by the research and to provide answers to the research questions. It is structured under two main parts: the first part consists of Chapters 1, 2 and 3 while the second part consists of Chapters 4, 5 and 6. The focus of the chapters is:

Chapter one: This chapter provides the background to the study and sets out in detail the issues and the research questions raised that the study sought to explore as a result of the introduction of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher training in Ghana. It also discusses the importance of the study for the larger body of research on mentorship for future policy considerations and for helping to improve the mentorship scheme. The last section explains the layout of the thesis, the aim of which was to give a quick summary of the structure and the components of the thesis.

Chapter two: This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section focuses on the location, geography, the people and the introduction of western education into Ghana. It also discusses educational reforms carried out in Ghana especially from 1987 with a particular focus on the analyses of the factors that have accounted for lack of improvement in teacher preparation and training. The second section discusses the new teacher training approach (the mentorship scheme) which is the subject of the thesis. The aim is to give the reader an idea of those engaged in the mentorship scheme to help appraise the issues raised in the thesis.

Chapter three: This chapter discusses the literature review. It is devoted to a general review of literature on issues relating to mentorship, its conceptualisation, philosophy

and models. It also discusses models of teacher education. Since the thesis is about mentorship in the context of teacher training, it is important to draw on the arguments in the literature on mentor assessment of teacher trainees and relate it to that context. Thus, the chapter also focuses on issues that relate directly to teacher training assessment, by critically analysing them and making inferences that are relevant to the study. Particular emphasis is placed on the theoretical arguments underlying certain approaches to assessment and their implications for the teacher training context in Ghana. An important aspect of the discussion in this part is the questions and issues that arise for Ghana.

Chapter four: This chapter focuses on the research methodology for the study. It discusses the rationale for adopting qualitative methodology for the study. It particularly examines some of the philosophical issues regarding qualitative method and the underpinning philosophy of the research approach of this study. It outlines specific measures that were taken during data collection and analysis of the case study data to ensure the validity of the findings. This part is very detailed to give a comprehensive picture of the challenges and problems faced in the research process and how these were dealt with. The final part of the chapter discusses how the data were analysed.

Chapter five: This chapter presents a comprehensive report of the substantive fieldwork evidence leading to the findings. The reported findings are based upon the analysis of the data across the two case study areas. (A profile of each case study area is presented in Appendix 4). The chapter contains verbatim quotations to illustrate the perspectives of the participants in the research and is in keeping with the traditions of reporting qualitative case study evidence. It must be pointed out that the analysis, although firmly grounded in the case study evidence sometimes extends beyond this to take account of

appropriate issues raised in the literature discussion in Chapter 3. This was considered an important part of the analysis as it helped to sharpen the discussion and raise the significance of the issues that emerged from the research.

Chapter six is the final chapter. The outcome of the research are drawn together guided by the key questions of the research and the various implications relating to the findings are discussed. Wider implications of the findings which relate to the issues of changing practice in educational settings as associated with the implementation of the mentorship scheme are also discussed.

Similarly, implications for mentor assessment policy review at initial teacher education in Ghana is considered and general recommendations suggested for improving the training of mentors in providing the needed support for trainees. In addition, the issues unearthed for possible future research are presented and reflections on the research are made pointing out the strengths and the limitations of the research and the challenges faced doing qualitative research.

The next chapter discusses the setting of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SETTING OF THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an outline of the educational system in Ghana. Its purpose is to describe and comment on developments, policies and practices in the educational system, which will enable the reader to understand, and appreciate the value of the questions being investigated in this study. It begins with a brief description of the geographical background of Ghana. It traces the development of formal education in the country from the time of independence from colonial rule to the major educational reform programme which was launched in 1987 and other measures taken after 1987 to achieve the goals of the 1987 reform programme. A substantial part of the chapter is devoted to pre-service teacher training education with particular emphasis on the following aspects: administration and management, supervision, the curriculum, and in-service training for primary school teachers. The chapter finally looks at teaching practice at the pre-service level and examines the mentoring programme, which has been introduced as a means of achieving a meaningful balance between theory and practice in the preparation of teachers in Ghana which is the focus of the study.

2.2 Ghana: Geographical Background

Ghana is a West African nation formed as an independent state in March 1957 and declared a republic in 1960 after a half century of British colonial rule. Before it attained its independence, the country was called the Gold Coast. According to Cameron and Hurst (1983) Ghana was the first British colony in sub-Saharan colonial Africa to be granted its independence because of its then economic strength and the presence of a highly educated cadre of its own that was quite capable of assuming

power. Ghana is a sub-Saharan African country located almost centrally on the long southward facing coastline of West Africa that stretches from Dakar in Senegal to the southern portion of the Republic of Cameroon. It covers an area of about 238,537 square kilometres. It is bordered to the west by Côte d'Ivoire, east by Togoland, the North by Burkina Faso and the south by the coastline of Gulf of Guinea. It has a total surface area of 239,460 square kilometres (i.e. approximately 92,000 square miles that is almost twice the size of England). The country consists mostly of low-lying savannah regions with a central belt of forest (Boateng, 1999: 506). The most distinguishing and astonishing geographic feature is the largest man-made lake of the world: Lake Volta created after the damming of the Volta river on which was built the Akosombo dam in 1964. The country is divided into ten regions, which have been further divided into one hundred and ten districts. Accra is the capital town, which is located in the southern part of the country. The population of the country at the time it became a republic in 1960 was 6.7 million (Boateng, 1966 P.133). This figure rose to approximately 12.2 million in 1984, and was estimated to be growing at an annual average rate of 3 percent. Ghana's population by the close of the 2000 population census was 18 million with an annual growth rate estimated at 1.79 per cent (Central Bureau of Statistics, 1994).

According to Antwi (1992), more than two-thirds of the population that is approximately 68.7 per cent of the population live in rural areas where subsistence agriculture: farming and fishing are the predominant economic activity. In spite of its small size, Ghana is ethnically divided into small groups speaking more than 50 indigenous languages or dialects (Adjabeng, 1980). The popular among these languages are Akan, Ga, Nzema, Eve, Dagbani and Hausa (Boateng, 1966 p10). Most

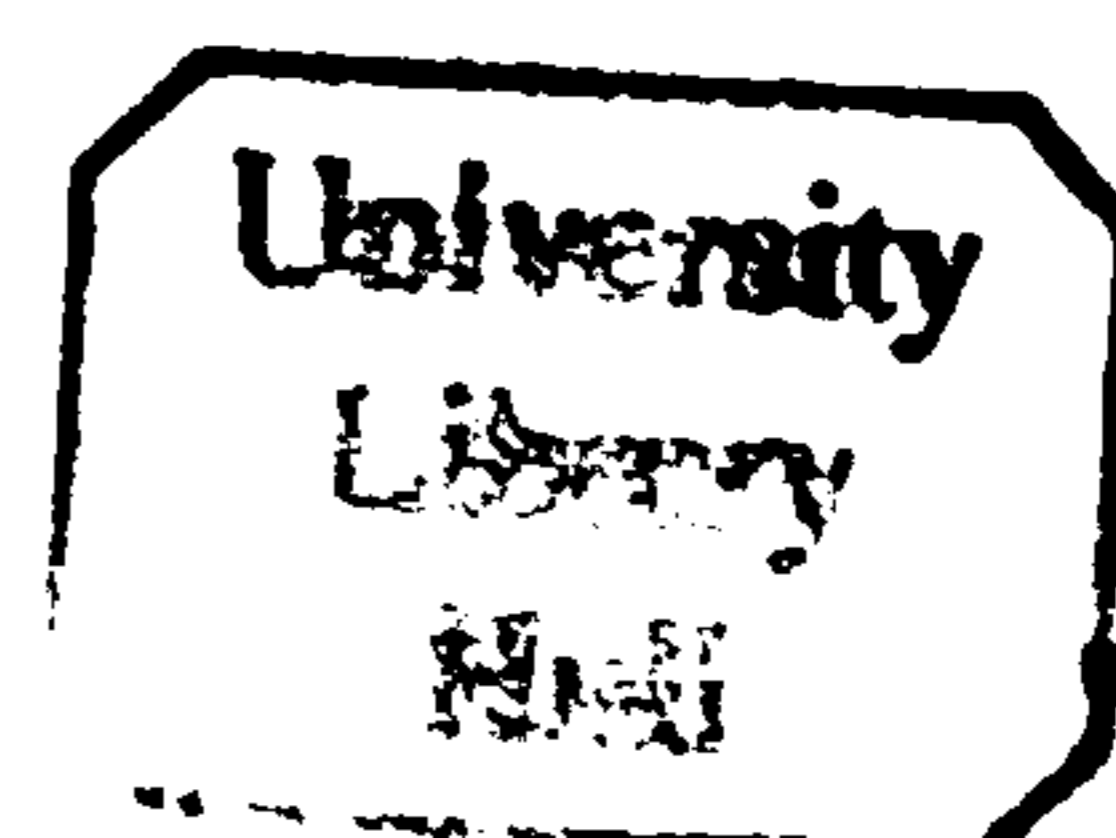
of the languages are spoken by groups of only a few hundred people. The Akan language, however, is the most popular because it has the largest number of native speakers and is also used as the medium of communication in big markets all over the country. Although English is the official language (that is, major language of law, government, and education) the majority of people do not speak it.

2.3 A Brief Account of the Development of Education in Ghana

McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh (1975) and Antwi (1992) are all in agreement that formal education started in Ghana in the fifteenth century with the establishment of the Castle Schools by the Europeans along the coast. These early schools were called Castle schools because they were located in the castles established by the Europeans for educating their mulatto children with African women. The schools were therefore, a by-product of European commercial activity and did not register much impact until the arrival of the missionaries in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. As in the rest of Africa, Western schooling was introduced into the Gold Coast on a firm footing by missionaries as early as 1765 and was continued throughout the nineteenth century as a philanthropic enterprise of Christian missions (Graham, 1971; Michel, 1988). By 1881, there were 139 schools, of which three were colonial government schools, and the total enrolment was estimated at 5000. In 1882, the colonial government began to take an active part in education, with a board of education nominated to oversee schools' inspection and to standardise school management (Antwi, 1992 p.32). Before the 1960s, the system of education that existed in the country emphasised literacy skills and prepared pupils for "white collar" jobs. The curriculum materials used in the schools were replicas of those used in English schools. Successes in the colonial educational system was measured by performance in examinations designed for pupils

growing up in the colonisers' countries whose experiences and needs were different from pupils growing in the colonies. Even teachers salaries were pegged with children's' successes in examinations referred to as "payment by results" (Graham, 1971). Thus the whole curricula in Ghana by then emphasised or was geared towards examinations.

By 1950, a total of 300,000 students were enrolled in schools throughout Ghana, with the British colonial government in 1952 encouraging increased attendance by declaring elementary school education fee free. The latter part of the 1950s and the first few years of the 1960s marked the period that most African countries gained their independence from foreign domination. At independence, governments were full of optimism and there was a widespread feeling throughout the independent states that things were going to change, and for the better, in all spheres of life. The search for the new systems and policies of education, which would serve as tools for the rapid development of the human resources of the new nations, became a major concern of African governments. They sought policies that would transform their educational system into those that can turn out, in the shortest possible time, literate-working populations for the development of their countries. The search for relevance in education led to a number of conferences of African ministers of education advocating the replacement of the "inherited" colonial system with alternative forms of education and innovations in school curricula. To achieve these, major educational reforms to ensure universal primary education were initiated resulting in massive increase in primary school enrolment throughout the continent (Fafunwa and Aisiku, 1982). In Ghana, by an act of parliament (the Education Act of 1961), the six-year fee-free Universal Primary Education (UPE) which was established a decade earlier by the 1952



Education Ordinance was extended to cover the four-year middle school education. That is, UPE was extended to cover a ten-year elementary education.

Though it has been the aspiration of successive governments of Ghana to improve the system of education in the country, changes realised since independence in the education system are stronger in quantitative terms than the quality of education being received by pupils in schools. More schools were opened in the 1960s and primary school enrolment rose from 503,000 in 1960 to 967,000 in 1970 (The World Bank, 1988). The rapid rise in school enrolments led to the appointment of a large number of elementary school leavers referred to as “pupil teachers” to teach in the hundreds of newly established schools. Table 2.1 shows the supply of trained and untrained teachers in schools in Ghana from 1959-1979.

Table 2. 1: Supply of trained and Untrained Teachers in Basic Education by Year

Year	Total Teachers	Number Trained	Number Untrained	Proportion Untrained
1959	21,200	14,200	7,000	33%
1969	47,880	22,505	25,375	53%
1979	103,689	59,589	44,100	42%

Table 2.1: Extracted from three different sources (Foster, 1965; GMOE, 1972; and Ghana Education Service, 1980), indicates how in three decades the proportion of pupil teachers (or untrained teachers) had never fallen below 30 per cent of the teaching force in Ghana in spite of the increasing supply of trained teachers.

It was not long before the progress of the post-independence educational reforms began to lose momentum as a result of political instability. Politically, the nation has fluctuated between civilian and military governments with the change often brought

through military coups. In fact, Ghana since regaining her independence in 1957 has seen several political regimes. These are Dr. Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP), 1957-1966; General Ankrah's National Liberation Council (NLC), 1966-1969; DR. Busia's Progress Party (PP), 1969-1972; Colonel Acheampong's National Redemption Council (NRC); 1971-1979; FL. Lt. Rawling's Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC); June to September, 1978; Chairman Rawling's Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC); 1981-1992; President Rawling's National Democratic Congress (NDC), 1992-2000 and President Kuffour's government January 2001 to date. These changes in government caused by military intervention often resulted in the abandonment of educational plans and changes in educational policies which did not auger well for Ghana. Again, in the 1970s, the economies of many less developed countries including Ghana were crippled by a marked deterioration in terms of trade of primary products, which made prices of primary products to drop drastically in spite of rising energy prices. Given that Ghana is predominantly an agricultural country with cocoa as its major export, the crisis left the nation's economy in serious disarray. This development forced governments to make drastic cuts in educational budgets which retarded the progress of education greatly. A World Bank source reported public expenditure on education to have fallen from 253.0 million dollars in 1975 to 80.9 million dollars by 1983 making the percentage of actual public expenditure to drop from 21.5 per cent in 1975 to 15.2 per cent in 1983 (The World Bank, 1988 p.138).

These developments caused by political instability and economic depression made the nation's ability to sustain schools for the growing population to diminish even with substantial financial aid from abroad (Europa, 1982 p.382). Schools consequently

received inadequate supply of equipment, teaching materials and textbooks while class-sizes doubled. Most schools had just a limited number of copies of official textbooks and had no copies of the teacher's guides and syllabuses. Many classrooms were without furniture and this was more serious in the northern part of the country (GMOE, 1988). The rapid increase in enrolment accompanied by a gradual decline in the nation's financial resources resulted in difficulties in the provision of educational facilities and resources, both human and material.

In 1974, a 'New Structure and Content of Education' was approved by the government to replace the system of education, which has existed since independence. The designers of the New Structure, the Dzobo Committee, advocated the replacement of the existing Middle schools with Junior Secondary Schools (Dzobo et al, 1974). By 1978, junior secondary schools had been opened at the various regional and district centres to trial the new system and to serve as pilot schools. Unfortunately, as a result of increasing enrolment accompanied by a gradual decline in the nation's economy, the New Structure and Content of Education could not be fully implemented until 1987.

2.4 The Educational Reform Programme (ERP) and the Structure of the Educational System

As rightly noted by Scaddling (1989) it was a decade before the educational reforms planned as early as 1974 began to come to fruition. In 1987 the government of Ghana initiated an educational reform programme which was aimed at revitalising the educational system. The reform programme led to the full implementation of a structure and content of education, which had been proposed a decade earlier, to replace the old system. The old system of education prescribed six years of primary school

starting at age 6, followed by four years of middle school education. The primary school grades are generally referred to as 1,2,3,4,5, and 6 (or P1, P2, to P6), and the middle school grades were Middle 1, 2, 3, and 4 . Though the curriculum of the middle schools was not too different from that offered at the lower level of secondary school, students who completed middle school education were not regarded as having had any form of secondary education. At any time after P6, a pupil could pass on to a secondary school after passing Entrance Examination in Mathematics, English and Quantitative and Verbal Aptitude set by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). In the tenth grade (that is, Middle 4), there was a separate examination for entrants to initial teacher training colleges; and finally a Middle School Leaving Certificate Examination for those terminating their school careers at this stage.

In the old system, secondary education took five years; and for those wishing to proceed further to university, there was an additional two-year Sixth Form course. The duration of pre-service education in the old system was therefore often 17 years excluding pre-primary education. This system of education, which was introduced in 1960, remained in force in Ghana until 1987.

Figure 2.1 shows the old structure of education which was replaced by junior secondary school in 1987.

Fig.2.1 The Old Structure of Education in Ghana

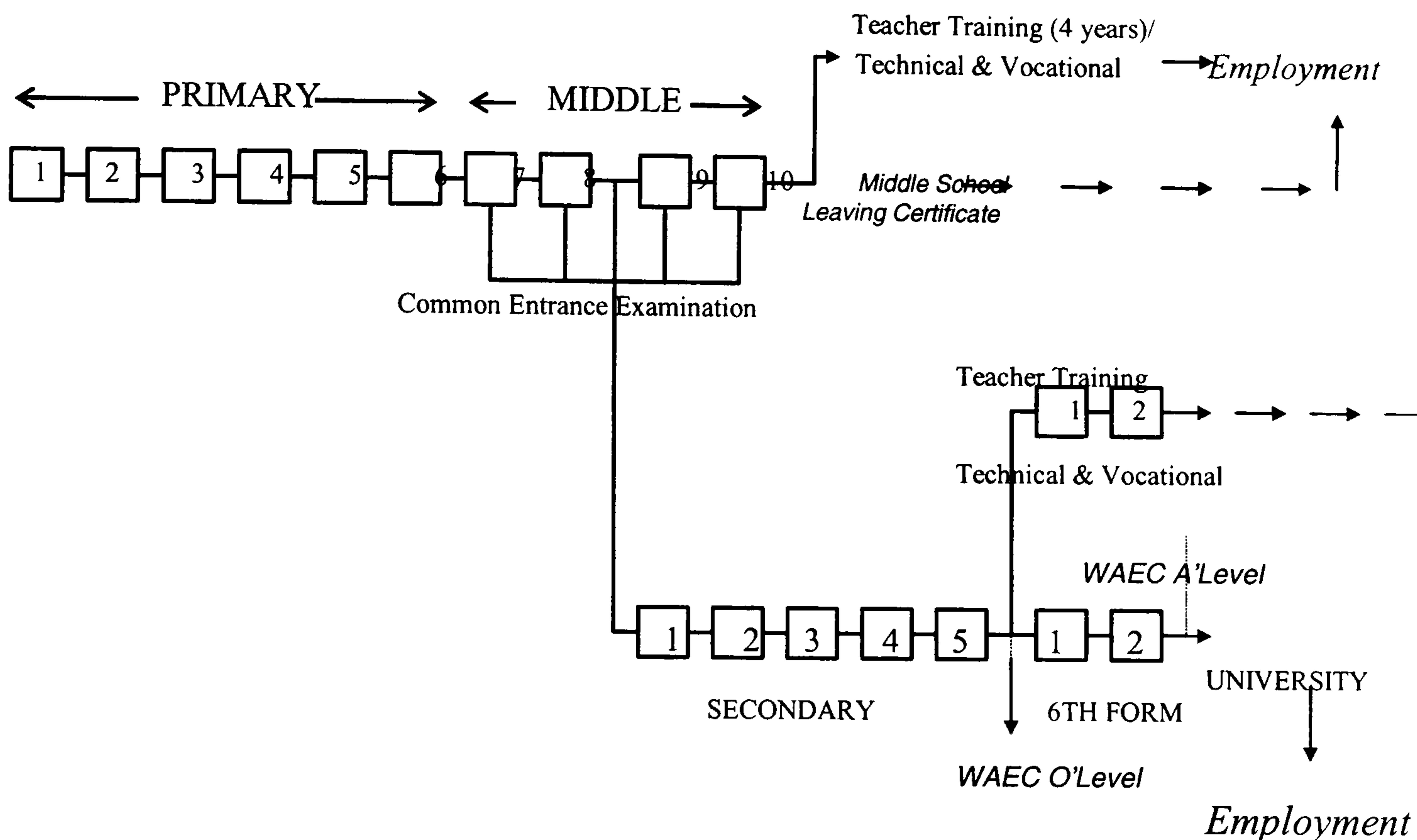


Figure 2. 1 The old structure of education in Ghana

The new education reform, which replaced the old system came about as a result of high-level deliberations between Ghana’s political leaders and prominent educationists, and won the confidence and backing of financial institutions like the World Bank and obtained from it what became known as the Education Sector Adjustment Credit or EdSAC. In addition to the financial package and support, the government signed the EdSAC agreement which was to take a period of six years to carry out the following policy and budget adjustment:

- re-aligning government subsidies of education in more equitable ways;
- encouraging higher quality of basic education for the country’s poorest families;

- cutting significantly on unnecessary or inefficient expenditures on student housing; salaries for non-teaching staff, and the old lengthy secondary school system ;(and)
- raising spending on instructional materials including textbooks, exercise books, and in-service training as budget resources are conserved from the above (Yeboah, 1990).

The agreement enabled the Ghana government to obtain an initial loan of US \$ 34 million from IBRD and promises of support from bilateral donors including Norway, Great Britain, Switzerland and the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Fund. With the help of these foreign donors, the 1987 educational reform programme was launched throughout the whole country. This led to the phasing out of the four-year middle schools, which were replaced by three-year Junior Secondary Schools (JSS). The new structure of education which replaced the old one which was the 1987 education reform programme had three major objectives. Firstly, it was intended to make a certain level of secondary education comprehensive. That is, to make the Junior Secondary school level accessible to the majority, or as many children of school-going age as possible.

The introduction of junior secondary education resulted in the shortening of the period of pre-university education from a possible of 17 to 12 years, thereby, lowering the cost of schooling and making more funds available to improve quality and access so that the majority of children could get good basic education. The first nine years of schooling, which is free and universal for all children aged between 6 and 15 years in

this new structure of education is described as Basic Education. It is defined as ‘the minimum formal education to which every Ghanaian child is entitled as of right, to equip him/her to function effectively in society’ (GMOE, 1986 p.9).

The nine-year basic education consists of six years primary schooling and three years junior secondary school. Pupils wishing to continue their education after junior secondary school are admitted after the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) to a three-year Senior Secondary School (SSS) course. At the end of the SSS course, students who qualify proceed to tertiary institutions that is, university, polytechnic or teacher training college.

Figure 2.2 shows the Structure of the New Education System in Ghana.

Figure 2.2 The New Structure of Education in Ghana

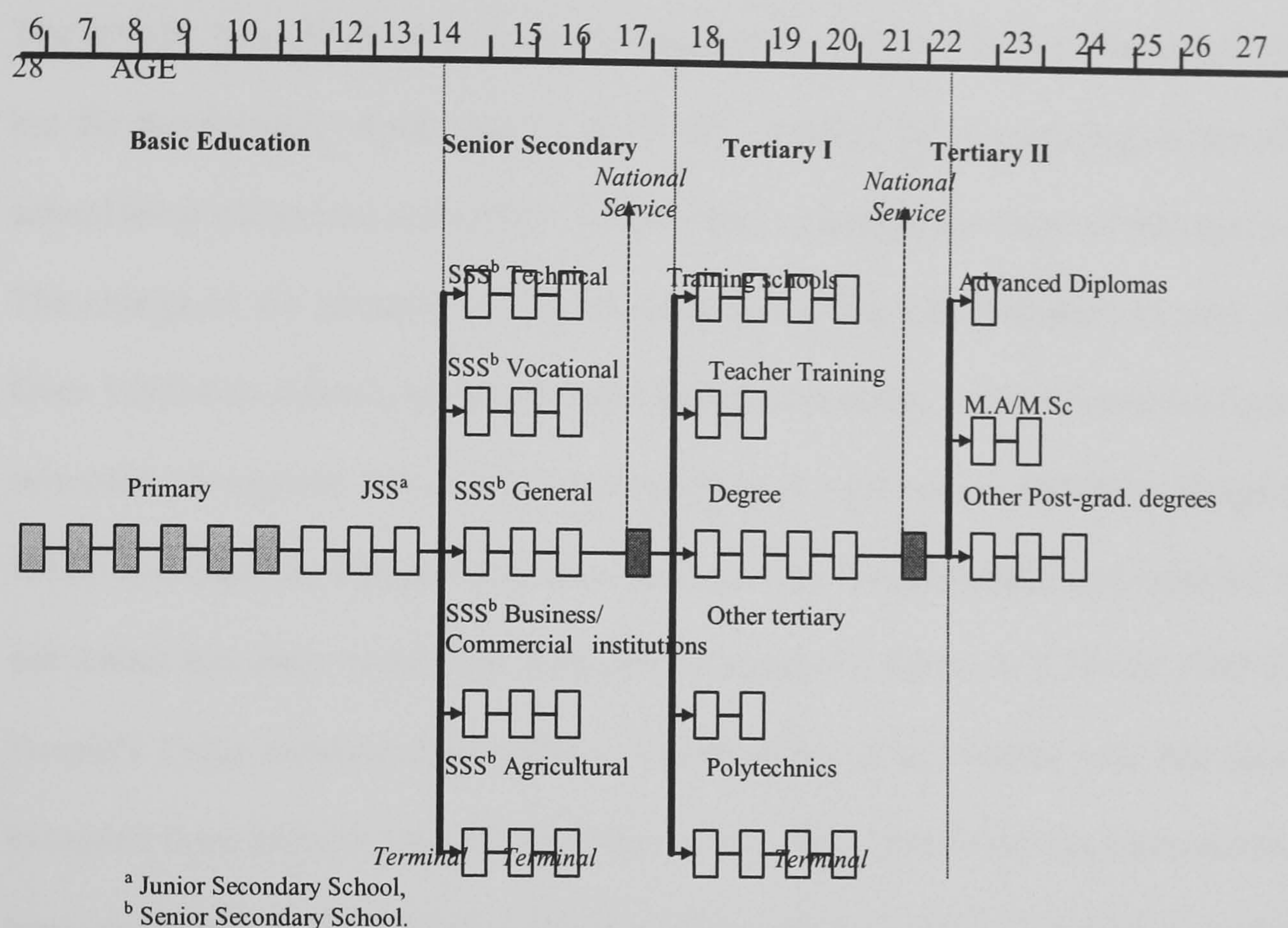


Figure 2. 2 The new structure of education in Ghana

Secondly the reforms were designed to increase the relevance and efficiency of the educational system by diversifying the curriculum so as to de-emphasise ‘elitist’ or academic knowledge and also vocationalise it that is, to give it the potential to create employment and ensure employability.

Thirdly, the reform was initiated as a cost-effective and cost-recovery mechanism in terms of policy and budget adjustments in the nation’s educational system. This was to ensure that government subsidies of education are aligned in more equitable ways with the various levels of education to safeguard unnecessary or inefficient expenditures on

student housing, salaries of non-teaching staff, and a cut down of the old education system to raise the spending on instructional materials, textbooks and equipment.

The reform brought about a number of changes at all levels of the educational system, but for the purpose of this study I shall only mention those occurring at the primary school level where post-secondary teachers who constitute the focus of this study teach. The change in the structure of education resulted in the establishment of new schools. Over 1,000 new schools have been built in deprived areas, 1,546 classrooms have been re-roofed throughout the country largely through community self-help programmes; 1,983 two-bedroom houses have also been built for headteachers; and primary school enrolment has gone up by over 3000,000 bringing the figure to 1,796 in 1992 (Ghana People's Daily Graphic, June 1996). The duration of the school year has also been extended from thirty-three weeks to forty weeks. Intensive in-service courses have also been organised for all primary school teachers throughout the country as part of the educational reform and the number of in-service a teacher attends now counts for his/her promotion from one grade to the other.

Furthermore, to ensure effective supervision in the schools the post of Circuit Supervisors have been created as part of the reform to ensure accountability and effective supervision in the primary schools. Circuit Supervisors have since 1987 been appointed throughout the country and have been provided with in-service courses to expose them to their new roles. Textbooks and essential curriculum materials have also been produced or purchased for all subjects of the primary school curriculum. In addition, each school has at least one copy of the prescribed syllabus to serve as a guide for teaching. Another major outcome of the 1987 education reform in Ghana has been the termination of the competitive selection examination (the Common Entrance

Examination), which was used for admission into secondary school. This has been replaced by the Basic Certificate Examination, which combines performance in internal teacher assessment, and external examinations. The internal assessment is expected to take a cumulative account of the pupil's performance throughout Basic Education.

Since this study is particularly concerned with teachers who teach at the Basic Education level the remaining part of the chapter will focus on Basic Education and pre-service teacher education.

2.5 Basic Education in Ghana: Administration and Management

The education system in Ghana is controlled by the Ministry of Education which has under it the Ghana Education Service (GES), which deals with pre-university education and the Council for Higher Education which is charged with university education. The Ghana Education Service established by the Supreme Military Council Decree (S.M.C.D. 357) is the body responsible for the implementation and supervision of all pre-university institutions in the country. The Teacher Education Division which is responsible for pre-service teacher education is therefore, an umbrella of the Ghana Education Service. The teacher education division in consultation with the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education of Winneba design pre-service and in-service programmes for teachers at the basic level. The first years of schooling in Ghana prior to the education reform of 1987 was referred to as primary school education and this consisted of pre-school (that is, kindergarten education), followed by six years primary school education. The kindergarten education catered for children between the ages of 1 1/2 to two years who commence full kindergarten education at age 4+ while the primary schools cater for children from about the age six to thirteen years. With the introduction of the reform

in 1987 Basic Education which refers to the first six years of primary education and three years junior secondary school education has come to replace primary education. Pre-school is now separated from Basic Education and managed differently. Basic Education is provided mainly in state owned or assisted schools, which are called public schools. There are also a small number of basic schools that are run privately and employ mostly untrained teachers. To supervise the academic achievements of pupils in basic schools both the public and the private schools have all been put under the Ghana Education Service and a directorate has been created for the supervision of the private schools. All primary schools are required to work to nationally prescribed teaching programmes or curriculum. The programmes, which are statutory, are contained in syllabuses. They are intended to be prescriptive in schools throughout the country. That is, they include detailed prescriptions of what is required to be taught in each year. To ensure the programmes cater for the basic and further development of the child they have been planned in a leaner order and teachers are encouraged to teach in a way that will help the children develop the fundamental concept of integration.

2.6 Initial Teacher Education in Ghana

Initial Teacher education in Ghana dates back to the establishment of the Presbyterian teacher training college (Salem) in 1848 with the aim of training teacher catechists for the mission schools. Religious education and moral education were therefore emphasised in the curriculum and the training was by some form of apprenticeship (Graham, 1971). The colonial government never made any conscious effort to encourage teacher education in the country as such initial teacher education had impetus after 1957 when Ghana attained independence. The period after independence and the implementation of the Accelerated Development Plan 1951 marked a turning point in

teacher education in Ghana. The Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) led to the establishment of schools at the basic level which also called for the training of teachers to man them. Antwi (1992) indicated that following the implementation of the Accelerated development Plan for Education in 1951 it was decided to recruit a large number of “pupil” teachers with weak academic background who consequently had to be given intensive courses to prepare them for teaching in the primary schools. He concluded that the need for teachers led to the establishment of teacher’s certificate “B” programme that laid the foundation stone for the development of education in Ghana. He added that unfortunately the government and the Ministry of Education have since 1962 not pursued rational and long-term policies and teacher training programmes have been ad-hoc given rise to various patterns of teacher education. This situation makes planning difficult and has affected entry requirements into teacher training colleges by compromising low academic entry requirements. This observation is confirmed by Antwi (1992) who stated that most people who opt for teacher training at the basic level in Ghana have weak academic background which is the result of lack of planning and screening which allow people to opt for teaching as a last resort. He concluded that this attitude harboured by teachers is contributing seriously to the low academic performance of pupils.

2.7 In-Service Education Provision for Primary School Teachers

In Ghana In-service Education and Training of teachers (INSET) is organised by the Ghana Education Service, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), the Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education of Winneba. Until the 1987 Education reform, in-service training which is meant for the upgrading and updating of knowledge was not taken seriously in Ghana by teachers.

Obeng-Mensah (1982) commenting on teachers' attitude towards in-service before the 1987 educational reform indicated that many teachers after completing their training did not attend workshops or refresher courses organised in the area where they teach. He added that even in places where in-service training courses have been organised, they were not taken seriously by the participants partly because incentives like payment of travel costs, overnight allowance and expenses on course materials were often not provided and also because several of such courses did not count towards the upgrading or promotion of teachers.

The few ambitious primary school teachers who achieve some development through private studies by passing either the Advanced Level Examination or the Mature Students' Examination gain admission to enter either the University of Cape Coast or the University of Education of Winneba and do not go back to teach at the basic level again. This is because the courses offered at the universities at the Diploma and degree levels are not tailored to meet the needs of basic school pupils and most of them prefer to take teaching appointment in the secondary schools which are viewed as more prestigious. In Ghana, there is the tendency for people to associate good teaching performance with high academic attainment. Many also think that the higher one's academic qualification the better one can teach. Recently even after the education reform of 1987 all teachers whose entry qualification into initial teacher training college was Ordinary Level GCE have been asked to teach in the junior secondary schools while those whose entry qualifications were either junior secondary or Middle School Certificate have been brought to the primary level. Graduates and Diploma holders teach mostly in the senior secondary schools and in the training colleges.

What is even serious is that the few teachers with 'O'-Level qualifications in the primary schools are made to teach in the upper primary (that is, Primary 5 and 6). The Primary schools in Ghana therefore, lack experienced teachers who are academically ambitious and enthusiastic about their professional development which does not help staff development in the schools. Besides, primary schools have no libraries in addition to the textbook and the teacher's handbook and teachers hardly have any professional materials (journals, newsletters, periodicals and magazines) to read. There is, therefore, little chance for these teachers to improve their general education and professional development. The fact that teachers received little with regard to in-service education before the reforms, is further supported by a Ministry of Education document which outlined the need for in-service course on the teaching of science and mathematics for primary school teachers, issued by the National Planning Committee for the Implementation of School Reforms (NPCISR) in 1991. The document indicated that:

Until the late 1970s and 80s primary science and mathematics methods were not key components of the programmes for initial teacher training colleges. Hence many teachers operating at the primary level did not get the opportunity to develop desirable attitudes, interests, competence and confidence for facilitating effective learning of science and mathematics for the primary school child (GMOE /NPCISR, 1991: p.4).

In the light of the poor in-service provision, attempts were made after the 1987 educational reform programme to design in-service programmes to enhance the professional efficiency of teachers. A document produced in 1989; 'In-service Training Programme for Teachers under the Educational Reforms in Ghana' was directed at making teachers understand the aims and objectives of the reforms, and at updating teachers' knowledge base in the various subjects of the curriculum. The

document stated that each programme for in-service training should be aimed specifically at improving the quality of education at the Basic Education Level through:

- developing more creative and innovative approaches to teaching;
- encouraging the use of locally available materials in teaching;
- updating the knowledge base and reading skills of teachers;
- enhancing motivation of teachers (Ghana Ministry of Education and Culture,1989 : 2)

To achieve these aims a number of in-service training courses were organised throughout the country after 1987. More than 90 per cent of the courses organised were co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education through the National Planning Committee for the Implementation of School Reforms (NPCISR). By 1992,the NPCISR had organised twenty-five of such courses for teachers at the various levels of pre-university education in the country. In addition to the reform related in-service courses co-ordinated by the NPCIRS, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), also launched a campaign to improve the academic competence of the bulk of primary school teachers who did not have Ordinary Level GCE qualification by organising ‘O’ Level classes in all the regional capitals for them. This was done presumably due to the Ghanaian mentality that higher academic qualifications lead to better teaching performances. These courses which were started in 1992 have now spread to the district centres and attendance at in-service training courses have been made as part of promotion from one grade to another for teachers. It might seem that in-service education and training of teachers has been very effective in Ghana after the 1987 education reform programme but the Basic Education Sector Assessment Review Report (1995) indicates that not much has been achieved. The report concluded that:

There are several problems concerning the organisation of in-service training, its content and effectiveness. In-service training is divorced from pre-service training and places the playing ground (the school) out of context (Basic Education Sector Assessment Review Report, 1995: 10).

This is due to the fact that in-service training programmes are conceived and designed by outside agencies and by people who have no experience in primary school teaching. Again, in-service training programmes are organised in didactic form without the involvement of classroom teachers and as a result in-service is not owned by classroom teachers. In-service training programmes for teachers must be based on andragogy; a principle that teachers are adults and are capable of being self-directing, as such in-service training organised for them should not be didactic. It should actively involve them to enable them acquire skills to deal with practical situations in school environment and in classrooms in particular.

These professional lapses in the preparation of primary school teachers and their inability to deal with real situations in school environment and classroom situations have been attributed to the college-based nature of their training which it is believed does not expose them to enough school experience. This development has led to the introduction of the new teacher training programme dubbed IN-IN-OUT in which trainees are supposed to spend two years in college and spend the whole of their last year of their training in schools. The last year of teacher training where trainees practise the act of teaching in schools supported by teachers/mentors is the focus of this study.

2.8 The New School-Based Teacher Education Programme

The new school-based teacher education programme in Ghana is of three years duration in which trainees spend the first two years on college campus and the last year of their training in schools under the supervision of classroom teachers who serve as mentors.

The philosophy behind its introduction is premised on the assumption that exposing teacher trainees to adequate school environment by extending the teaching practice component of their training and providing them support through mentorship will enhance their professional efficiency in the classroom. This assumption is captured in the justification for the introduction of the programme which states that:

Current developments in teacher education suggest that alternative structures should be explored to come out with a more efficient way of preparing teachers. There is therefore the need for the following:

- Offer teacher trainees more exposure to the realities of the school and classroom situation and reducing the artificial nature of formal teaching practice which lasts for only a short period (12 weeks) spread out over a one year period, (usually 4 weeks in each year).
- Commit classroom teachers to support teacher trainees using “mentoring” approach rather than abandoning them to their fate when these trainees are posted to the schools.
- Emphasise the importance of the concept of a foundation period, followed by a deepening of principles in methodology and a prolonged cycle/period of practice (school attachment) and reflection which leads to a dynamic, developmental concept of professional competence.
- Ensuring that trainees’ school experience and college experience are mutually supportive and complementary. (GES/TED 2001 pp.4 –5)

Teacher trainees are placed in schools near their colleges with the assistance of district directors and principals of teacher training colleges while headteachers are expected to arrange for placement of trainees in their schools. As far as the out component or

teaching practice is concerned the main people involved are trainees, mentors, Link tutors and headteachers.

Mentoring is the key driving force during teaching practice and as such mentors are the key persons during the school experience. Practising headteachers who are effective, efficient and have a high sense of administrative ability and responsibility and teachers who are very effective and efficient were selected as mentors. Mentors are in fact anchor persons for trainees since they stay with them in the classroom during teaching practice. They perform various roles in the training of teacher trainees. In the mentorship scheme in Ghana, mentors as co-operating teachers are expected to act as role models for trainees and give them guidance in classroom management and organisation during teaching practice. Their roles as spelt out in the handbook include the following:

- stay and supervise trainees in the classroom
- serve as role models for trainees by providing trainees professional and emotional support
- help trainees plan and organise their lessons
- assist trainees in writing their project/or carry out Action Research
- introduce trainees to classroom management and class control
- assist trainees in preparing teaching/learning materials
- help trainees in pupils' appraisal
- hold counselling sessions with trainees after teaching
- write comprehensive notes on trainees
- hold meetings with lead mentor to discuss the progress of trainees
- hold meetings with Link Tutors to discuss matters pertaining to the interest of trainees

- write comprehensive profile on trainees
- hold conferences with link tutors, to discuss issues which will help trainees achieve the targets for development. (GES/TED 2001, p.22).

Also in this new teacher training scheme some training college tutors who are nominated as Link Tutors by their principals also play important roles in providing support for trainees during teaching practice. The link tutors work hand-in-hand with headteachers and mentors during teaching practice and discuss the progress of trainees to know the strengths and weaknesses of trainees to help them set targets for their development. They also visit trainees in schools as link tutors to observe and monitor their progress and school files during teaching practice. The link tutors therefore, act as liaison officers between the colleges and the schools. At the college level they are also expected to hold meetings with curriculum tutors to help trainees acquire professional competence in the subjects they teach in the schools.

The programme thus, has a system where trainees are gradually introduced into actual classroom teaching by observing the mentors, helping them and working with other teachers in their schools of practice. Infact, the roles and responsibilities of mentors and link tutors and that of the colleges and the schools are arranged and defined in such a way that there is co-ordination at all levels to give informed information on the strengths and weaknesses of trainees and collate assessment marks for the overall development of trainees. Through these processes the colleges and the schools are able to usher trainees in Ghana into actual teaching experience in the classroom. This one year 'Out Programme' which is used for teaching practice to help teacher trainees

acquire adequate school experience by working with mentors in school environment and in the classroom is the main focus of this study.

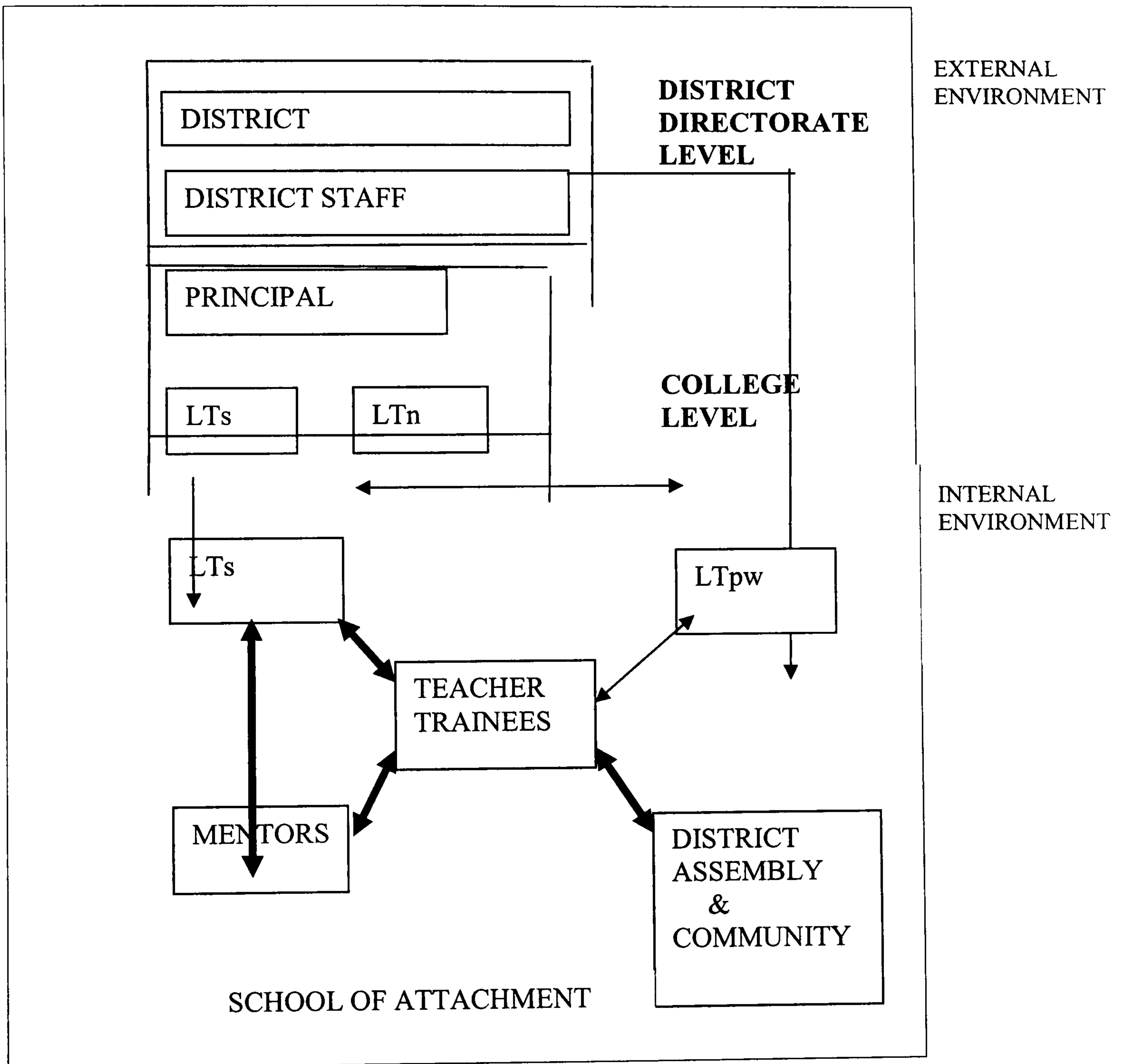
As the diagram in (Fig. 2.3) depicts the main players in this mentorship scheme are the mentors, lead mentors, link tutors and the trainees. These constitute the main players within the school environment.

Other institutions or bodies charged with the responsibility of seeing to the success of this programme are the Teacher Education Division, the Institute of Education University of Cape Coast, the Regional and District Education Offices, Assistant Directors of Education and the Town Development Committees in the various towns and districts who constitute the external environment as depicted also in the diagram . In Ghana, the Teacher Education Division which is an umbrella of the Ministry of Education, in conjunction with the teacher training colleges and the Institute of Education at University of Cape Coast and the University of Winneba are the main bodies responsible for the designing of pre-service teacher education curricula and the supervision of pre-service teacher education. The Teacher Education Division is also responsible for the designing and organisation of INSET programmes for pre-service teacher education. The Teacher Education Division, therefore, sees to the implementation of government policies as far as pre-service teacher education is concerned and views of the teacher education division are seen as the government or “official views” when it comes to issues pertaining to pre-service teacher education.

The diagram in (Fig.2.3) explains the process by which the colleges and the other agencies work hand-in-hand with the schools in supporting trainees to be effective practitioners.

(Fig.2.3)

The Organisational Chart for the Management of the Mentorship Scheme



Source: GES/TED (2001 :10).

The Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast and University of Winneba are also charged with the responsibility of assisting the Teacher Education Division in

supervising and designing pre-service teacher education curricula in Ghana. The Institute of Education also has the sole responsibility of conducting examinations and awarding certificates to teachers at the pre-service teacher education level in Ghana. In essence, the Institute of Education ensures quality assurance as far as pre-service teacher education is concerned in Ghana.

As regard the Regional and the District Education offices headed by Regional and Assistant Directors of Education, they are charged with the responsibility of seeing to the supervision and implementation of educational policies at the regional and district levels. As far as the new teacher education programme which is the focus of this study is concerned, the Regional and the District Education Offices were responsible for selecting circuit officers to go to the schools to assist mentors and link tutors in filling the records of trainees for trainees' marks to be sent to the Institute of Education at University of Cape Coast. Their role is therefore, more of supervisory than assisting mentors and link tutors. The regional and district education offices thus constitute the oversight committees which report about the progress of the new mentorship scheme to the Teacher Education Division for the necessary action and guidance.

The Town Development Committees are created in the districts or the towns headed by District Chief Executives or Committees to see to the development of the districts or the towns as far the provision of social amenities are concerned. In the new teacher training programme in Ghana the districts and the towns are expected to play important roles in the implementation and success of the programme. For instance, the districts were given the opportunity to sponsor teacher trainees from the local areas to ensure that they returned to the districts or towns after training to help solve the acute shortage

of trained teachers in some remote areas of Ghana. The idea of sponsorship has benefited areas like Dambai, Tamale, Wulensi, Foso and Axim which are areas in Ghana noted for acute shortage of teachers. The districts and the towns were also charged to liaise with the district education offices, churches and other agencies in providing accommodation and basic amenities for trainees in some remote parts of the country during teaching practice.

Thus, the implementation of the new teacher training programme in Ghana involved institutions, bodies and communities at the grass root as a whole.

2.9 Summary

In this chapter attempt has been made to describe Ghana's geographical location, the people, the political set up, educational administration, management and organisation and some of the problems in the education sector that have given rise to the new teacher training programme which is the focus of this thesis. Institutions and bodies charged with the implementation and success of the teacher education programme have also been discussed. The rationale is to help the reader have an idea about the context of the study to enhance appreciation of the issues raised in the work. The next chapter focuses on the literature review.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the chapter is to review issues concerning mentoring as an approach to initial teacher education. It is also meant to provide information on work done in the area and to provide a theoretical basis for the study. Wittgenstein (1988) offered that one should distinguish whether ‘puzzles’ one is faced with require information (more facts) or require clarification (sorting out). This would seem useful counsel for commencing a literature review. Wittgenstein’s advice is that we should seek to clarify the information we have rather than seek and acquire more. Such an assertion would appear sound advice when faced with the seemingly daunting task of identifying, retrieving, collating and analysing literature in order to understand. This is especially so in the wealth of literature written on the phenomenon of mentoring. Caruso (1990:14) noted a decade ago that although academic writings on mentoring are recent, they include 225 conference papers, 150 doctoral dissertations and 65 books. In spite of the wealth of literature on mentoring from the western world research work on mentoring at the Post-secondary teacher training level is non-existent in Ghana. As a result, secondary sources were used mainly from Britain, since Ghana, a former British colony has the British model of education. Of particular interest in this Chapter are the following sub headings:

- The concept of mentoring;
- Conceptions of teaching;
- Learning to teach;
- Models of mentoring

- Assessment at initial teacher education;
- Profiling (and)
- Moderating of assessment results.

The Chapter concludes with a summary of the literature review.

3.2 The Concept of Mentoring

Mentoring as a term has often been used variously to mean different things hence definitions of mentoring are elusive. Commenting on the complexity of defining the concept of mentoring Carruthers (1992:11) notes:

With the passage of time and with the demands of the situations in which mentoring occurs, adaptations of the classical mentor-protégé dyad have proliferated in order to satisfy particular needs.

A lexical definition may help in communicating and researching mentoring (Roberts2000). Kemmerling (1992:2) explains a lexical definition:

A lexical definition simply reports the way in which a term is already used within a language community. The goal here is to inform someone else of the accepted meaning of the term, so that the definition is more or less correct depending upon the accuracy with which it captures that usage.

The Oxford Dictionary defines a mentor as ‘wise and trusted counsellor. When discussing mentoring Haggerty (1986) asserts that the literature ‘confuses the person, the process and the activities’. Elmore (1989) warns of a ‘manic optimism’ that seems to prevail amongst mentoring proponents. Some writers (Anderson and Shannon1995; Carima, 1988; Donovan, 1990; Fagan, 1988; Little, 1990) exasperatedly call for clarification of the phenomenon. Bush et al. (1992) contend that attempts at such clarity are ephemeral, that the concept is an ‘elusive’ one which resists simplistic labels. Stammers (1992) argues that there is no ‘single animal’ called a mentor, rather a group of tasks associated with the role. Dodgson (1992) concurs with Bush et al

(1992) .After reviewing the literature he concluded that definition is elusive and varies according to the view of the author. Adding to the lack of definitional clarity is Levinson et al. (1978) widely accredited with bringing mentoring into the academic debate-who write:

No word currently in use is adequate to convey the nature of the relationship we have in mind here. Words such as ‘counsellor or “guru” suggests the more subtle meanings, but they have other connotations that would be misleading. The term “mentor” is generally used in a much narrower sense, to mean teacher, advisor, or sponsor. As we use the term it means all these things and more (Levison et al 1978:97).

Caruso (1990) notes that many studies do not attempt to posit any specific definition of the nature of the action of mentoring; rather they refer to the help functions contained within the relationship, i.e., guiding, caring, nurturing, counselling and advising. Zey (1984) defines mentoring as a relationship whereby the mentor ‘oversees’ the career development of another person, usually a junior. A dyad is implicit here, in a formal organisational context. He posits a ‘mutual benefit model’ whereby the whole organisation gains from the mentoring relationship. Alleman (1986) stipulates that a mentor is a person of greater rank or expertise who teaches, guides and develops a novice in an organisation or profession: again a dyad within a formal context. Donovan (1990) discusses mentoring within nursing; notes the lack of definitional clarity and concurs with May (1982) whose definition refers to a relationship: an ‘intense relationship’ between an experienced person and a novice. Armitage and Burnard (1991) refer to Haggerty’s (1986) phrase ‘definitional quagmire’ and ask that if no definitional agreement exists, how do we know we are talking about the same thing?

Field and Philpot (1998) define the mentoring role as a separate role to the tutor, although both should work closely together. To cloud the issue still further, Gay and Stephenson (1998:23) refer to a 'teacher-mentor' saying that:

...the condition we now have before us is one where mentoring is not supplemental to a mainstream activity but is incorporated within the mainstream activity in such a way that it has a direct input into the future of the individuals that are being mentored.

Anforth (1992) argues for the formulation of a mentoring definition that has the mentor restricted to assisting, befriending, guiding and advising the protégé; a scheme which does away with the assessment function. Morle (1990) takes a less direct stance and says that the role of supervisor, assessor and mentor may be carried out within the relationship, as long as the protégé knows which one is being carried out. The approach reasoned here is that a lexical definition may be reached, but only after locating a consensus on the essential attributes of the mentoring phenomenon as perceived by those who observe, practice, research and evaluate the phenomenon. What becomes apparent on inspection of the literature is that definitional clarity of mentoring is a problematic area. It is not that any of the above authors are incorrect. It is rather that they do not share the same or possibly even similar perceptions of the mentoring phenomenon. These different meanings can lead to confusion and problems when it comes to implementation. Therefore, it is expedient to examine the various meanings attached to the term mentoring and what it means for this thesis.

Roberts (2000) claims the origin of the modern day mentor is to be found in the little known *Les Aventures de Telemaque*, by Fenelon (1699). He adds that the word itself did not enter into common usage until the year 1750, some three millennia after Homer's epic poem. Touching on the definitional complexity of the concept of mentoring Roberts indicated that mentoring is a complex, social and psychological

activity and the plethora of quite recent research and discussion has often been hindered by the lack of consensus as to what constitutes mentoring. He explains that the problem of definition is due to attempts by writers to focus upon the definition of mentoring but since the essential attributes determine the definition, and since attributes of mentoring vary depending upon the experience of the phenomenon, searching for definitions of mentoring has led many writers to relinquish their attempts and either call for clarification or accept that there 'is no single animal called mentoring'. Roberts (2000) however, claims the definition of mentoring must be located via a presupposition less revisit of the phenomenon, via exploration of essential and contingent attributes. Roberts, after application of an inductive, phenomenological approach defines mentoring as:

A formalised process whereby a more knowledgeable and experienced person actuates a supportive role of overseeing and encouraging reflection and learning within a less experienced and knowledgeable person, so as to facilitate that person's career and personal development (Roberts 2000:162).

Roberts (2000) from a phenomenological reading of the literature collated found the essential attributes of mentoring as: a process form, an active relationship, a helping process, a teaching-learning process, reflective practice, a career and personal development, process, a formalised process and a role constructed by or for a mentor. Placing the concept mentoring in historical perspective Anderson and Shannon (1995) claim the term 'mentor' has its roots in Homer's epic poem, the Odyssey. According to Anderson et al., in that myth Odysseus, a great royal warrior while fighting the Trojan War entrusted his son Telemachus to his friend and advisor mentor and charged him with advising and serving as guardian to the entire royal household. Explaining further, Anderson and Shannon (1995) state that the account of the mentor in the Odyssey leads us to make several conclusions about what the term mentoring connotes. First

mentoring is an intentional process as the mentor intentionally carried out his responsibility for Telemachus. Second, mentoring can be conceived of as a nurturing process which fosters the growth and development of the protégé toward full maturity as it was the mentor's full responsibility to draw forth the full potential of Telemachus. Third, mentoring can further be conceived of as an insightful process in which the wisdom of the mentor is acquired and applied by the protégé. . Fourth, mentoring is a supportive, protective process as Telemachus was to consider the advice of his mentor, and the mentor was to 'keep all safe'.

Clawson (1980) also in an attempt to explain the concept mentoring from historical perspective relates it to the mentor in the Odyssey and asserts that it was the mentor's task in the Odyssey to help Telemachus grow in wisdom without rebellion.

It is reasonable to conclude from Athene's role and activities in the Odyssey as a mentor that role modelling is a central quality of mentoring for taking human form, Athene provided Telemachus with a standard and style of behaviour which he could understand and follow. Athene by this role in the Odyssey helps us to understand that mentors need to make themselves available to protégés as role models and to understand how their modelling can stimulate perspective, style, and a sense of empowerment within the protégé. Murray (1991) in 'A New English Dictionary' documents various uses of the term 'mentor' dating from around 1750. These uses confirm the historical meaning of mentoring and further imply that a mentor may be a person or a personified thing. It needs pointing out that it has not been until the late ten to fifteen years that much about mentoring has appeared in the professional literature. Clawson (1980) for example identifies the mid-1970s when mentoring for a professional career became a topic of research.

Eng (1986) also suggests that the emphasis of mentoring for a professional career coincided with the Human Resources Development Movement in business. Since the mid-1970s, mentoring has increasingly been used to describe a variety of functions in a variety of vocational fields, yet no commonly accepted meaning of the term has been developed (Speizer 1981).

Phillips-Jones (1982) defines mentors as influential people who significantly help protégés reach their life goals. 'They have the power -through who or what they know to promote ...welfare, training or career' (p.21). She identifies six types of mentors: traditional mentors, supportive bosses, organisational sponsors, professional mentors, patrons and invisible godparents. Phillips-Jones explains that traditional mentors are usually older authority figures who over a long period of time protect, advocate for, and nurture their protégés and permit them to move up the organisational ladder on their coat-tails. Supportive bosses are persons in a direct supervisory relationship with their protégés, and like traditional mentors supportive bosses reach and guide but they function more as coaches than as long term protectors and advocates. Organisational sponsors are top-level managers who see that their protégés are promoted within the organisation. Unlike supportive bosses and traditional mentors they do not stay in day-to-day contact with their protégés. Professional mentors comprise a variety of career counsellors and advisors and protégés pay for services from these mentors. Patrons are persons who use their financial resources and status to help protégés prepare for and launch their careers. Invisible godparents also help protégés reach career goals without their knowing it and they make 'behind the scenes' arrangements and recommendations (Phillips-Jones 1982, pp.22-24, 79-89).

Alleman (1986) stipulates that a mentor is a person of greater rank or experience who teaches, counsels, guides and develops a novice in an organisation or profession. Expanding the definition, she identifies nine mentor functions which are: giving information, providing political information, challenging assignments, counselling, helping with career moves, developing trust, show-casing protégés' achievements, protecting and developing personal relationship/friend (pp.47-48).

Levinson et al (1978) and Zey (1984) represent contrasting views of mentoring.

Levinson et al (1978) claim mentoring is:

.... The mentor is ordinarily several years older, a person of greater experience and seniority in the world the young man [sic] is entering. No word currently in use is adequate to convey the nature of the relationship we have in mind. Words such as 'counselor' or 'guru' suggest the more subtle meanings, but they have other connotations that would be misleading. The term 'mentor' is generally used in a much narrower sense, to mean teacher, adviser, or sponsor. As we use the term, it means all these things and more (p.97).

In contrast to this relatively broad and informal definition of mentoring, Zey (1984) defines a mentor as:

A person who oversees the career and development of another person usually a junior, through teaching, counselling, providing psychological support, protecting, and at times promoting and sponsoring. The mentor may perform any or all of the above functions during the mentor relationship (p.7)

In this definition mentoring is viewed as a formal process within an organisation that promotes the career development of the protégé to the benefit of the organisation and the individual.

Daloz (1983) drawing upon a travel metaphor characterizes a mentor as a guide on a journey. During the trip the mentor carries out the following functions: pointing the way, offering support and challenging.

Placing mentoring in the field of education, Fagan and Walter (1983) simply define a mentor as 'an experienced adult who befriends and guides a less experienced adult (p.51). Similarly, Klopff and Harrison (1981) conceptualizing mentoring as an enabling process, state that mentors are 'competent people who serve as teachers, advisors, counsellors, and sponsors for an associate, who may be younger and of the same or different sex' (p.42). Klopff and Harrison go on to say that the mentor and associate mutually gain 'insight, knowledge, and satisfaction from the relationship (p.42). They stipulate that all of the processes or functions found within their definition must be enacted for mentoring to occur.

McIntyre et al (1993), claim that the term mentoring was imported into education from various professions like management, which has made the meaning of the term problematic. Jacobi (1991) commenting on the problematic meaning of mentoring quoted Marriam (1983) that:

The phenomenon of mentoring is not clearly conceptualised leading to confusion as to just what is being measured or offered as an ingredient in success. Mentoring appears to mean one thing to developmental psychologists, another to business people, and a third thing to those in educational setting (Jacobi in McIntyre et al 1993:12).

Fish (1995) defines the mentor as any teacher who works in schools with student teachers to improve their practice. She emphasised that mentoring by teachers in schools should always operate in partnership with tutors in higher education because that provides the best educational preparation for joining the teaching profession. Fish claims mentoring should aim at educating students to become members of the teaching profession rather than training them to be deliverers of the curriculum to pupils. She

thus, advocates for mentor education rather than training. Touching on the complexity of mentoring she states:

Being a mentor is specifically different from previous responsibilities and modes of operation as a teacher supervisor or as a class teacher receiving a student for teaching practice. It now involves taking on the entire role of educating the student to be a teacher. ...Working with adult students towards a professional qualification (being the gatekeeper of a profession) is quite different from teaching young pupils the National curriculum....The differences between this and previous experiences of having a student are awesome. It also means knowing about ITE in much more detail (Fish 1995: 3)

It needs pointing out that the various definitions of the term mentoring from the historical perspective, business and educational literature and the lack of conceptual frameworks for organising the various mentoring functions and behaviours found within the definitions deny the term of any water-tight definition and creates problems for those who wish to develop and implement mentor programmes for teachers. Emphasizing this point Anderson and Shannon (1995) state that some definitions of mentoring by their generality are too vague or ambiguous to be helpful to teachers assuming mentor role. They claim an example of such vagueness is found in Fagan and Walter's conceptualization of a mentor as 'an experienced adult who befriends and guides a less experienced adult' (p.51). Such definitions according to Anderson and Shannon do not give mentors enough specific direction as to what they are to do or how they are to do it. Anderson and Shannon (1995) concluded that it is therefore, difficult from studying the definitions as a group to know whether mentoring involves a set of

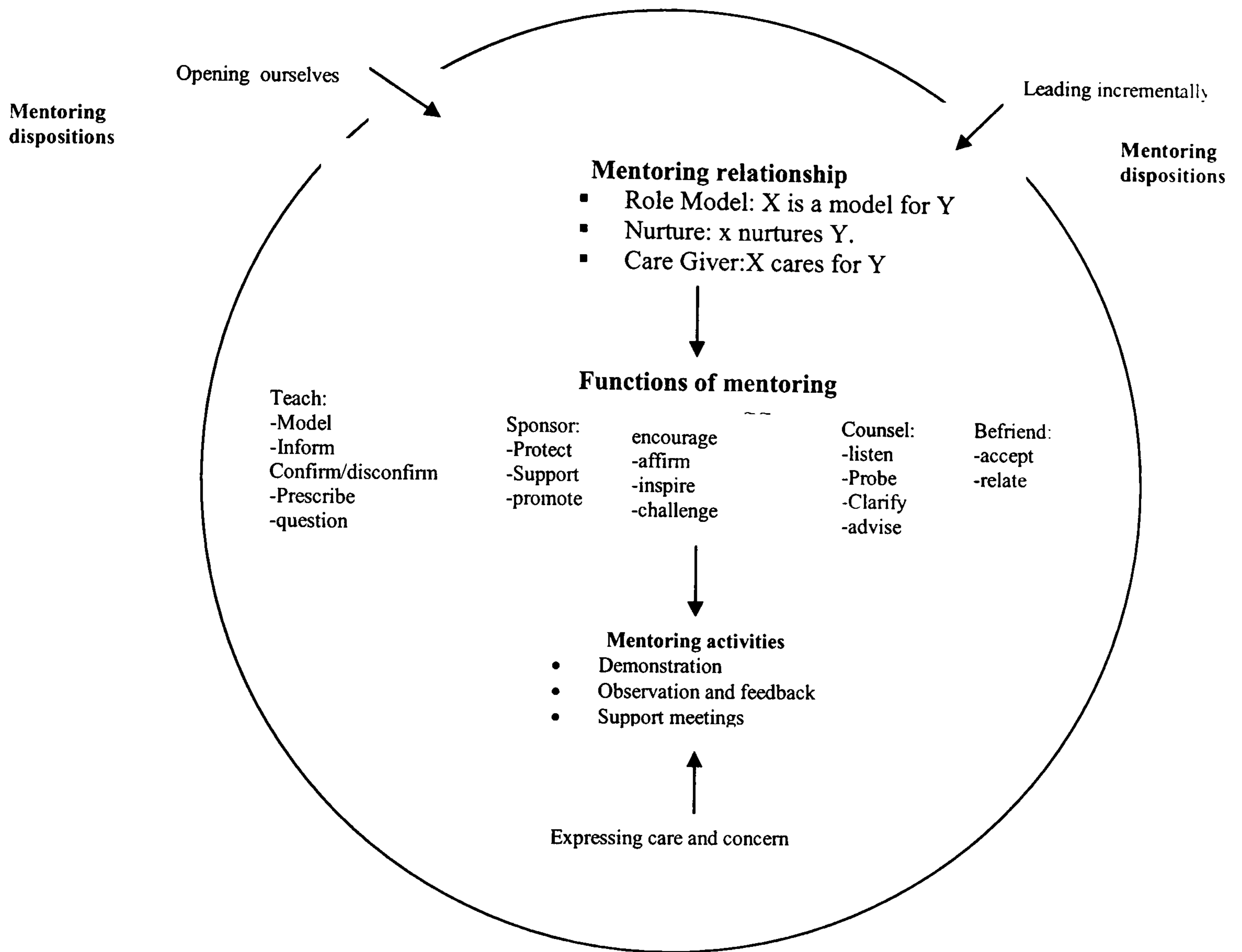
functions that are conjunctively or disjunctively joined. Explaining this point further, Anderson and Shannon claim Alleman (1986) for example cites four mentoring roles and nine mentoring functions without establishing a clear relationship between the two sets and the lack of rationale for and the relationship among these thirteen variables constrain what contribution they make to the understanding of the concept.

Anderson and Shannon (1995) in the light of the problems expressed above offered a basic definition of mentoring that centres on five mentoring functions and related behaviours; delineates some basic mentoring activities and specifies some necessary dispositions of mentors. They define mentoring as:

a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional/ or personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an on going, caring relationship between the mentor and protégé (Anderson 1987).

The essential attributes of this definition are: the process of nurturing, the act of serving as a role model, the five mentoring functions (teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counselling and befriending), the focus on professional and/personal development and the ongoing caring relationship. The model is elaborated in figurative form and Figure 3.1 specifies the mentoring dispositions which Anderson and Shannon regard as 'essential' as well as breaking down the mentoring functions into their constituent parts and identifying key mentoring activities.

Fig.3.1 : Anderson and Shannon's Mentoring model.



Anderson and Shannon (1995) claim nurturing implies a developmental process in which a nurturer is able to recognise the ability, experience and psychological maturity of the person being nurtured and by providing the appropriate growth producing activities. The concept of nurturing to them also implies several notions embedded in the 'gardening' metaphor in which the nurturer helps provide an environment for growth, considers the total personality of the person being nurtured in deciding how best to be helpful, and operates with a belief that the person being nurtured has the capacity to develop into fuller maturity.

Closely related to the nurturing process is the act of serving as a role model. Mentors provide the protégés with a sense of what they are becoming. Protégés can see a part of their adult selves in other adults and by their example mentors can stimulate growth and development in their protégés (Levinson et al, 1978).

Levinson et al (1978) assert that the essence of mentoring may be found more within the kind of relationship that exists between the mentor and the protégé than in the various roles and functions denoted by the term 'mentoring'. Touching on the functions of mentoring, Anderson et al (1995) also state that it includes teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counselling and befriending. Explaining further what each entails they claim teaching means basic behaviours associated with teaching including: modelling, informing, confirming/disconfirming, prescribing and questioning, and these behaviours in the context of mentoring are guided by the principles of adult education. Illustrating how mentoring functions are carried out within the teaching context they state it include: demonstrating teaching techniques to a protégé, observing the protégé's classroom teaching and providing feedback, and holding support meetings with the protégé .

Sponsoring they also claim involves being a kind of a guarantor and in the context of mentoring involves three essential behaviours: protecting, supporting and promoting. Teacher mentors can protect their protégés from something in the school environment for instance, helping them to get a very troublesome student removed from their class or helping protect protégés from themselves for instance advising protégés not to stay up late every night preparing lessons until their health is impaired. Touching on encouraging, Anderson and Shannon state is a process that includes the behaviours of affirming, inspiring and challenging. Teacher mentors can affirm their protégés for who they are and what they can do. They can also inspire them by their example and words

and they can offer challenge by inviting them to become involved in a variety of growth-producing experiences.

Touching on counselling Anderson and Shannon (1995) claim is a problem-solving process that includes behaviours such as listening, probing, clarifying and advising to the degree that protégés are willing and able and through these activities teacher mentors can help protégés solve their own problems. Regarding befriending, they claim while it is difficult to delineate all of the behaviours associated with, two critical ones which are accepting and relating stand out. Elaborating this point, Anderson and Shannon (1995) state that as a friend, teacher mentors in various ways convey to their protégés that they understand and support them and that they have time for them.

Commenting on the dispositions that mentors should have and drawing on the definition offered by Katz and Raths (1985), Anderson and Shannon define a mentoring disposition as an attributed characteristic of a mentor, one that summarises the trend of the mentor's actions in particular contexts (p.31). They added that mentoring dispositions arise from the concept of mentoring and also from the values held by those who develop mentor programmes. Highlighting the importance of dispositions in mentoring Anderson and Shannon (1995) offered three dispositions which they claim are essential to the concept of mentoring. First, mentors should have the disposition of opening themselves to their protégés for example by allowing their protégés to observe them in action and convey to them the reasons and purposes behind their decisions and performance. Second, mentors should have the disposition to lead their protégés incrementally over time. Third, mentors should have the disposition to express care about the personal and professional welfare of their protégés.

As indicated earlier, the various meanings attached to the term mentoring creates a serious problem in understanding what the term means which in a way affects the role of the mentor in school-based teacher education and the implementation of mentorship programmes. Emphasising this point Anderson and Shannon (1995) state:

In developing teacher mentor programs it is all too easy to focus prematurely on such task as designing job descriptions for mentors, selecting mentors and protégés, providing some initial orientation sessions and then getting a programme underway. To do so, without first thinking carefully about the concept of mentoring, is to run the risk of developing programs that are incomplete, lack integrity, and duplicate programs that in some form have already been tried. We believe that those who develop mentor programs for beginning teachers should embed them in a definition of mentoring that captures the essence of the mentoring relationship (Anderson and Shannon 1995:33).

One of the tasks of this thesis is to find out how the term mentoring was conceptualized at initial teacher training level in Ghana and how the conceptualization affected its implementation.

3.3 Conceptions of Teaching

Different models of mentoring are rooted in different views of teaching and of the experiences which one requires in order to develop that capacity. Thus, looking at models of mentoring without reference to conceptions of teaching is like planning a scheme of work without reference to the knowledge, skills and concepts which the scheme of work is designed to promote (Maynard & Furlong 1993).

Various writers have either implicitly or explicitly proposed different models of the teaching learning process and different visions of the role of the mentor based on the way they perceive teaching and learning. Maynard and Furlong (1993) are of the view that the way teaching is conceptualised and perceived influence one's views of the

processes involved in learning to teach and the role of the mentor in mentorship programmes.

Schon (1983) conceptualises teaching as a transactional process which involves teachers drawing on their existing stock of concrete experiences or concepts in order to 'frame' unique teaching situations. It is through the process of 'framing' that the teacher enters into a dialogue with the situation itself by achieving an understanding of it through attempting to change it. In other words, the teacher attempts to shape the situation but in conversation with it so that his or her own model and appreciations are also shaped by the situation. It is in this way that the 'phenomena that he seeks to understand are partly of his own making' (Schon 1983:151). Schon (1987) talks of professional education in the preparation of trainees and to him coaching followed by reflection-on-action is central in his view as to how trainees can and should be supported in learning to teach. From Schon's perspective therefore, the role of the mentor is to act as a coach by helping the student teacher to reflect on his practical teaching experience. Zeichner and Liston (1987) view teaching as a complex intellectual and moral activity. Drawing on Dewey's (1910) distinction between routine and reflective action they argue that learning to teach must involve trainees in systematic enquiry into their own practices and other peoples practices in order to reveal the intellectual, moral and other assumptions on which their teaching is based. They argue further that it is only through such enquiry that trainees can establish for themselves a rational basis for their professional actions. Mentors from their perspective are seen as needing special skills in order to help students in this systematic enquiry.

The 'New Right thinkers' like O' Hear (1988) talk of learning to teach through the emulation of experienced practitioners which is a form of unreflective apprenticeship. Such an approach or idea follows from the conception of teaching as an almost mystical

process, dependent primarily on personality and 'natural' skills not susceptible to systematic analysis. From this perspective mentoring is perceived not as an active process nor does it involve any particular skills. To be a mentor according to this perspective is simply to act as a model. In sharp contrast, those supporting a competency model advocate a more systematic, skills-based approach to learning to teach. It is by separating out the different elements of teaching that students can systematically be prepared for their performance; the mentor here is a trainer. These various conceptions of teaching have given rise broadly to two models of professional practice where some people see the preparation for teaching as offering would-be professionals a set of clear-cut routines and behaviours and pre-packed course content which requires only an efficient means of delivery- Technical Rationality (TR). Others, however, feel that such a position denies the real character of both professionalism on the one hand and teaching and learning on the other. They argue that teaching involves complex decision-making and elements of professional judgement of practical wisdom, all guided by moral principles, but that these are not able to be set down in absolute routines- Professional Artistry (PA)

Tracing the origins of Technical Rationality Schon (1983) indicates that Technical Rationality is the heritage of Positivism, the powerful philosophical doctrine that grew up in the nineteenth century as an account of the rise of science and technology and as a social movement aimed at applying the achievements of science and technology to the well-being of mankind.

Emphasising this he writes:

Technical Rationality is the Positivist epistemology of practice...institutionalised in the modern university founded in the late nineteenth century when Positivism was at its height, and in the professional schools which secured their place in the university in the early decades of the twentieth century (p.31).

Schon (1983) referring to Technical Rationality as the dominant epistemology of practice writes further that “According to the model, of Technical Rationality.... Professional activity consists in instrumental problem-solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique” (p.21).

Schon(1983) commenting on the limitations of Technical Rationality writes:

If anything the effective use of specialised knowledge depends on a prior restructuring of situations that are complex and uncertain. An artful practice of the unique case appears anomalous when professional competence is modelled in terms of application of established techniques to recurrent events. Problem setting has no place in a body of professional knowledge concerned exclusively with problem solving (p.19).

Criticising Technical Rationality further, Schon (1983) stated that Technical Rationality depends on agreement about ends but it is when ends are fixed and clear that the decision to act can present itself as an instrumental problem but when ends are confused and conflicting there is as yet no problem to solve. He concluded that a conflict of ends cannot be resolved by the use of techniques derived from applied research; rather it is through the non-technical process of framing the problematic situation that we may organise and clarify both the ends to be achieved and the possible means of achieving them. (p.41).

Fish (1995) also commenting on Technical Rationality states that it is based on an assumption which views teaching as relatively simple interactions, discernible and able to be broken into component parts in which the teacher gives out and the pupils take in. Concluding she stated that such a position denies the real character of both professionalism on the one hand and teaching and learning on the other.

These conceptions of teaching have given rise to two broad models of teacher education: Competency-based teacher education and the Reflective practitioner philosophy of teacher education.

3.4 Learning to Teach

Teaching necessarily begins with a teacher's understanding of what is to be learned and how it should be taught. It proceeds through a series of activities during which the students are provided specific instruction and opportunities for learning, though the learning itself ultimately remains the responsibility of the students. Teaching must properly be understood to be more than the enhancement of understanding (Shulman 1986). Touching on knowledge base for teaching Schulman (1986) states that if teacher knowledge were to be organised into a handbook, an encyclopaedia or some format for arranging knowledge, at minimum they would include:

- content knowledge
- general pedagogical knowledge, with special reference to broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organisation that appears to transcend subject-matter
- curriculum knowledge, with particular grasp of the materials and programmes that serve as "tools of the trade" for teachers
- pedagogical content knowledge, that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding;
- knowledge of learners and their characteristics

- knowledge of educational contexts, ranging from the workings of the group or classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures; and
- knowledge of educational ends, purpose, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds (Shulman 1986:8).

Shulman emphasises that among the categories of knowledge pedagogical content knowledge is of special interest because it identifies the distinctive bodies for teaching.

He states:

It represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organised, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction. Pedagogical content knowledge is the category most likely to distinguish the understanding of the content specialist from that of the pedagogue (Schulman 1986:8).

Enumerating the sources for the teaching knowledge base Shulman indicates that there are at least four major sources which he enumerated as: scholarship in content disciplines, the materials and settings of the institutionalized educational process; research on schooling, social organisations, human learning, teaching and development, and the other social and cultural phenomena that affect what teachers can do; and the wisdom of practice. Explaining further his view of the sources of content knowledge Shulman indicated that teaching is, essentially a learned profession and the teacher as a member of a scholarly community must have not only in-depth understanding with respect to the particular subjects taught, but also a broad liberal education that serves as a framework for old learning and as a facilitator for new understanding. The teacher has special responsibilities in relation to content knowledge, serving as the primary source

of student understanding of subject matter. The manner in which understanding is communicated conveys to students what is essential about a subject and what is peripheral. The teacher must have a flexible and multifaceted comprehension, adequate to impart alternative explanations of the same concepts or principles to the students. These responsibilities Shulman claims place special demands on the teacher's own depth of understanding of the structures of the subject matter, as well as the teacher's attitude toward and enthusiasm for what is being taught.

On educational materials and structures, Shulman states this should advance the aims of organised schooling, materials and structures for teaching and learning which include curricula with their scope and sequences, tests and testing materials, professional teachers' associations with their functions of negotiations, government agencies and the general mechanisms of governance and finance and how they are created. Shulman concluded that because teachers necessarily function within a matrix created by these elements, using and being used by them, it stands to reason that the principles, policies, and facts of their functioning comprise a major source of the knowledge base; and if a teacher has to "know the territory" of teaching, then it is the landscape of such materials, institutions, organisations, and mechanisms which he/she must be familiar as they comprise the tools of the trade and the contextual conditions that will either facilitate or inhibit teaching efforts.

Shulman stated further that unfortunately, educational policy makers and staff developers tend to treat only the findings of empirical research on teaching and learning as relevant portions of the scholarly knowledge base. He added that these research findings while important and worthy of careful study represent only one face of the contribution of scholarship. Perhaps the most enduring and powerful scholarly influences on teachers are those that enrich their images of the possible: their visions of

what constitutes good education, or what a well-educated youngster might look like if provided with appropriate opportunities and stimulation. Thus, the philosophical, critical, and empirical literature which can inform the goals, visions, and dreams of teachers is a major portion of the scholarly knowledge base of teaching (Shulman 1986). Concluding, Shulman (1986) states that the wisdom of practice, the maxims that guide or provide reflective rationalisation for the practices of able teachers is the least codified. One of the more important tasks for the research community is to work with practitioners to develop codified representations of the practical pedagogical wisdom of able teachers as practitioners simply know a great deal that they have never even tried to articulate. A major portion of research agenda need to focus on collecting, collating, and interpreting the practical knowledge of teachers for the purpose of establishing a case literature and codifying its principles, precedents, and parables for a knowledge base for teaching is not fixed and final.

Writing further on the knowledge base of teaching within the context of teacher training in the United States, Shulman(1987) and Haertel (1991), advocate for a conception of a knowledge of teaching that sets forth a theory about the underlying knowledge and skills teaching requires, informed by exemplary teaching practices in contrast to canonized procedures of classroom teaching. Haertel (1991) for example, argues that prescriptive curricular and model teaching practices are of limited value in deriving a conception of the knowledge base of teaching. According to her this is because often they are grounded in a model which holds teachers responsible primarily for implementing prescribed procedures as opposed to their own professional judgements about which instructional approach fits, or needs adapting to a particular situation. The point Haertel appears to be making is that teachers need to be introduced to some core of special knowledge about teaching but in a context that holds promise for helping

them to make informed judgements about teaching. It is this knowledge base of teaching which then becomes the basis for developing certain professional teacher assessment tasks (Shulman, 1987; Haertel, 1991).

Shulman & Sykes (1986) have also suggested that in the content specific pedagogical knowledge area of teaching, some of the issues that could be tested are, for example:

What are the concepts, skills and attitudes which this topic has the potential for conveying to students? ...What analogies, metaphors, examples, similes, demonstrations, simulations, manipulations, or the like are most effective in communicating the appropriate understandings or attitudes of this topic to students of particular backgrounds and prerequisites ?... (Shulman & Sykes, 1986; pp.8-9. quoted in Haertel, 1991).

These questions are mainly about examining students' pedagogical knowledge base and their ability to relate it to hypothetical teaching and learning situations. Shulman (1987) has therefore, presented a model of teacher training in which he links pedagogical reasoning with the practical aspect of teaching. In it he attempts to emphasise as part of the training, the importance of introducing student teachers to certain aspects of teaching practice. The model consists of six components. The first two comprehension (of purposes, subject matter structures etc.) and transformation (involving stages of preparation, representation, selection and adaptation) deal with the pedagogical reasoning part, while the remaining four address the action component. These are: instruction, evaluation (i.e. checking for student understanding during interactive teaching), reflection (reviewing, reconstructing, etc.), and new comprehension (of purposes, subject matter, students, teaching, self, etc.). In effect, the action component is about assessing students on how well they can relate the pedagogical knowledge base of teaching to practical or simulated teaching events.

According to Stones (1994) such assessment “takes as central the need for students to demonstrate in their teaching..., a knowledge of pedagogical principles that is likely to be of abiding usefulness when they have left the training institution” (Stones, 1994; p.241). What clearly testing the knowledge base of teaching will not provide is the guarantee that students who display satisfactory understanding of teaching principles or concepts during assessment will necessarily make good teachers. As Stones (1994) points out, this is because of ‘the very complex nature of teaching and the infinitely complex nature of human learning’. Consequently, Stones argues that it is important that teacher training assessment possesses a strong formative evaluation element to equip students with the skills of diagnosis in respect of their own performance. This is to ensure that when they leave college beginning teachers can become responsive to the needs of learning and can self-monitor their teaching for improvement. (Issues about self-monitoring through formative evaluation of professional learning are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of this chapter).

The goal of teacher education is not to indoctrinate or train teachers to behave in prescriptive ways, but to educate teachers to reason soundly about their teaching as well as to perform skilfully. Sound reasoning requires both a process of thinking about what they are doing and an adequate base of facts, principles, and experiences from which to reason. Teachers must learn to use their knowledge base to provide the grounds for choices and actions. Therefore, teacher education must work with the beliefs that guide teacher actions, with the principles and evidence that underlie the choices teachers make. (Fenstermacher 1986).

Maynard and Furlong (1993) also state that learning to teach is a complex, bewildering and sometimes painful task. It involves developing a practical knowledge base, changes

in cognition, developing interpersonal skills and also incorporates an affective aspect (p.10).

Learning to teach can therefore, be characterised as the development of an appropriate body of practical professional knowledge that enables student teachers to combine the theories learnt with actual teaching situations by adapting the material to be learned to the needs of pupils/students to facilitate understanding. Maynard and Furlong (1993) commenting on the complexity of teaching and learning state:

any description of how students learn to teach must itself be based on an adequate conceptualization of teachers' professional knowledge and the way that knowledge is used in the process of teaching (p163).

Commenting further on teachers' professional knowledge, Maynard and Furlong asked whether professional knowledge can be conceived of as series of competences and teaching as the technical following of rules (Jessup1991); or alternatively as a 'natural' common-sense process based on personality and sound subject knowledge (Lawlor1990); or yet again whether teaching is a fundamentally moral activity involving the exercise of complex judgements which can and should be brought to the level of consciousness(Carr and Kemmis1986); Zeichner and Liston 1987).

Concluding, Maynard and Furlong (1993) indicated that though the different traditions of thought may lead to the development of useful strategies in the training of teachers, however, as conceptions of professional knowledge and the process of teaching, they consider them inadequate. Focusing on what is involved in teaching, they indicated that learning to teach "can usefully be characterised as the development of an appropriate body of practical professional knowledge with which student teachers can come to frame actual teaching situations" (p.174). Maynard and Furlong conceptualise

teachers' knowledge as falling within four broad areas or domains: knowledge of pupils, knowledge of strategies, knowledge of content and knowledge of context (p.164). Explaining further, they indicated that it is important to recognise that knowledge within each of the different domains is held at many different levels of abstraction as at the most specific level teachers will have built up a great deal of concrete knowledge (stock of experiences) on which they can draw in their teaching. Teachers also hold a great deal of specific situational knowledge like school policies on discipline. Breliner (1987) also state that in addition to this, teachers also hold a kind or 'level' of knowledge or teaching experience which allows them to form concepts or schemas of the typical or likely. He added that teachers will for example know and be able to predict children's reactions and responses to some issues or know of strategies that are likely to work or to elicit children's understanding. Commenting further on teachers' professional knowledge Maynard and Furlong in their study indicated that although each of these domains of knowledge are equally important, they are not experienced in the same way for pupils and context are in a sense given or fixed as they are what the teacher has to work with and within.

Maynard and Furlong (1993) added that by contrast, content and strategies while being inseparable are experienced as being more mutable or open to choice. Teachers' practice therefore, does not depend on knowledge drawn from a cluster of discrete domains, rather, it depends on the complex interaction and interplay between the domains. Effective practice is achieved when all the pieces are brought together. Emphasising the complexity of teaching, they indicated that, the interdependency of these domains makes learning to teach particularly difficult. Touching on teachers' tacit knowledge or knowledge in-action Maynard and Furlong indicated that teachers in their study found it difficult to describe it.

They state:

From our work with teachers, we became aware that whereas they were able to talk about some but not all aspects of the content of their knowledge-what they knew about pupils, contexts, lesson content and strategies they found it much difficult to talk about how they actually used that knowledge in their teaching (Maynard & Furlong 1993, p.165).

They concluded that from the various body of literature reviewed the work of Schon (1983) provided the best starting point for an understanding of how teachers use their practical professional knowledge in teaching. Teachers' professional knowledge is embedded in skilful action and for experienced teachers procedures like managing group work, asking appropriately pitched questions and diagnosing common learning difficulties are undertaken with little conscious thought. Maynard and Furlong indicated that "it is only when there is some 'felt difficulty', when teachers' practice is in some way becoming noticeably out of balance that they become consciously aware of what is happening. It is only when things go wrong that teachers find it necessary to bring the framing process to the level of consciousness in order to modify their practice or alter their intentions" (p.166). Explaining the point above further, Maynard and Furlong (1993) maintain that while the routine of teaching may be carried out automatically, it did not mean that teachers went about teaching thought-lessly for teachers do remain constantly aware of situations in the classroom and they do not even for a minute switch off. Commenting on the difficulty in explaining teachers' tacit knowledge or knowledge-in-action they concluded that the difficulty is due to the fact that it is in part 'felt' knowledge which must be felt personally or be learned experientially. Maynard and Furlong in their study on learning to teach emphasised that although it is possible to 'act like a teacher' simply by following routines and recipes by others, becoming an effective teacher demands a deeper understanding of the processes involved in teaching and

learning. Experienced teachers are therefore, able to frame teaching situations by drawing on richer and more complex understandings. They concluded that one of the most common complaints made by student teachers about their professional preparation was that however valuable and interesting their college-based studies, real learning does not begin until they enter the classroom for no amount of college work can substitute for the experience of starting to take responsibility for the teaching and learning process itself.

Maynard and Furlong (1993) concluded that in understanding how students develop an appropriate body of practical professional knowledge in the various domains, it is necessary to recognise that their learning of the 'content' of professional knowledge cannot be disentangled from other forms of learning that go on at the same time. Professional development does not only depend on the acquisition of knowledge but it is also dependent on students undergoing certain forms of personal learning as well as confronting fundamental issues associated with values (p.169).

Furlong et al (1988) in their research on school-based training distinguished between four different dimensions of training which they argued went on in all forms of teacher training course. These levels are as follows:

- Level (a) direct practice

Practical training through direct experience in schools and classrooms

- Level(b) indirect practice

'Detached' training in practical matters usually conducted in classes or workshops within training institutions.

- Level (c) practical principles

Critical study of the principles of study and their use.

- Level (d) disciplinary theory

Critical study of practice and its principles in the light of fundamental theory and research (p.132).

Furlong et al.'s argument was that professional training demands that trainees in their courses must be exposed to all of these different dimensions of professional knowledge. Moreover, courses, they suggested need to establish ways of working that help trainees integrate these different forms of professional knowledge. Furlong et al emphasised that trainees need to be systematically prepared in practical classroom knowledge which is a distinctive form of professional knowledge and training cannot be left to chance. Furlong et al (1988) suggest it is only teachers who have access to that level of knowledge as it is only they who know about particular children working on a particular curriculum in a particular school. Training must therefore, be a partnership between training institutions and schools to enable teachers benefit from the experiences and research knowledge of lecturers which is outside level (a). Since its publication, the analysis of Furlong et al has been criticised for its notion of levels. McIntyre (1990) in a lengthy critique has suggested that there is an implicit hierarchy in the model. He suggests that the model prioritizes academic knowledge at level (d) implying that it is the only route to professional rigour. McIntyre agrees that trainees need access to different forms of professional knowledge and that the practical knowledge of teachers must be a central part of the training process. He however, suggests that different forms of professional knowledge should all be used to interrogate each other. Practical classroom knowledge which is the province of teachers should be used to interrogate more

theoretically based knowledge and vice versa. This debate has continued for some time but teacher educators (Furlong et al 1988, Maynard and Furlong 1993, Shulman 1986) now agree that trainees need systematic preparation in practical classroom knowledge which can be provided by teachers working in their own classrooms and schools. This agreement has led to a shift from the notion of supervision in schools to the notion of mentoring which is an active process, where teachers as practitioners have an active role in the training process.

3.4.1 Stages of development

An examination of research literature on the process of learning to teach confirms that trainees typically go through a number of distinct stages of development each with its own focal concerns. These concerns can usefully be grouped under the following headings: early idealism; survival; recognising difficulties; hitting the plateau; and moving on (Furlong et al, 1995:12).

3.4.1 (a) Early idealism

At this initial stage trainees are very pupil-oriented and they want to be popular, liked, warm, caring, friendly, and not like the miserable permanent classroom teacher. They also often base their personal aspirations on becoming a clone of their own. Confirming this Fuller and Brown (1975) in their research on pre-teaching concerns of trainees found that they are often idealistic in their feelings towards their students, identifying realistically with pupils but unsympathetic or even hostile to the class teacher. Moreover, they often seem to hold a clear image of the sort of teacher they want to be.

3.4.1 (b) Personal Survival

Once trainees embark on their teaching experience, their idealism often fades in the face of realities of classroom life and they frequently become obsessed with their own survival. Class control and management, 'fitting in' and establishing themselves as a 'teacher' often become major issues for them (Furlong et al, 1995). Furlong et al referring to their research claim at this stage of training, trainees frequently refer to the problem of not being able to 'see' and they use phrases such as 'it's all a blur', 'I can't seem to focus' and 'feeling my way'. Calderhead (1988) confirms this by stating that in the early stages of school experience, time is often given for trainees to observe classroom practice but this is often wasted as they cannot make sense of the noise and movement around them; they do not understand the significance of the teacher's actions and they simply do not know what it is they are supposed to be looking for. It is no wonder that at this stage trainees often express the need for quick fixes', and 'hints and tips' (Eisenhart et al, 1991).

3.4.1 (c) Recognising Difficulties

At this stage trainees become sensitive to the varied demands made on them and they are keen to give an impressive performance. With conflict shaken the issue of assessment often starts to predominate and trainees constantly make the plaintive cry of 'Am I doing well?., ' Will I pass?' In this phase trainees also begin to focus on the issue of teaching methods and materials, referring frequently to classroom constraints or lack of resources. (Furlong et al, 1995).

3.4.1 (d) Hitting the Plateau

After weeks when basic management and control procedures have been established, trainees are liable to 'hit the plateau'; at last they have found a way of teaching that seems to work and they stick to it. However, they frequently find difficulty as Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1975) explain that in shifting the focus from themselves to others, or from the subjects they are teaching to the issue of what the pupils need to learn, there often is, as Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann point out, a vast gulf that exists between 'going through the motions of teaching...and connecting these activities to what pupils should be learning over time' (p.257).

3.4.1 (e) Moving On

At this stage trainees eventually go on to experiment and show concern for pupils' learning but without positive intervention. Calderhead (1987) maintains that their level of reflection at this level is shallow and ineffective in promoting professional learning.

It needs explaining that the literature survey on conceptions of teaching and learning to teach though is not meant to measure explicitly the perceptions about teaching and learning to teach but have been reviewed since trainees already have their personal values and experiences which will influence their perceptions of their preparations for teaching. Again, the argument underlying this portion of the review of literature is that a fuller appreciation for the role of the mentor will not be achieved until there is a more thorough understanding of the processes involved in learning to teach, for just like any form of teaching, mentoring must be built on a clear understanding of the learning processes it is intended to support.

3.5 Models Of Mentoring

Mentors are variously defined as the skilled craftspersons of the apprenticeship model, the trainers in competence-based teaching model, or the reflective coach, critical friend and co-enquirer of the reflective practitioner tradition. These three distinct models of mentoring aside, there are also other more particularised models: Anderson and Shannon (1988), the Oxford Internship Scheme (McIntyre, 1990), Furlong and Maynard (1993) and Tomlinson (1995). In this section the three general models are reviewed. The rationale for doing this hinges on the understanding that a combination of the various models or their parts will facilitate effective mentoring of trainees at the various developmental levels of their training.

3.5.1 The Apprenticeship Model

Historically, apprenticeship represents the first formal attempt to train teachers systematically. Used extensively during the 19th. and early 20th .centuries, it was the means by which the pupil-teachers destined to work in elementary schools were trained. Training was carried out on-the job and involved trainee and trainer in a pupil-master craftsperson relationship. The novice was induced into teaching by an experienced practitioner, observing the teacher at work and then attempting to emulate them. Trial-and error learning featured prominently. Implicit in this model was a dichotomy between the pupil-teacher's own academic study and the acquisition of teaching skills. There was little sense that the two may be intimately connected and, in reality, achieving either was a matter of chance. The individual's academic study was dependent on the conscientiousness of each head teacher and the acquisition of craft skills depended on the individual's ability to make personal sense of teaching from what they had observed (Tomlinson, 1995). Apprenticeship is widely used in industrial

settings for training in skilled trades and in passing on lower order craft skills. Educationalists therefore wonder whether it is appropriate for teacher education which is more intellectually demanding and a high-order profession. Teaching is not a collection of relatively simple craft skills which one can refine with practice and then apply in a hard and fast formulaic manner in the classroom. There is also not a single or best way of teaching anything; rather, there is a range of possibilities and alternatives some of which are better per se and some of which are more suited to particular circumstances. The capacities which a skilful teacher exercises are the product of a complex synthesis of personal values and beliefs, professional preparation and training, and store of relevant experiences and detailed situational knowledge. Attempting mechanically to reproduce what one had observed without developing insight into the processes at work is therefore, an unreliable form of teacher preparation for unquestioning and slavish imitation of established practices does not give learner access to the knowledge, understanding and judgement which underpin those actions and decisions-what Elliot (1990) describes as 'intelligent skill knowledge' (Maynard and Furlong 1993: 30). A reliance on learning from the observable, surface features of behaviour means that the learner may never penetrate their deeper meaning and significance. Another deficiency of the Apprenticeship model is that it is conducive to professional stasis, for implicit within it is the notion of the experienced practitioner as infallible expert. Therefore, apprenticeship provides little or no opportunity for established practices to be challenged, refined or improved, nor for alternative practices to be developed and experimented with. Critics claim that it produces unthinking automatons who can reproduce behaviour but without intelligent skill knowledge or the possibility of further professional development.(Maynard and Furlong 1993). In spite of the criticisms of the Apprenticeship model to training, Right-wing thinkers such as

O'Hear (1988) and the Hillgate Group (1989) have championed the apprenticeship model of initial teacher training (ITT). It has consequently become the model of mentoring that has been written about most frequently and most vehemently, largely because of the distaste which it inspires in educationalists and because those who do favour it have political influence (Maynard and Furlong 1993). The feelings and attention which it has excited were intensified when the government launched the Licensed Teacher Scheme (DES 1988). Fears were expressed that this scheme would herald the re-emergence of apprenticeship as a principal form of ITT. Apprenticeship was apprehended as a bogeyman which threatened to de-professionalize teaching in England. It needs pointing out that although there are a few educationalists who would accept a pure apprenticeship model as the principal or the only form of ITE, the value of apprenticeship as one strategy among others is now widely recognised (e.g. Maynard and Furlong 1993; McLaughlin 1994; Tomlinson 1995). In place of the emotionally charged language of apprenticeship and its historical connotations there is a more neutral word 'modelling'. As described by McIntyre (1994), modelling is a cautious and a qualified version of full-blown apprenticeship. He asserts:

focused and effective modelling can be used in deliberate and purposeful ways ... teachers as teacher educators are very well placed to help student teachers focus attention on particular aspects of observed teaching from which they can usefully learn. In particular they can help student teachers to recognize that they do not need to emulate teachers in their totality in order to learn specific and useful skills and strategies from them... teachers can make these aspects of their own teaching especially prominent and visible....What is needed however, is the demonstration in concrete terms of what it means to do, and also the demonstration of some ways in which these things can be achieved. Student teachers frequently need to be offered the beginnings of a repertoire of ways of setting about basic classroom tasks (McIntyre 1994:87-8)

Thus modelling is now regarded as a strategy which is useful in certain circumstances and for certain purposes. It has a particular role to play at the start of a course where it

may represent one step along the way to 'finding oneself' as a teacher and developing a professional persona (Furlong and Maynard 1993:183). Even at an advanced stage in a student teacher's professional development, modelling may still have a role to play. Again, if there is a competence with which a student is experiencing difficulties or a skill which they are keen to develop to a higher level, then a teacher with recognized expertise in this area may model it for the student to study. Thus, few with a professional interest in ITE would countenance a pure apprenticeship model as an adequate form of preparation for beginning teachers; however, a more measured approach does not dismiss apprenticeship out of hand. It recognises that when modelling is used for students and by students in a judicious manner for carefully thought-out purposes, it has a valuable contribution to make. This view is endorsed by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (DES 1991: para. 46).

3.5.2 The Competency-Based Model

Competence models are based on pre-specified behavioural outcomes and skill-related competences which the training and assessment procedures are tailored to meet. The job of the trainer in a competency-based model of training is to devise a programme of activities which allows the trainee to fulfil the assessment criteria which may be detailed in a checklist of performance criteria and a profiling system (Tomlinson, 1995). There are some authors and teacher educators who question whether competency-based training with its reductionist approach is applicable to professions and to higher education (Schon 1983. Schon, 1987. Fish, 1995). Fish (1995) for instance indicated that competency-based teacher education treats teaching as if it were an occupation rather than a profession. She claims education is seen in terms of an industrial transaction where what is important is the efficient and cheap delivery of a product

(National Curriculum). Here what matters most in training for this job is mastering specific and standardised skills and demonstrating that mastery. Concluding Fish writes:

Such an approach, though useful in factory production where there is only one right way of doing things and professional judgement is irrelevant, it is incompatible with professional activity. In teaching it is different. Dividing teaching into collection of skills which can be seen and measured distorts the nature of teaching because there is much more to being a professional teacher than that, nor will there be universal agreement about exactly how many skills are necessary (Fish 1995 :45).

Nevertheless, Circular 9/92 (DfE 1992: para.2.1) specified a list of teaching competences which 'Higher education institutions, schools and students should focus on throughout the whole period of initial training. It needs pointing out that although the way was left open for individual partnerships to incorporate the competences of Circular 9/92 into their own more elaborated programmes of training and assessment, there is no question of ignoring them or of adopting a totally different approach to education and assessment. Thus the competence-based model is the official requirement and all ITE courses must demonstrate that they conform to it to achieve accreditation in England.

Indeed all government documents (e.g. CATE 1992; DIE 1992; Ofsted 1993, DfE 4/98 and 2002 Standards for the Award of Qualified Teacher Status), consistently refer to the preparation of beginning teachers as ITT not ITE. It is surprising that (DfE 4/98 and 2002 Standards) have come to replace the more general "competences" set out in DfE 9/92, 14/93 and DfE 1/96 but the preparation of beginning teachers is still referred to as ITT and not as ITE probably due to official desire to deprofessionalise teaching (Fish, 1995). The stress on mastering of specific and standardised skills as envisaged with the emphasis on ITT rather than ITE, and the reductionist approach to a complex activity like teaching denies it professional judgement and value. The government policy thus, offers a clear steer towards treating the mentor as a trainer. In summary, the competence model in which the mentor performs the role of a trainer is central to government

thinking and provides the basis for the regulations with which all ITE courses must comply in England

3.5.3 The Reflective Practitioner Model

Ideas about reflective practice have been extremely influential both in characterising the nature of teaching and in suggesting the kind of initial education which a teacher requires. A particularly influential figure in this field is Schon, who reached his conclusions about professionalism as a result of studying certain occupational groups, though not teachers. His studies of the working practices of these groups challenged the traditional notion of the professional person as an infallible person who had been trained up to qualified status and, having achieved that level of expertise, simply practices the skills and exercises the specialist knowledge that were acquired during training. Schon (1983) found that two types of reflection played a much more central role in the thinking and practices of the occupational groups than could be explained by the infallible expert model of professionalism. He identified reflection-on-action (i.e. after the event) and reflection-in-action (i.e. during the event) as essential characteristics of 'professional artistry' which was distinguished by its reference to a store of relevant previous experiences and detailed contextual knowledge rather than relying simply on the knowledge and skills acquired during initial training. Explaining Reflection-in action Schon writes:

When we go about the spontaneous, intuitive performance of the actions of everyday life, we show ourselves to be knowledgeable in a special way. Often we cannot say what it is that we know. When we try to describe it we find ourselves at a loss, or we produce descriptions that are obviously inappropriate. Our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of actions and in our feel for the stuff with which we are dealing. It seems right to say that our knowing is in our action (Schon 1983, p.49).

Explaining further regarding reflection-in-action, Schon says:

when we have learned how to do something, we can execute smooth sequences of activity, recognition, decision, and adjustment without having, as we say to think about it (Schon 1987, :26).

Elliot (1991) distinguishes between the infallible expert and the reflective practitioner models of professionalism as follows: Infallible experts:

(i) Expect clients to defer to their superior knowledge and wisdom in identifying, clarifying and resolving their problems.

(ii) Engage in one-way communication. They tell and prescribe while the client listens and obeys. The client is allowed to ask questions from a position of deference but not to question from a presumption of knowledge. There is little reciprocity in communication because the 'expert' is not concerned with developing a holistic view of the client's situation.

(iii) Understand and handle the situations they confront exclusively in terms of the categories of specialist knowledge they have mastered.

iv Apply specialist knowledge intuitively rather than reflectively on the basis of the commonsense wisdom enshrined in the occupational culture (Elliot 1991: 311-12).

Elliot (1991) contrasts the infallible model with 'the new professional images' which are similar in many respects to Schon's (1983) characterization of the "reflective practitioner" and states they involve:

(i) Collaboration with clients (individuals, groups, communities) in identifying, clarifying and resolving their problems.

(ii) The importance of communication and empathy with clients as a means of understanding situations from their point of view.

(iii) A new emphasis on the holistic understanding of situations as the basis of professional practice, rather than on understanding them exclusively in terms of a particular set of specialist categories.

iv Self-reflection as a means of overcoming stereotypical judgements and responses.

Elliot (1991) goes on to describe the reflective practitioner thus:

Rather than operating as an infallible source of relevant knowledge, the role of the reflective practitioner is to participate in a process of collaborative problem solving through which the relevance and usefulness of his/her specialist knowledge can be determined and new knowledge acquired. From the perspective of the 'reflective practitioner' model professional competence consists of the ability to act intelligently in situations which are sufficiently novel and unique, to require what constitute an appropriate response to be learned in situ. Competence cannot be defined simply in terms of an ability to apply pre-ordained categories of specialist knowledge to produce correct behavioural responses. Within this model of professionalism, stereotypical applications of knowledge are to be avoided and this implies that any attempt to pre-specify correct behavioural responses or 'performance indicators' is a constraint on intelligent practice... Learning to be a reflective practitioner is learning to reflect about one's experience of complex human situations holistically... (Elliot 1991:312-14).

Fish (1995) also states that the argument for taking a reflective practitioner approach to ITE are derived from the PA view of teaching which assumes that the world of professional practice is fast changing and professionals need to exercise and to continue to refine and develop not only simple skills, but their own dispositions, professional character, abilities, capabilities and understandings. Many aspects of teaching a lesson cannot be specified. Professionals need to be able to think on their feet, to improvise, to respond to the uncharted and unpredictable. Further, teaching is a moral and social practice requiring the ability to exercise moral decision-making and professional judgement. What is needed is an approach to teaching and to learning to teach which enables teachers 'to work at their practice, modify it and keep it under critical control' (Eraut 1989, :175). Touching on the characteristics of the reflective practitioner

model Fish says it seems to have offered a common enough set of characteristics for those in ITE to see its character as including:

- Taking practice and personal and formal theory seriously and being aware of their complexities
- Taking a holistic view of professional practice
- Taking a problem-solving stance to practice
- Recognising the need for the practitioner to investigate practice personally and valuing small-scale humanistic enquiry
- Seeking the meaning in the experience by means of reflecting on it
- Seeking to identify beneath practice the values, assumptions, beliefs and personal theories(or ‘theories of action’)
- Working in collaboration with colleagues, the better to reflect, deliberate and understand practice
- Doing all of this in order to develop/change/refine/challenge practice (Fish 1995 :51).

Fish concluded that reflection is one means of investigating practice and of theorising about it. It involves systematic critical and creative thinking about action with the intention of understanding its roots and processes and to be in a position to refine, improve or change future actions.

Maynard and Furlong (1993) indicated that supporting trainees in the Reflective Practitioner Model necessarily demands a shift in the role of the mentor. They claim in the early stages of school experience, when trainees are still ‘learning to see’ mentors need to act as collaborative teachers working alongside trainees, acting as interpreters and models. Once trainees have moved beyond that initial stage and started to take

increased responsibility for the teaching process itself, mentors need to extend their role. While continuing some periods of collaborative teaching, they also need to develop a more systematic approach to training by acting as instructors and by establishing routines of observation and feedback on agreed competences. Finally, once trainees have achieved basic competence, the role of the mentor needs to develop further for while other aspects of the role may continue, mentors in the final stage of development need to establish themselves as co-enquirers with the aim of promoting critical reflection on teaching and learning by the trainee. They concluded that:

Effective mentoring therefore is a difficult and demanding task and teachers performing the role need time and in-service support appropriate to the increased responsibilities being placed on them....The work of mentors, however effectively undertaken, can by definition, be only one aspect of professional preparation. Trainee teachers continue to need preparation in other dimensions of professionalism. They need a broad understanding of different styles of practice; and an appreciation of the moral, political and theoretical issues underlying educational practice. All of these other dimensions of professional knowledge are still best provided by those in higher education. Effective mentoring is a way of complementing and extending forms of training made available through higher education institutions. It is not intended to be, nor can it be, a substitute for them (Maynard and Furlong, 1995:22).

If one accepts these theories, learning to teach becomes a much tentative, exploratory, context-specific, value-laden activity shaped in and through experience than pure apprenticeship or competence training models would allow. Other models of mentoring are therefore, necessary to accommodate this view of professionalism.

Elliot and Calderhead (1994) have highlighted the importance of mentoring that strikes a careful balance between supporting student teachers and challenging them to promote professional growth. The final model which this chapter discusses addresses the suggestion of Elliot and Calderhead. It needs emphasising at this point that apart from reviewing the literature on the three distinct models of mentoring one of the

particularised models: (Maynard and Furlong, 1993) is reviewed since it is a composite of four generic models: model, coach, critical friend and co-enquirer. Maynard and Furlong (1993) model is empirically based. It grew not from a survey of the literature but from field studies of student teachers enrolled on ITE courses. The model is grounded in the conviction that:

Like any form of teaching, mentoring...must be built on a clear understanding of the learning processes it is intended to support...mentoring strategies cannot be developed in a vacuum...they must be built on an informed understanding of how students develop (Maynard and Furlong, 1993: 195).

Maynard and Furlong's model is a stage model which depicts learning to teach as a series of overlapping phases in which mentoring strategies need to be carefully matched to students' developmental needs. We are warned that its presentation as a simple stage model should not be taken at face value, since the development of individual students is likely to be idiosyncratic. Therefore, the stages need to be interpreted 'flexibly and with sensitivity'.

3.5.4 Maynard and Furlong's Stage Model

Maynard and Furlong (1993) model has the following stages:

Beginning teaching

- Focus of student learning: rules, rituals and routines; establishing authority
- Mentoring role: model
- Key mentoring strategies: student observation and collaborative teaching focused on rules and routines.

Supervised teaching

- Focus of student learning: teaching competences
- Mentoring role: coach

- Key mentoring strategies: Observation by the student; systematic observation and feedback on student's 'performance'.

From teaching to learning

- Focus of student learning: understanding pupil learning; developing effective teaching
- Mentoring role: critical friend
- Key mentoring strategies: student observation; re-examining of lesson planning.

Autonomous teaching

- Focus of student learning: investigating the grounds for practice
- Mentoring role: co-enquirer
- Key mentoring strategies: partnership teaching; partnership supervision.

(Maynard and Furlong, 1993:181)

3.5.5 The Mentor as a Reflective Coach

The coach helps the student teacher to use reflection as a tool for self-development. Following Schon's categorisation of professional thinking into reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, students are introduced to reflection-on-action as a principal means of learning on the job. Tomlinson (1995) argues that students should be inducted into this kind of reflective practice from the outset by working alongside reflective practitioners who can model the skills for them. In this way, students become habituated to these ways of thinking and working, thus, providing a sound basis for ongoing professional development once the course ends. Coaching should be viewed as an active process which demands the mentors making planned and systematic interventions into the students' reflections in order to make them more meaningful and analytical. Though students will of course, think about their teaching experiences with or without

encouragement to do so, but without the support and guidance of more experienced teachers, too much of the learning that may be gleaned from classroom experiences is left to chance. A skilful mentor can extend novices' thinking about teaching by challenging them into fruitful areas of enquiry. The mentor can help them to 'sift significant from the inconsequential and to focus on areas which merit further exploration such as values and assumptions' which need to be scrutinised (Maynard and Furlong 1993). Maynard and Furlong added that the mentor can probe ideas in order to deepen insight. Once a student has started to teach, the mentor's systematic interventions at the planning, reflection/evaluation and re-planning stages are the basic constituents of reflective coaching which assists the student's reflection-on-action. Gradually students can also be encouraged to engage in reflection-in action by a collaborating teacher or coach who works alongside the student in the classroom. This style of coaching is akin to the traditional sporting approach, by which sports people are helped to think about and refine their performances during execution by an actively involved coach who offers comments, instructions and tips.

3.5.6 The Mentor as a Critical Friend

During the initial stages of learning to teach, beginning teachers tend to be self-centred, focusing inward on their own performance. To become more effective practitioners, they will soon need to make a fundamental shift in emphasis from centring on themselves as teachers to focusing on pupils as learners, and from seeing a lesson as a teaching opportunity for themselves to its learning potential for their pupils and allowing that to determine how they teach. When helping students to make this difficult transition from a performance-oriented student to a facilitator of learning, Maynard and

Furlong (1993) present the mentor as 'critical friend' with a task that is 'doubly challenging'. They state:

...they need to be encouraged to look critically at the teaching procedures they have established and evaluate their effectiveness. However, as they are often still extremely insecure about their teaching abilities, they also need considerable support if they are going to achieve this...The mentor needs to be able to challenge the student to re-examine their teaching, while at the same time providing encouragement and support. Two specific mentoring strategies are particularly pertinent at this stage of a student's development. First, students need to return to classroom observation but now focusing their attention very specifically on how pupils learn...A second strategy is to focus again on lesson planning. This might be achieved by asking the student to plan a lesson or sequence of lessons. The mentor can then focus discussion of the lesson plans on the content of the planned lesson rather than on the performance of the student (Maynard and Furlong, 1993:190)

3.5.7 The Mentor as Co-Enquirer

Whereas the apprenticeship and the competence training models are grounded in relationships of subordination, the co-enquiry, partnership supervision and partnership teaching of Maynard and Furlong (1993) suggests the more equal relationship between mentor and mentee. Whereas in the competence training model the training agenda is specified in advance, in co-enquiry, priorities are negotiated with the learner playing a key role in identifying the focus for attention. Observation and collaborative teaching are key techniques in this model, as in others, but they are undertaken for distinctive purposes. A pioneering piece of work in this area was that of Ruddock and Sigsworth (1985), who describe the implementation of the practice of partnership supervision. They claim in partnership supervision, the mentor observes the student's practice in the areas selected for consideration by the student and provides an evidence-based record of the practice for the two to consider. Again, the student should take the lead in analysing and evaluating the performance using the mentor's record of the event as the basis for discussion. As the term co-enquiry suggests, the mentor is not expected to tell the student what she or he in the role of an expert, thinks of the performance, to carry out

diagnostic assessment nor to prescribe future action for this should be a process of collaborative enquiry in which both might be expected to make discoveries. The mentor participates as an equal in the process of enquiry in the knowledge that she or he may also gain from an exercise which is close to action research. Partnership teaching is similar to partnership supervision in that the two work as more or less equal members of a team in the planning and development of resources, lesson delivery and evaluation. This strategy, may again, provide excellent opportunities for the professional development of both parties. For instance, their earlier discussions may have thrown up research questions or untried approaches which the two may experiment with in partnership teaching. Again, knowing that two teachers will be present in the lesson may provide the spur and the confidence to try things which either might be reluctant to attempt alone. Given what has been said so far about co-enquiry, it is clear that it is a fairly advanced form of mentoring, which is brought into play once a student has attained core competences. However, even though in its pure form it would be inappropriate at the beginning of a course to give a learner such a directing role in managing their own progress, nevertheless there is no reason why features of this approach might not be used sparingly and judiciously at an early stage in a course. For instance in providing feedback on student's early attempts at teaching, an approach which focuses exclusively on telling what is bad or good about their practice, and prescribing future actions without attending carefully to the student's understanding of the situation they have experienced, is unlikely to promote the best kind of meaningful learning (Ausubel 1987). Clearly, working with this model of mentoring, as with others, is more a matter of judging the degree of application which is appropriate in particular circumstances rather than electing a mentoring type per se. Nevertheless, an emphasis on co-enquiry may pay particular dividends in the later stages of a course.

Studies of learning to teach have identified different developmental stages through which students pass, one of which is 'plateauing'. Once students have struggled through the survival stages and have discovered techniques which work for them and enable them to achieve the competence levels necessary, there is a natural temptation to 'play safe' and carry on practising tried and trusted approaches rather than taking the risks involved in striving for further professional development. Co-enquiry is a way of encouraging students to move and not to rest content with basic competence and a limited repertoire of practices. Placing the onus firmly on students helps them to accept ownership and responsibility for their own professional development and is likely to motivate them.

It needs explaining at this point that even though the initial teacher education programme in Ghana is fashioned on the reflective practitioner model: 'trainees are expected to reflect by bringing their experiences to bear on their teaching' (A Guide for mentors and trainees, p.24), literature on the three distinct models (apprenticeship, competency-based, the reflective practitioner), and a particularised model which is a composite of the models have been reviewed on the grounds that 'mentoring' should not conjure up in our minds the notion of a single, multipurpose, catch-all activity since teaching is a complex, multidimensional activity. Again, learning how to teach and the processes which support that are unlikely to be simple or single-faceted. Research into the ways in which student teachers develop and learn (e.g. Corbett and Wright 1994; Maynard and Furlong 1993) highlights the inadequacy of such a conception of mentoring. Good-quality mentoring is a complex, sophisticated activity incorporating different strategies and requiring high level skills. Furthermore, the ways in which a teacher mentors students are likely to be influenced by a range of factors including: the training received (or lack of it); the model explicitly required or implicit in a particular

partnership scheme; personal preference influenced by the mentor's own view of the role of a teacher; personal qualities and interpersonal skills; the nature of the personal relationship which the mentor has formed with the student; values and commitments; the demands of various stages in the course; the capacities and the needs of the individual mentee and the desired learning outcomes associated with a particular activity. The complex demands required in the preparation of trainees therefore, demand that rather than selecting any model; parts of the various models according to students' needs and school contexts should be selected since this approach is likely to contribute to a view of mentoring that responds to the changing needs of trainees. This approach will assist in preparing trainees at the various developmental stages as they commute from the status of learners to that of teachers. Part of the purpose for reviewing this portion of the literature is to find out how the training and the model adopted for initial teacher education helped in preparing mentors in supporting trainees and how it also helped trainees' in acquiring the knowledge, skills, experience and the confidence to teach.

3.6 Assessment and Initial Teacher Education

3.6.1 Formative Assessment and Teacher Training

As indicated in Chapter 1, the introduction of Mentoring at the Post-Secondary Teacher Training level in Ghana was intended to achieve two purposes which were: to help trainees have adequate school experience and also to use mentor assessment to give emphasis to the practical and professional areas of teacher training. Mentors are therefore, expected to provide support to trainees by acting as anchor persons by assessing trainees and to use feedback information from assessment to enhance the professional development of trainees. In short mentors are seen in a school-based

teacher education as the gatekeepers to the teaching profession(Fish,1995). The issue of formative assessment for promoting professional learning in a school-based teacher training programme which hinges on mentoring which is the focus of this thesis is very crucial. The review of literature on formative assessment and related issues is, therefore, intended to provide valuable insights into that. Calderhead (1988) has pointed out that:

teacher education courses have sometimes conformed more to a certification process than a genuinely professional learning process. Student teachers have learned to demonstrate a narrow range of contrived competencies in order to be favourably assessed and certificated as a teacher (p.10)

He continues that many constraints continue to pressure teacher education in the area of assessment as many teacher educators consider it inappropriate for teacher education to use the construct of assessment in which the primary focus is on summing students' achievement with little to show on how formative assessment contributes to that. The main contention appears to be that a summative focus which is geared purposely to measure predetermined standards, does not fit well with a philosophy of teacher education based on formative development and reflective practice (Moon & Mayes 1995)

The tension arises partly because of differences in expectation of assessment. Black and Broadfoot (1982) point out that educators primarily require information for internal decision purposes but "third" parties are more interested in information for accountability and selection. This creates tension in the practice of assessment. The key issue as Wiliam and Black (1995) point out, is not whether one can become the basis of the other. Rather, it is the extent to which one function can adversely affect the other in any close association, which is the problem.

Highlighting the tension between summative and formative assessment Sadler (1989) argues that the principles upon which summative assessment operate differ significantly from those of formative assessment and the former has the potential to corrupt the latter. Fairbrother (1995) for instance has illustrated this problem in an experimental teaching situation with pupils in which he tried to attach a formative activity onto a summative test. He reports that this failed because the pupils appeared not to know how to merge the two and also they were more concerned with the outcome of the test. Thus, the interest of high-stakes outcomes of assessment appears to have curtailed an interest in formative evaluative activity of Fairbrother.

To alleviate the tensions between summative and formative assessment in initial teacher training context some writers have advocated that formative activity should rather drive the assessment process and provide for summarising general performance. Many teacher educators believe that a profile approach to assessment can perform this dual task (Witty 1994, Murphy et al., 1993). Hitchcock (1990) on the other hand holds a contrary view to this stand and has advanced argument to suggest that it is much more difficult to combine formative and summative assessment into one unified profile system. This issue will be examined more closely in the section on profiling. In Ghana Continuous Assessment (CA) is used for both formative and summative purposes in schools and in the teacher training colleges and the extent to which mentors and Link Tutors use the formative aspect of assessment to enhance trainees' professional knowledge and development is very important to this thesis.

The following sections will examine closely the tensions between formative and summative assessment in teacher education in Britain and Ghana. The purpose is to highlight some of the tensions in assessment.

3.6.2 Formative and Summative Assessment Tension in ITT in Britain

In Britain, Continuous Assessment (CA) with a formative intent characterises the forms of assessment used in teacher training but this doubles as a progressive measure of professional competence. That is the process cumulates in a summative evaluation of professional competence. In Britain, initial teacher training reforms backs this practice:

Higher education institutions, schools and students should focus on the competences of teaching throughout the whole period of initial training. The progressive development of these competences should be monitored regularly during initial training. Their attainment at a level appropriate to newly qualified teachers should be the objective of every student taking a course in initial training (DFE, 1992).

Thus with the aim of securing national standards of vocational competence, clear and transparent criteria were developed in training institutions in Britain. Institutions were however free to reformulate these criteria to suit their particular assessment policy. Some teacher educators perceive some difference between the whole construct of assessment articulated as levels of professional competence with summative intent and their own construct of teacher education which is formative and developmental (BERA, 1992; Bridges et al., 1995)

The problem it seems is not simply reinterpreting the standards criteria to fit a particular assessment policy or vice-versa. Rather, it is whether the competence criteria represents a framework for the development of the student teachers' professional learning, with which teacher educators are concerned; and also whether the developmental approach to teacher education in which formative assessment plays a crucial role will eventually not

be stifled by undue emphasis on outcomes or achievements (see Mc Namara 1992; Carr 1993). This is an issue of concern within teacher education in Britain and other educators such as Tomlinson (1995) are optimistic with outcomes or achievements. Tomlinson sees several virtues in an outcome approach but that this has to be operationalised within the framework of functional analysis rather than behaviour prescription. He believes that the functional analysis framework can ensure formative and developmental activity, rather than lead to prescribed behaviours that will encourage the practice of ticking of competencies as present or absent.

Another issue of concern is : should assessment in teacher training aim primarily at measuring defined criteria of competencies? Or should it be part of a less restricted professional development process? Some educators argue that both can be used within the context of training (eg Tomlinson 1995). Others however, are more sceptical and advocate more emphasis on the holistic approach (eg. Mc Namara 1992 Fish 1995). The concern is that a measuring process could lead to achievement-focused assessment and eventually encourage summative judgement to the detriment of formative evaluative process. These issues underline the latent tension between formative and summative functions of assessment in Britain.

This formative versus summative tension in assessment in ITT has become acute because of fundamental differences in assessment constructs. In Britain, it appears teacher educators seek more of a formative and developmental perspective of assessment while the official construct seems to be more summative in focus.

The next section will examine the nature of the formative and summative tension of assessment in Ghana.

3.6.3 Formative and Summative Assessment Tension in Post-Secondary Teacher Training in Ghana

As explained earlier, one reason for the introduction of mentoring at Post-secondary teacher training (PSTT) level in Ghana was to give more emphasis to formative evaluative activity to enhance the professional development of trainees. Assessment in schools and colleges in Ghana is structured on Continuous Assessment (CA) which is expected by policy makers to reflect cumulative process of achievement by providing marks for external examination and classification of students (Ghana Ministry of Education, 1987). That is, assessment by mentors and link tutors is still expected to contribute marks for use with the external examination to arrive at the final pass or fail grade at the post-secondary teacher training level as well as perform a formative function. The assessment procedure can therefore, be said to be plagued with the tensions and constraints associated with a unified scheme intended to achieve both formative and summative functions (William & Black 1995). An undue emphasis or focus on marks and grades could inhibit the use of assessment to address learning-related problems (Gipps, 1994a; Sadler, 1989). It can also lead to less attention being given to means of carrying out feedback. Black and Dockrel (1980) from their study about CA reported that feedback often came as a general attainment grade instead of information about strengths and weaknesses. Such an assessment has little to offer towards improving specific learning difficulties. Sadler (1989) also argues that.

Continuous assessment cannot, ...function formatively when it is cumulative, that is, when each attempt or piece of work submitted is scored and the scores added together at the end of the course. This practice tends to produce in students the mindset that if a piece of work does not contribute towards the total, it is not worth doing (p.141).

This could undermine classroom teacher assessment intended to give feedback to students. The effect as Sadler points out is that students may undervalue classroom teacher assessment because they do not attract formal grades or marks as others do.

Moon & Mayes (1995) are of the view that it is important to integrate values into the assessment of student teachers in initial teacher training. They state:

The incorporation of a values dimension, focusing on professional qualities,...ensures a holistic approach to assessment and one that emphasises the unique significance of preparing for entry into a profession (Moon & Mayes 1995, p. 240).

Some important professional values and skills may fail to receive attention from tutors and students if assessment is only done by grading or numerically. It would be important from the professional point of view for students to see that qualitative judgements about some professional qualities and skills make some contribution to the overall evaluation about readiness to begin teaching. It needs pointing out that scoring all assessment performances at the post-secondary teacher training level in Ghana only in terms of marks could lead some students into thinking that high scores mean one possesses the ability to teach effectively, and low scores mean weak teaching skills

The policy guidelines on assessment in Teacher Training Colleges in Ghana which hinges on Continuous Assessment is expected to promote formative learning opportunities and also to provide marks to be used in part for certification. This attempt to combine two functions of assessment: summative and formative, if not well handled might not achieve the desire of promoting the professional development of trainees through feedback from assessment. It can also risk becoming another form of examination system that produces the same undesirable backwash effect on teaching

and learning associated with formal examinations. Black & Broadfoot (1982) warn that teacher assessment can become “ a staccato form of final examination” (p.34) if it leaves no time for remedial action. It is evident from the official guidelines of assessment at the Post-secondary teacher training level in Ghana that though assessing and recording of trainees’ professional learning within formative framework was considered, this laudable objective stands the risk of not being achieved because of the dual function of assessment. Black & Broadfoot (1982) point out that an assessment policy which focuses primary attention on marks or grades can present obstacles for teachers who, want to introduce alternate assessment procedures that are essentially formative.

One of the tasks of this thesis is to explore whether mentors’ and link tutors’ assessment was providing opportunities for learning to enhance the professional development of trainees.

3.6.4 Addressing the Tension Between Formative and Summative Functions of Assessment

Harlen et al (1992) and Black (1993) have proposed two alternatives for relieving the tension between formal formative and summative assessment. Harlen et al., claim the tension can be relieved by separating them so that they operate under different circumstances and time because it is difficult for the two to coexist. The other is focusing entirely on an assessment process which is formative in orientation and drawing information in the course of the process by selection or aggregation for summative purposes (Black 1993). The force of the argument is that it is only in this way that formative assessment can be protected from the overwhelming powers of external ‘high-stakes’ assessment. Black however points to two problems this orientation can pose. One of the reasons is that it can give rise to tensions between the

advisory role and the adjudicatory role of a teacher. The other is that it is difficult for a formative framework of assessment built into the teaching and learning process to give the final outcome picture of a student's achievement that would be fair and reliable. That is, the use of formative assessment to derive summative evaluations of achievement lack the kind of reliability expected from 'objective' methods of assessment. The other alternative of separating the two functions of assessment so that they operate distinctly still leaves unanswered how the summative function can be prevented from swamping formative work (Black 1993).

William and Black (1995) prefer to see assessment as a continuum at the ends of which lies the two functions of assessment, with a particular function invoked as and when it is required. They explain that:

At one extreme (the formative) the problem of creating shared meanings beyond the immediate setting are ignored: assessment is evaluated by the extent to which they provide a basis for successful action. At the other extreme (summative) shared meanings are much more important, and the considerable distortions and undesirable consequences that arise are often justified by appeal to the need to create consistency of interpretation (p.7).

Black and William(1995) also argue that not all evidence generated from summative assessment can serve a formative function. They add that the concerns for shared meanings for teacher assessments, with consequent requirements for teachers to document their work so that moderation can take place may serve to limit the extent to which records of students' achievements can serve formative functions. William and Black are of the view that assessment events or activities can be designed to yield information which could have summative or formative consequences. They, however, argue that the benefits from the continuum philosophy are to be found in the separation

of interpretation of evidence from its elicitation, and the consequent actions from the interpretations.

Rowntree (1987) is of a slightly different view. He claims the distinction between formative and summative assessment should not be seen in the form of the assessment but in the intentions and the interpretations of the assessor (p.22). He is of the view that whatever form an assessment takes, it can benefit the learner by revealing areas for further development. Nitko (1996) also shares a similar view.

However, Black & Dockrell (1980) point to empirical evidence suggesting that learners often make little of certain assessment information. Thus from the point of view of the learner not all assessment information may be useful for promoting learning. Both Rowntree and Nitko focus their interest on whether the information from assessment is useful to the teacher in getting to know the student better, or whether that information helps others feel better informed about the student. By this stand they shift the focus of formative assessment from what the student perceives it can do for him/her to how the teacher can use it to help the student. The mode of assessment advocated by Rowntree and Nitko will not suit a teacher training programme for trainees like the one being evaluated since assessment in teacher education should provide feedback for the trainer and the trainee to help both reflect on their teaching skills and methodology.

Blachard (1992) has argued that the design of formative assessment needs to be centred around the learner, and therefore, self and peer assessment need to be the main thrust of such assessment. Self and peer assessment can be used at ITT to enhance the professional development of trainees as it will enable trainees to reflect on their practice.

From the foregoing discussions it is clear that significant tensions are created when assessment is required to serve both formative and summative functions. However, it

needs pointing out that where the paramount purpose in education or training is to improve performance it would appear that the formative function of assessment should take precedence over summative considerations. One factor which could mitigate against the successful impact of formative assessment on learning is the use to which the information gathered is put. Thus, if it is largely to help the learner, then the opportunity exists for it to be useful for learning improvement. On the other hand, where the information gathered is intended for high-stakes setting, then the extent to which it can also serve a formative function becomes limited. It is also clear from the discussions that it is far from easy to achieve formative assessment when summative considerations are a serious part of the purpose of assessment.

The next section discusses the Behaviourist and the Constructivist perspectives of formative assessment and the implications for promoting student teachers' professional learning.

3.6.5 Behaviourist and Constructivist Perspectives of Formative Assessment and their Implications for Professional Learning

Torrance (1993) has given some suggestions as to how assessment activity can be practised to affect professional learning process. Torrance suggests two theoretical perspectives of formative assessment: the behaviourist and the constructivist perspective, and argues that most modes of formative assessment fall in either of these two categories. The behaviourist perspective he criticises as exceedingly mechanistic and as being composed of short term goals, clear assessment objectives and detailed feedback on what has or has not been achieved and what must be done to improve subsequent performances. Pryor and Torrance (1995) have referred to this approach as Convergent Teacher Assessment where the teacher's emphasis is on finding out if the learner knows a predetermined thing.

Obviously this would be inappropriate for teacher education given the holistic and complex nature of the professional learning outcome (Stones, 1994). Complex outcomes Sadler (1989) points out require judgement to be based on degree of expertise and not on 'correct or incorrect' outcomes. Even if students' exhibited practices or methods that are considered professionally incorrect, context is an issue, which needs consideration in arriving at such judgements. This hinges on the idea that professional action is always sensitive to context (Schon, 1983) and that therefore, judging it needs to take into consideration the interpretation or understanding of context. It is therefore worth engaging in assessment activity which permits students to divulge reasons and motives behind practices or perceptions about teaching because of the value of reflective practice in teaching (Schon, 1983).

The Constructivist perspective, Torrance points out, focuses on creating an environment for assisting the learner to comprehend and engage in new ideas and problems. It is essentially an active collaboration between the teacher and the learner to improve performance (Wood 1991). It is therefore, closer to the conceptualisation of formative assessment as a process for helping learners develop their own learning skills. It reflects the view of formative assessment as a tool for developing metacognitive process of learning (Gipps, 1994). Pryor and Torrance (1995) have referred to this as 'Divergent Teacher Assessment'. This approach addresses two important questions about teacher assessment, which are:

- (i) What form of assessment is needed to properly reflect students' learning?
- (ii) What form of assessment should be used to ensure a beneficial impact on teaching and learning? (Gipps, 1994; p. 27).

Both Gipps(1994), Pryor & Torrance(1995) point out that a model of assessment that reflects Vygotsky's idea of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) might provide answers to these issues. Essentially, Vygotsky's ZPD refers to the gap between the unassisted performance level of the learner and his/her potential level displayed under more capable guidance which could come from either the teacher or peers (Gipps, 1994a). Here, the guidance is provided not in prescriptive terms but as a form of collaborative support. Under this conceptualisation, assessment is seen as being accomplished jointly by the teacher and the student with the needs of the student determining the form and focus of the formative activity (Pryor & Torrance 1995).

This form of assessment, which is accomplished jointly by the teacher and the student, will facilitate professional development in ITT as it will allow mentors and trainees to work in collaborative spirit. It will also provide opportunity for trainees to bring their experience to bear on the training process to facilitate self-assessment and reflection.

Torrance (1993) has referred to some studies in a non-formal educational setting relating to the constructivist perspective of formative assessment, which appears to suggest that it can have positive influence on learning. At this stage there is a lack of hard empirical evidence to suggest the same for initial teacher training. Nevertheless, the requirements of the professional learning process would suggest that the constructivist is the most appropriate for teacher training. Here the need is for the student teacher to engage in a process of reflective development where methods, procedures and processes are constantly under review to respond to the contingent nature of teaching and other related issues (Schon, 1983). A constructivist perspective of formative assessment could therefore allow student teachers to take more responsibility for their own professional learning and by that, promote their ability to improve their teaching knowledge and skills.

Torrance (1993) also warns of the danger of formative assessment becoming fairly mechanistic. He writes:

...essentially summative, taking 'snapshots' of where learners have got to, rather than where they might be going next, with the emphasis on the conduct of more controlled and reliable test situations, and gathering of evidence for third parties (p.340)

This warning from Torrance (1993) is relevant for initial, teacher training particularly in Ghana where assessment for teacher trainees conceived as a formative process, is nevertheless expected to generate marks for external consumption. The crucial question is, is it possible for mentors to do this successfully? There are good reasons as discussed in the previous section to suggest that it may be difficult to achieve in practice. Research information that helps us to understand the nature of the constraints of summative assessment on formative assessment is needed. From such understanding, it may be possible to suggest ways of making the assessment process functionally more formative to provide feedback to mentors and trainees and ultimately to help trainees in developing their professional skills. An important purpose of this thesis is to understand how mentors and link tutors use the assessment of trainees to enhance their professional development and to recommend ways for improving it to maximise the formative function of assessment during school experience to enhance the professional development of trainees.

3.6.6 Improving Learning Using Formative Assessment

One of the reasons why formative assessment is often considered crucial to learning is the belief that it can be used to monitor and also provide guidance for growth in learning development. From the teacher training point of view, it is important to examine more critically what the characteristic features of formative assessment are and

the ways in which it can in practice provide opportunity for improving professional learning.

Formative assessment is conceptualised in the literature under two main functional frames. One is as a mechanism for monitoring the progress of teaching and learning. Here, it is considered as a diagnostic tool, which the teacher uses formally, or informally to gather information about weaknesses in students' learning (Rowntree 1987, Harlen et al., 1992, Nitko, 1996). The other function is a little subtle and of a more complex nature which is as a device for developing 'deep' learning approaches (Fairbrother 1995; Gipps 1994; Nitko, 1996). A deep approach to learning is one in which the learner is encouraged to internalise what is learnt, and thus, producing greater understanding. It is brought about through closer involvement of the learner with the learning situation or assessment tasks (Blanchard 1992). The idea is for assessment to develop more effective and efficient ways of learning. In a school-based teacher training which makes use of mentor and link tutor assessment, formative assessment geared towards developing learning and brings the trainee closer to the learning situation will facilitate reflection. The two functional frames are discussed in detail in the subsequent sections by examining the ways in which they can be useful in the teacher training setting

3.6.7 Monitoring Learning Process Through Formative Assessment

Generally, formative assessment has been conceptualised as involving the use of assessment information to feedback into the teaching /learning process to improve it. This information may be structured for use by the teacher or the student depending on its intended purpose. Thus, it can become a mechanism for informing curriculum

planning (Gipps 1994a), and monitoring learning by providing information for teaching decisions (Harlen et al 1992). Harlen et al., stress that often this occurs quite informally and unnoticed in the classroom, but argue that formative assessment has to be embedded in the structures of educational practices to ensure its effectiveness in improving learning. In effect, the monitoring and improvement to learning have to become purposive rather than incidental and as they put it, done with “rigour and reliability to make it effective”. They also suggest that a formative assessment scheme that would ensure maximum effect on learning must have the following characteristics.

It has to be:

- (i) gathered in a number of relevant contexts;
- (ii) criterion-referenced and related to a description of progression;
- (iii) disaggregated, which in this context means that distinct aspects of performance are reported separately and there is no attempt to combine dissimilar aspects
- (iv) shared by both teacher and pupil;
- (v) a basis for deciding what further learning is required;
- (vi) the basis of an on-going running record of progress.

Although Harlen et al., were writing with reference to using formative assessment to improve pupil learning, much of what they suggest can find application in the teacher training setting with some modifications. What is rather doubtful as far as ensuring an effective impact on learning is concerned, is the suggestion that formative assessment has to be applied in a precise manner. It raises many questions such as, what risk is there for formative assessment to be operated mechanistically if its practice is more structured? And what is lost or gained by this? Professional practice is more contingent and holistic in nature so the setting or context must be taken into consideration.

Blanchard (1992) is dismissive of the idea of rigour and reliability in formative assessment as a means of effecting positive impact on learning, because it suggests an objective model that alienates the student from participating in the assessment process. He argues that an essential feature of formative assessment is that it takes into serious consideration the student's role. As he puts it:

A student's learning depends on his/her coming to recognise and act on the reality of situations within which s/he operates: where no single set of criteria is likely to be absolutely, universally valid; where different criteria serve different interests and ends; where criteria change in the light of experience. Improving one's criteria constitutes learning: without the critical revision of the means by which one judges quality of performance one cannot make use of one's learning (p.117).

For Blanchard therefore, an emphasis on rigorous procedures for reliability in formative assessment can reduce the opportunity for the learner to be actively involved in his/her own learning development. An active involvement of the learner requires flexible criteria to address the changing needs and situations of learning. The student's needs as well as diversity and dynamism to Blanchard, are essential features of formative assessment that has the potential to improve learning. He concludes by suggesting that the possible consequences of this approach to the formative uses of assessment are as follows:

- (i) the student revising his/her own criteria and the grasp of others criteria;
 - (ii) the student choosing alternative criteria by which to assess past or future performance
 - (iii) the student's redirecting his/her efforts;
 - (iv) the student's choosing the next step to take if the performance is to be sustained.
- (P.119).

The nature of teaching and student teachers' professional learning suggests that such consequences of formative assessment are probably the most desirable for teacher training. However, as pointed out earlier, where an appreciable interest in summative evaluation of performance exists, the extent to which this can be achieved may be called into doubt. Blanchard's model may be useful for professional learning if formative activity is not geared towards recording performance for checking up purposes, but for summing up formative learning in for example, profile format (Harlen et al., 1992). The use of profiling to serve a formative function, which is also, crucial in school-based teacher education is discussed in the ensuing section of this chapter.

Applying formative assessment rigorously in teacher training may also have some undesirable consequences on the professional learning process. Professional teacher development as discussed earlier, requires judgements that reflect the complex nature of professional learning setting and context. There can be a danger of assessment becoming mechanistic if such judgements have to operate within a tightly defined framework of formative assessment. Another reason a tightly defined view of formative assessment would not be beneficial to a teacher training setting is the possibility of stifling an active involvement of trainees in their own assessment.

This becomes more important in a school-based programme like the one being evaluated which aims at producing teachers who are capable of monitoring and improving their own practice through critical self-appraisal. In this case students will need considerable involvement in assessing their own progress and in developing an awareness of the importance of reflecting in actual teaching situations. Thus, within the teacher training context trainees professional development can be promoted through formative scheme of assessment, which operates flexibly, but purposely to promote professional learning.

3.6.8 Formative Assessment and Metacognition

Formative assessment is also conceptualised as developing ‘internally’ the capability to learn effectively by a variety of means and to plan one’s own learning strategies. In this instance, feedback from formative assessment becomes a means by which learners learn to manage and control skills and knowledge required in competent practice (Fairbrother 1995, Sadler 1989; Butler & Winne 1995). This is essentially a process of developing metacognitive learning skills. Metacognition is basically developing the ability to manage and control one’s own learning through a process of adaptation and change. Gipps (1994a) claims “ access to metacognitive process...can come from a process of guided or negotiated self-assessment in which the (learner) gains awareness of his/her own learning strategies and efficiency” (Gipps 1994a, p.28). Nitko (1996) also points out that in Metacognition students are empowered to guide their own learning and that by frequently applying standards and criteria to their own work they internalise them. In a professional development training like teacher education, metacognitive learning processes could be considered particularly useful as the learning experience entails the complex interrelation of theory with practice (Calderhead 1988), in which an awareness of when and how to adapt acquired skills is important for good teaching.

Thus, quite apart from formative assessment providing a means for monitoring learning and teaching, some educators argue that, it should be about helping the learner learn how to learn (Fairbrother 1995). Formative assessment in this context provides the student the opportunity through a planned and progressive programme to develop skills of learning how to manage one’s learning for maximum efficiency and effectiveness. In teacher training this could mean the use of feedback to promote learning how to learn to teach from learning experiences encountered during professional training like ITT which hinges on mentoring. In effect this mode of formative assessment offers the

student the opportunity to develop his/her own way of managing the needs of professional learning. It is conceptualisation of assessment, which epitomises the principle of reflective practice with the emphasis on enabling self-directed growth in professional learning and development (Schon, 1983; Calderhead, 1988). It is therefore, a useful tool in ITT as it allows trainees to reflect and bring their experiences to bear on the teaching learning process. One could argue, therefore, that formative assessment in the teacher training setting has to have as its focus the progressive development of student's own critical evaluation of his/her professional learning.

Sadler (1989) has also stressed the central role of the learner in providing feedback for his/her own professional development. Sadler believes that to improve learning the learner has to come to hold a notion of quality similar to that of the teacher to be able to monitor consistently the quality of that learning and also to possess a store of alternatives upon which to draw. Thus, the trainee is expected to develop a repertoire of teaching skills from which he/she can fall on as and when the need arises in the teaching/learning process. This, essentially, distinguishes between internal and external feedback, the former called self-monitoring by Sadler. Sadler (1989) states:

If the learner generates the relevant information, the procedure is part of self-monitoring....If the source of information is external to the learner, it is associated with feedback.....The goal of many instructional systems is to facilitate the transition from feedback to self-monitoring (Sadler 1989, p.122).

Sadler sees information from formative assessment as coming from either the learner or an external source, but argues that, ultimately feedback should become information for self-monitoring of learning. Butler and Winne (1995) advance a similar view in an article on feedback and self-regulated learning. They point out that the simplest and most common type of feedback is outcome feedback, sometimes called knowledge of

results. Outcome feedback carries no additional information about the task other than its state of achievement. They therefore, argue that outcome feedback provides minimal guidance for a learner about how to self-regulate. Outcome feedback will not be useful in the preparation of trainees at ITT as it will inhibit their metacognition and affect the development of a reservoir of teaching skills demanded of teachers. Butler and Winne (1995) stress that to better guide learning in authentic complex task, feedback should provide information about cognitive activities for learning. Thus, the assessment process should provide insights into ways of learning to learn better and as a result students become more efficient in handling problem situations. For this to happen Sadler believes that three things must occur. According to him the student will have to:

- (i) possess a concept of the standard (or goal, or reference level) being aimed for;
- (ii) compare the actual (or current) level of performance with the standard;
- (iii) engage in appropriate action which leads to some closure of the gap.

(Sadler, 1989; p.121)

This perspective presents formative assessment not only as a tool in the teacher's hands for diagnosing problems of learning, but also as a means by which students develop their own means of managing and controlling their own learning which is very much in tune with initial teacher training that prepares trainees to reflect over their practice like mentoring.

Formative assessment therefore, has an important role to play in the professional training and development of teachers. Its role should go beyond providing information on teaching and learning and development from external source like mentors and link tutors. It should transcend broader context of benefiting the trainee to promote reflective practice characteristic of professional action. The reflective inquiry view of

professional action and its implications for formative assessment in teacher training has been discussed by many writers (see, Schon, 1983; Korthagen, 1988).

Korthagen (1988) emphasising reflective inquiry and the role of formative assessment in teacher training states:

..the student teacher learns with the help of the supervising teacher educator to make use of internal feedback based on his/her own experience (Kothagen 1988, p.37).

Appreciating the complexity of teaching, Korthagen again states that because it is impossible to prepare prospective teachers for the various professional situations they may be confronted with in their careers, it is important to train them to reflect on their experiences and also to be conscious of their own professional development. The reflective Practitioner model as explained by Schon (1983), "...endeavours to develop in (the prospective teacher) the ability to discover new methods...to deal with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict" (p.50); which is also in line with preparing trainees to respond to professional and novel situations they may encounter in their careers.

To foster this perspective of professional development in teacher training, formative assessment should aim at developing in the trainee reflections on understandings implicit in professional action or professional learning situations which will allow the trainee to criticise and restructure his/her style of teaching. Within teacher education therefore, it would appear inadequate to conceptualise formative assessment as a mechanism for the tutor to use in diagnosing student learning for the purpose of remedial action. It should be used in helping to develop in the student teacher the ability to manage growth in professional development by helping trainees to monitor their professional learning and development.

As indicated earlier in this thesis, some writers as a convenient way of combining formative and summative assessment to function under a unified assessment have advocated profiling the result of assessment. The next section discusses profiling in detail and its use in initial teacher training.

3.7 Profiling

3.7.1 Profiling in Initial Teacher Training

Mentors as part of their role are expected to write profiles of trainees in school-based teacher training programmes. This section therefore, focuses on the use of profiling in initial teacher training.

Bray (1986) explains that a student profile is,

...essentially a discussion document designed as a systematic, detailed, comprehensive and purposeful statement intended to focus on, and to assist in the individual's progress and development. As such, the individual often contributes to it and has access to it; he/she may share in the assessment process, and may be involved in the decision arising out of the assessment (p. 141-142)

Fairbairn (1988), also points out that profiling is,

...a method of presenting information on a student's achievements, abilities, skills, experiences and qualities from a range of assessments, and often from a range of assessors including the students themselves. The assessment information can be provided in a variety of ways, e.g. in the form of grades, marks, percentages, comments and performance descriptors or criteria (p. 35).

The above assertions clearly show that profiling is considered to have a wide range of applications covering both formative and summative functions of assessment. "It includes the continuous formative learning process, as well as the summative, or summary, document of record" (Hitchcock 1990, p. 2). In particular, "they provide recording and reporting frameworks for diagnostic assessment" (Rowe & Hill, 1996 p.

316). An important aspect of profiling is also the access it can provide for the student to be actively involved in the assessment process. Profiling is also seen as providing the opportunity to compose the learner's progress and achievements in systematic and comprehensive detail (Bray 1986).

In Britain, unlike Ghana, profiling has found considerable application in teacher training. Several individual schemes have been developed and used, each reflecting a particular philosophy of professional training. Profile development and use in training institutions in Britain have been under the national framework of competency-based teacher education (DFE, 1993), but individual institutions have been allowed the freedom to interpret competency criteria to fit particular philosophies of training. The competency-based framework set out by the DFE Circular 9/92 directs that 'the means of assessing students' competencies should be fully documented and understood by students, teachers and tutors', and that 'students will participate in their own assessment with tutors and teachers' and that institutions should report 'how students are profiled for prospective employers' (quoted in Murphy et al, 1993, p. 142),).

The competency-based framework for student teacher assessment has attracted a lot of debate from educational researchers in Britain (see, for example BERA 1992). Some of the issues debated have already been discussed earlier in this chapter and thus, need not be rehearsed. However, one aspect of the Circular's directive that appears to have received the support of many teacher educators is the aspect on profiling. This is hardly surprising since it offers the opportunity for training to foster a formative and developmental perspective of professional development- a perspective shared by many teacher educators and teachers (see Bridges et al, 1995). Following Circular 9/92 many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) who are involved in teacher training have developed a scheme of profiling which allows for greater participation by students in

their assessment and, in some cases gives them opportunity for developing a professional development portfolio (for example, the Open University national assessment scheme-Moon & Mayes, 1995). Calderhead and James (1992) describe a student-centred log approach developed at the University of Bath School of Education, which sought to offer students greater opportunity and responsibility in reflecting on their professional development. The aim was to foster reflective development and the log approach as seen to offer students greater responsibility in charting their own progress. The model was also seen primarily as formative. The Department of Education, University of Cambridge on the other hand, developed a profiling scheme based on a competency check-list (Beardon and Reiss 1991), that reflects what some educators consider a mechanistic approach to competency development (Murphy et al, 1993). There is an aversion among many educational researchers to check listing as a means of reporting the student teachers' development and achievement because they see it as contrary to reflective practice philosophy. But perhaps the reason why it is at times used is because of the ease with which it makes the recording of achievements. The disadvantage though, is that it can be restrictive and fail to provide a more holistic view of training experiences and achievements (Whitty, 1994). Whitty (1994) again reports of a profile scheme for teacher training developed in Northern Ireland. The main characteristic of this scheme was the development of teacher competencies under two main domains: professional characteristics and professional competencies. This particular division was based on the notion that "professional characteristics were...the underlying qualities of the teacher which enabled him or to pull the individual competencies together and apply them in the professional context"(Whitty, 1994, p.37). The developers of the scheme felt that, in order to teach satisfactorily, certain craft skills had to be learnt but at the same time it was important to recognise the role of generic

professional competence, which were in the main non-specific. The Northern Ireland example reflects an eclectic stance of the two extreme positions of competency development illustrated in the Bath and Cambridge model. Some professional teacher educators are of the view that the format of profiling that can be most helpful for teacher development is one based on an empowering philosophy: one that focuses on the students' "self-image as they develop into competent teachers" (Murphy et al, 1993, p.143). Murphy et al, point out that this approach offers several advantages to the student teacher's professional development and enumerates them as helping to:

- (i) make explicit the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to become an effective teacher
- (ii) articulate their own decision about appropriate teaching strategies with the support of the above;
- (iii) see learning to teach as a developmental process and learning to teach better as the long term concern;
- (iv) focus their reflections and evaluations about their own practice-what they have achieved and what they are yet to grasp;
- (v) set realistic future goals and to be involved in the process of assessing to what degree they achieve them
- (vi) gain assessment experience of a profile assessment system similar to that which they may encounter in schools (Murphy et al., 1993, p. 143).

The writers also stress the need for profiling and reflective process to be a part of the way in which teacher trainers and students develop their work for assessment. This, according to them, avoids the situation where profiling becomes "...a free floating strand in ITT" (p. 144). Such a profile from the point of view of Murphy et al., should also be student-led. They do not however, provide any specific example of how in

practice it can work together with teaching and learning and how the formative process can be summed up for summative purposes. However, the Open University model of profiling described by Moon and Mayes (1995) offers an insight into how such an approach to profile development might work in practice.

As Moon and Mayes point out, the Open University model is an attempt to introduce a value dimension to the assessment of teacher competencies. The values dimension is seen in terms of professional qualities and is assessed in the context of day-to-day teaching task to a matrix representation of achievements. However, the aspect of the model, which is of importance to this thesis, is the way in which it illustrates how formative development is conducted and recorded for summative purposes.

Moon and Mayes (1995) state:

As students demonstrate increasing competence within the defined areas of competency they ...simultaneously develop a foundation of evidence for their capability in relation to professional qualities. Second the model is seen primarily as formative during the student's progression through the course. Finally, summative judgements are made at the point when all the necessary evidence is accumulated. This stresses the importance of the interrelation of the various competencies and professional qualities and disavows an attempt to 'tick off competencies in a discrete and isolated way.... The model therefore, allows for critical reflection, including some negotiation of assessment targets during the course whilst specifying the judgements made by assessors when the final judgements are made. Students are primarily responsible for developing a professional development portfolio within which they accumulate the variety of evidence to support their progression through the course (Moon & Mayes 1995: 237).

According to Moon & Mayes, these process results in an assessment portfolio, which includes school reports, assignments, log of school experiences and student materials selected with mentor support. This portfolio is then submitted to the assessment Board who base their final assessment on the accumulated evidence before them. This Open University model of assessment and profiling illustrates an attempt to ensure that the

formative and summative dimensions of assessment operate under the umbrella of reflective development philosophy.

The idea of profiling in ITT as discussed above is very much in line with the school-based ITT in Ghana which is the focus of this thesis. When the programme was introduced in Ghana, a profile covering student's abilities, efforts and achievements was produced. Such a profile is meant to represent a sample of student's learning over time and thereby provide a more reliable estimate of achievement (Guidelines for Mentors GES, 2000). This idea of profiling has also brought to an end the prescriptive and deterministic nature of assessment at ITT in Ghana.

A survey of the literature on profiling also suggests that it is conceptualised in terms of two dimensions of assessment: the process and the product or the formative and the summative parts respectively. According to Mundy (1989) the process and formative parts refers "...to the on going profiling process involving the self-awareness, reflection, review and dialogue which aid the student's personal, educational or career development" (p. 78). Profiling of this sort in some tangible form with subsequent summative judgements about achievements represents the summative or product part. It is a view which accentuates the difference between a profile as an administrative record often for reporting purposes and as a working document intended to help student progress and develop (Bray 1986). It is the working document aspect, which is considered to promote the formative function of assessment. In this regard, it is seen to be more than a record of achievement or the accumulation of evidence to support progress. It serves as a framework for monitoring student's educational progress against some reference standard or criteria (Rowe & Hill, 1996)

Fairbairn (1988) notes that it is much easier for teachers to understand and emphasise the summative end of profiling than the formative process in their practices because of the transient nature of formative process. He stated that:

It is not surprising that teachers should tackle the development of profiling from the reporting angle. First, the summative, end-product of the assessment and profiling process is the only tangible part, which is readily communicable to noviciates. A teacher looking to existing schemes for profiling ideas will inevitably come across products rather than processes... What is more difficult to ascertain are the processes of assessment and discussion which precede recording (Fairbairn 1988, p. 56).

Thus, although profiling schemes may be considered to provide ideal opportunity for the formative function of assessment, the documents themselves give little insight into how that function is operationalised.

Bray (1986) points out that within education there are differences in the priorities, purposes and philosophies behind profile development. He stated further that these differences reflect the formative or /and summative thrust of the intended assessment scheme. Thus, in contrast to Fairbairn, Bray sees ways in which the formative function of assessment can be made more tangible and accessible to the teacher who operates it. In other words, profiles can be designed either with a primary intent on the summative or formative function of assessment. He outlines them as follows:

- (i) Profiling for formative assessment, assessment in support of learning to enable students to understand, and build upon, learning experiences-and reflective skills, attitudes, feelings and sensibilities...that are not easy to assess by conventional means.
- (ii) Profiling for formative assessment but this time for –remedying weaknesses, improving performances and optimising strength;

- (iii) Profiling as a means of developing a discussion document, offering more relevant and reliable data on abilities, skills, attainments and attitudes, as a basis for decision taken by and with the student on curricular, vocational and personal development;
- (iv) Profiling as a statement of attainments, including but going beyond examination results, for the use of outside agencies, particularly employers, after the student has left school (Bray, 1986 p.142,).

This categorisation of profiling indicates that the role of assessment in relation to student learning or achievements determines its principal function. Nevertheless, the important issue is whether, in a single profile scheme, all four purposes can be represented but to varying degrees. This raises the issue of using an assessment system for both summative and formative purposes and the tensions that arise from doing so. Another important question is what is lost or gained by a focus of one over the other? While Noss et al, (1989) do not posit a firm separation between the formative and summative roles of profiles, they argue:

The problem is that schemes which purport to simultaneously undertake both grading (summative) and diagnostic (formative) assessment are fundamentally unviable. The danger exists that schemes which start out solely with the intention of providing private or diagnostic tools become used as part of public [graded] assessment-and thus their original intention is destroyed (p.115).

Commenting on whether assessment can be used to serve both summative and formative functions at the same time Hitchcock (1990) also argues that the underlying philosophies of the two appear to be difficult to reconcile. He stated that:

On the one hand, formative profiling is concerned with improving relationships between students and teachers, and is aimed at increasing self-

esteem and self-confidence; it is geared to improving attainment and enhancing self-development. On the other hand, summative profiles are more concerned with reporting and passing judgement upon the student (Hitchcock 1990, p.93).

Others, such as Brown (1989) are more optimistic and assert that “the two can and need to be linked” (p.93). Thus, whether profiles can be used to serve effectively both formative and summative functions is still a contentious issue.

Another positive attribute of profiling reported in the literature is the flexibility it offers for reporting the outcome of assessment. Rowntree (1987) for instance cites numerous examples of how profile reporting can be used. One particular interest to this thesis is the narrative analysis of performance. The others focus on lettered or numerical transcripts of achievement and are considered by Rowntree to produce little effect on the learning process. This is because they are not directed at learning-related problems or difficulties. Rowntree argues that the narrative analysis of performance as a reporting strategy allows for a more humane relationship between the assessor and the assessed, and creates an opportunity for debating the criteria of assessment. This is a method of reporting which fits into an increasingly popular view of assessment in initial teacher training like mentoring ‘where the student teacher’s input in the assessment is valued and often credited’ (Haney et al, 1987).

Profiling can therefore, give more meaning to the assessment of teacher trainees as regard to their progress towards their targets. It is hoped that this study will provide some information on the strengths and difficulties about the use of profiling at ITT in Ghana.

3.7.2 Problems Associated With the Use of Profiling

Fairbairn (1988) in reviewing some school-based teacher training and the use of profiling in Britain, indicated that teachers faced some challenges in the use of profiling in assisting students. One major problem identified by Fairbairn is the problem of time for developing and using profiles. He stated that teachers had difficulty in using observation methods with large groups. He stated further that: the assessment, recording, discussion and reporting which make up the profiling process all take time.

This brings to focus the effectiveness of formative feedback which is an important function of profiling process. Crooks (1988) points out that for feedback to be effective it should take place not long after a task is completed as such an approach has the potential of promoting student learning. Profiling according to Bray (1986) provides students the opportunity to contribute to their own assessment through self-assessment. This is perhaps a strong point for the use of profiling in assessing students as it has the potential of producing positive effects on learning (Fairbairn 1988, Winne, 1995).

Fairbairn however, is of the view that the benefits of self-assessment will only be realised only when certain conditions are ensured. He outlined them as:

- (i) When the purposes of self-assessment are made clear to the students as this will help them to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to also help them decide what kind of help they need to assist them in planning their work and to decide learning targets.
- (ii) When the language and criteria used in student self-assessment are understood by students. When students have a feeling that self-assessment is more than just a dialogue with themselves by teachers commenting constructively and

effectively on the information. But the major problem facing teachers is when and how to act upon information gathered through profiling.

Rowntree (1987) has indicated that profiling can have repercussions on the curriculum especially where different courses may require different emphasis on the design and operation of profiling. He indicated that course structure, content, teaching and learning methods will have to undergo significant changes to accommodate the use of profiling. He also suggested that the introduction of profiling might create both opportunities and problems for teachers. Some of the problems he highlighted are “the need to make plain both to themselves and others the criteria by which they assess” (Rowntree 1987, p.237). He concluded that those who have never given serious thought to their assessment may find difficulty in explaining their criteria, while others may know very well their assessment construct but may be of the view that revealing them to students might undermine their ‘expert’ status.

The introduction and use of profiling as an assessment process will definitely call for changes in many areas of educational practice and will also need proper conceptualisation by teachers and structural support. Fairbairn (1988) commenting on the effective use of profiling in Britain in promoting pupil learning outlined eight changes four of which are general and applicable to other levels of education including teacher education or ITT which are summarised below:

- i) The provision of INSET for teachers for practical classroom-based assessment recording and reporting and the use of information from formative assessment; and for the provision of guidance and support for teachers in key co-ordinating and leadership roles to help them manage information from profiling.

- ii) The creation of non-contact time for teachers for the purpose of review, material development and reflection and planning with colleagues.
- iii) Flexible teaching methods to facilitate individual and small group work, as well as whole class teaching. This will need to be an integral and necessary part of any substantial change towards profiling.
- iv) Changes in time tabling to facilitate effective formative assessment and teacher/student discussion. Thus, blocking the time table at least in some subjects can provide teachers with more flexible time to integrate teaching, observation, assessment and discussion.

Part of the intended purpose of this thesis is to find out how mentors assess trainees and the way they use information from profiling to help trainees to enhance their professional development.

It is evident from the foregoing literature on formative assessment and profiling that they both have inherent problems using them in assessing teacher trainees. A solution perhaps might be to moderate mentor assessment of trainees or assessment results. The next section discusses moderation of assessment results.

3.8 Moderation of Teacher Assessment

As indicated earlier in the previous sections of this chapter, mentor assessment of trainees is used as part of the judgements in awarding trainees final certificate but there is problem in variation of the assessment results. This section reviews the literature about moderation of teacher assessment to relate it to mentor assessment of trainees as a way of achieving some degree of uniformity to enhance the validity and reliability of mentor assessment. The first section takes a preliminary look at two main approaches to moderation: group/consensus and statistical moderation and at their main advantages and disadvantages. The second section provides a summary review of research into

some of the practical difficulties of group moderation and also some key issues for standardising teacher training assessment for quality assurance and control purposes.

Shaw & Radnor (1995) explain that moderation of teacher assessment is essentially an attempt to review teachers' judgements of the value of students work, in terms of its quality and reliability of results. This is necessitated by the knowledge that teachers' judgements of students work are open to all kinds of prejudices, influences and biased interpretations (Murphy, 1987; Gardner, 1994; Black, 1993). Gardner (1994) for example, points out that teachers have been influenced in their judgement of students' ability by factors unrelated to performance as physical attractiveness 'halo' effect etc. Harlen (1994) has also identified other sources of error in teacher assessment such as differences in interpretation of performance criteria or marking schemes and the intrusion of irrelevant contextual information in making judgements. These issues about teacher assessment as raised by Gardner and Harlen also relate to mentor assessment of teacher trainees. For fairness and credibility, especially when teacher assessment forms part of a high-stakes assessment system like the mentorship scheme which is the focus of this study, it is considered necessary to moderate the process and outcome.

According to Shaw & Radnor (1992) the job of moderation is essentially:

to monitor the quality of assessment and ensure that it is fair, to see that the procedures have been adhered to, and check on interpretations -that is, how criteria have been applied to cases; it should take account of context in which the work is done by the students, adjust and correct invalid or erroneous assessments, and maintain consistency across samples of work and institutions (p.230).

This is a process that can be laborious, time-consuming and costly. The relatively cheaper and easier option is statistical moderation. This basically attempts to transform

through statistical techniques internally assessed marks so that they closely match marks from external examinations. Increasingly, this system of moderation has come under criticism for lack of context- added dimension and will not suit a professional setting like assessing teacher trainees in a school environment. Murphy (1991) for instance argues that the assumptions which underpin its operation are hardly justifiable and in fact are questionable. He points out that:

internal assessment is essentially designed to test the same skills and abilities as are assessed by the external examination, and that external examination provides a valid and reliable measure of those skills and abilities, and correlations between internally and externally assessed marks are consistent within each group of candidates (p. 3).

If teacher assessment is meant to supplement and not to complement external examinations as in the mentorship scheme then adjusting students (trainees') marks using results of an external examination becomes even more disputable.

Murphy (1982) again has suggested that from a social perspective, statistical moderation techniques may be hard to explain to the public and teachers and students may find it difficult to understand. Murphy (1991) does however, see a use for statistical moderation but as a device for identifying a sample of institutions or teacher groups, for further moderation by non-statistical methods. In other words, statistical moderation does not become the final arbiter of grades or marks, instead it becomes a device for identifying potential discrepancies in teacher assessment or mentor assessment of trainees.

Another approach often preferred among professional educators, is 'consortium or consensus/group moderation' (Shaw & Radnor, 1995; James & Conner, 1993; Murphy, 1991; Gipps, 1994b; Harlen, 1994). It is described as meetings of teachers at which

grading criteria and agreed schemes of assessment are discussed, in order to reach a consensus about their quality and appropriateness. At these meetings samples of internally assessed work from the different institutions undergo scrutiny for their comparability and where necessary, recommendations for mark adjustment are suggested (Murphy, 1991). This approach gives weight to the professional judgements of teachers and presents opportunity for such judgements to be developed further. Research evidence suggests that where teachers come together to discuss performance standards, or criteria, the moderation process becomes a process of teacher development with backwash on teaching (Gipps, 1994b).

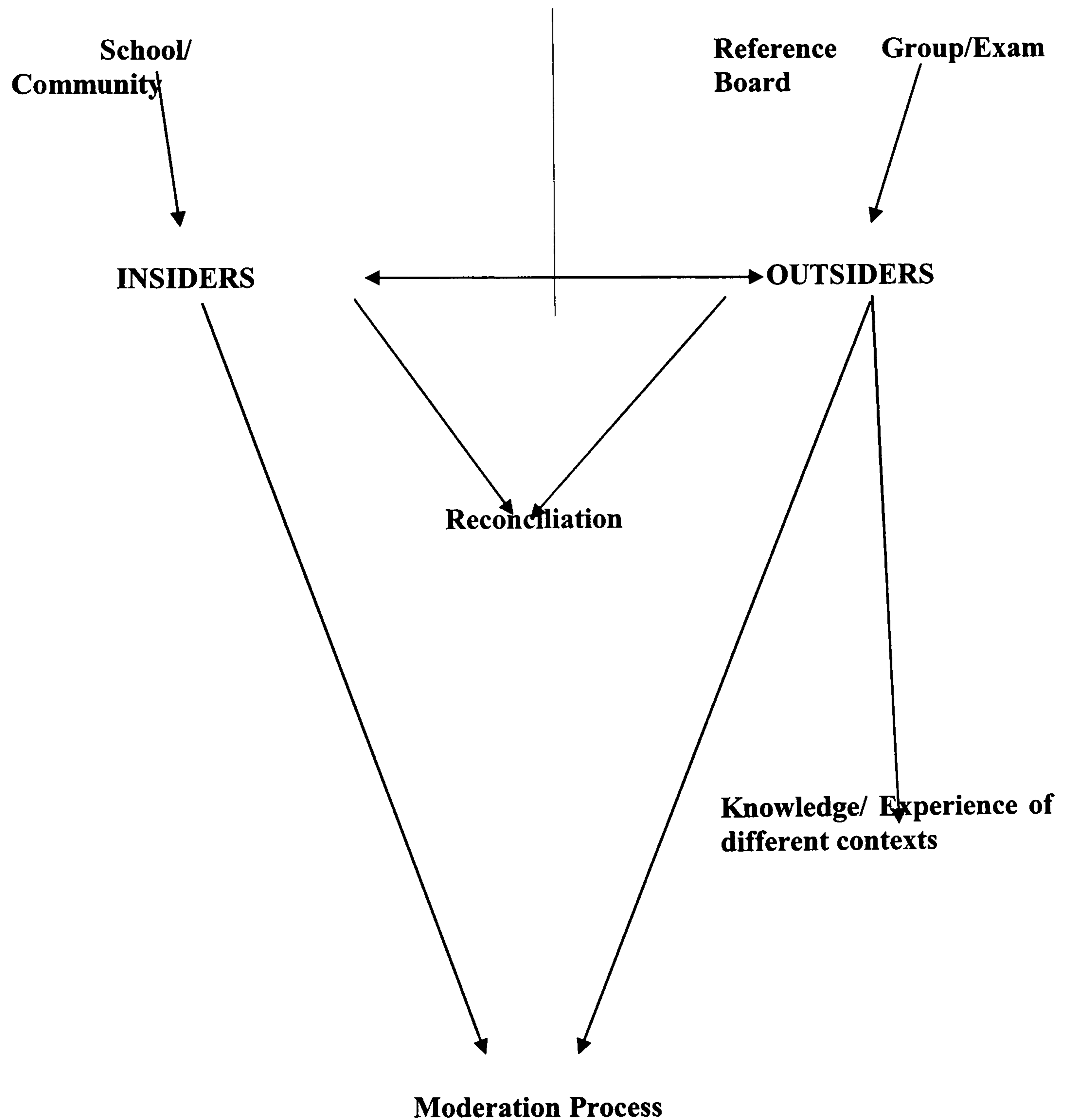
The literature presents different models of group/consensus moderation (see for example, Hralen, 1994). However, the model suggested by the researchers, Shaw & Radnor (1995) is of particular relevance to this study. It is based on a partnership between teachers (insiders) and ‘experts’ from an examination board. In the context of this study this can be likened to mentors and link tutors (insiders) and lecturers from the Universities of Cape Coast and Winneba and personnel from the Teacher Education Division all as ‘experts’ to work together. Shaw & Radnor have named this model as the “reconciliation model of moderation”. Though the model is with reference to the British National Curriculum, they point out that it can have application beyond it. The model perceives accountability as a two-way process, that of the more ‘objective’ assessment establishment, that is, the moderators’ officialdom, working in association with the more ‘subjective’ teacher community (p.242).

The reconciliation model of moderation appears to hold promise for application in the mentorship scheme in Ghana. This is because of the opportunities it presents by way of interaction for mentors and link tutors to work collaboratively and under the ‘expert’ to

improve the standard of training. Considering the number of basic schools scattered throughout the one hundred and ten districts and the forty-one teacher training colleges in Ghana, operationalising it will undoubtedly present enormous challenges. The Reconciliation Model of Moderation is shown in figure 3.2

Fig. 3.2: The Reconciliation Model of Moderation

ASSESSMENT SAMPLES OFFERED



Shaw & Radnor have listed administrative difficulties and cost as two main problems that may affect its effective use. Other problems that are envisaged to affect its implementation in a developing country like Ghana is: paying for travel for mentors and link tutors coming on moderation, Xeroxing costs due to the need for multiple samples of trainees' assessment forms, planning, problems of the size and representativeness of trainees' assessment that will be necessary to maximise validity and storage. It would be important to find out in this study whether certain fundamental requirements or conditions needed before group/consensus moderation can effectively operate are present in the case study areas. Examples are: professional competency of mentors in assessing trainees, whether well-planned assessment of trainees takes place in the schools, and whether 'outside' personnel exist who have had the requisite training and experience to offer guidance in the mentorship scheme.

3.8.1 Problems of Group/Consensus Moderation

A survey of some of the more recent research into the moderation of teacher-assessed work revealed that there are certain practical difficulties that can clearly affect its effective use. Among the most significant ones identified in this study are the following (see Shaw & Radnor, 1995; James & Conner, 1993; Buchan, 1993):

- (i) For teachers to be genuine partners in moderation in a fully professional way, they need adequate training, particularly in the methods or techniques of assessment.
- (ii) Assessment criteria which might at first appear to be a simple matter of clarification often turn out in practice to need a carefully managed and thorough discussion between teachers and the moderators. In other words, the interpretation of assessment criteria is not a simple and straight forward matter and can complicate the moderation process.

(iii) Teachers tend to vary in the detail they include in justification of the grades they give. Some grade and annotate every element so that the grade is a cumulative outcome. Others provide general overall comment with the grade. This presents a dilemma at moderation meetings, since at that point it is difficult to repair anything that has gone wrong with such grading practices. This makes it difficult to award a grade that is seen to be fair at moderation.

(iv) Teachers complain that moderation procedures often do not allow sufficient time for reflection and professional development. In other words, the quality assurance end of the spectrum of moderation is often not given sufficient emphasis or attention.

(v) As would be expected, teachers often interpret official guidelines on school-based assessment differently. There are also variations in the presentation of tasks between teachers and schools, and variation by some teachers in the mode of presentation from one group or individual student to the other. This, inevitably influences the way marks or grades are awarded, making comparison difficult.

(vi) Varied backgrounds and motivations of those participating in moderation often create complications. Some people show more interest in the quality assurance end of moderation, while others emphasise measures of quality control, such as common approaches to assessment tasks across institutions.

These are issues which clearly will need to be addressed in any group moderation situation. The issues show the enormous task that will face the implementation of a system of moderation in which teachers are closely involved. Though these findings relate to moderation of teacher-assessed work in Britain, it is reasonable to expect that

they will not be very different with other educational systems which might want to introduce group moderation.

Moderation relies on commonality in assessment process, as Shaw and Radnor (1992) point out. In other words, common assessment procedures and criteria are vital if the moderation process is to be efficient and meaningful. This amounts to standardizing the conditions and procedures of the assessment process to enhance the reliability of scores. But such standardisation can impose strains which distort student performance and so lower the validity of the assessments (James & Conner, 1992; Nuttal, 1987). The contentious issue, as far as the teacher training context is concerned, is the extent to which its assessment procedures should be standardised. Delandshere (1994) has indicated that standardizing certain professional teacher assessment exercises, especially those nested in context, tends to compromise validity. This is because such exercises “recognize a range of appropriate responses which cannot all be documented since they are dependent on the (often implicit) assumptions made by the student and on the context in which they operate” (Delandshere 1994, p.110).

One important challenge that faces post-secondary teacher education in Ghana is how it tackles the issue of standardization of assessment procedures as far as the mentorship scheme is concerned. Again, this thesis will examine whether sufficient commonality in mentor assessment procedures and criteria exist in the case study areas to make moderation feasible.

3.9 Summary and Relevance of the Literature Review.

In this Chapter attempt has been made to review related literature about the concept of mentoring, learning to teach, models of mentoring, assessment at initial teacher

education with emphasis on formative assessment, profiling and moderation of assessment results. The review will help shed insights into some of the critical incidence and issues that have influenced the implementation of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in Ghana, to help in making recommendations on how the mentorship scheme could be made more effective to promote trainees' professional development.

The next chapter discusses the methodology adopted for the study

Part Two

CHAPTER 4

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology adopted for the study. It explains the rationale behind the choice of a qualitative research methodology and also discusses the methods and procedures that were used to gather data for analysis. The chapter also contains a discussion of some of the philosophical issues that underpinned the choice of the methodological approach for the study. The last section of the chapter discusses the development and design of the research; specifically the data collection and analysis procedure and the way in which the findings are reported and analysed. Bryman (2001) defines qualitative research as:

a research strategy that usually emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data...it is inductivist, constructionist and interpretivist (p. 264).

An important consideration which informed the choice of qualitative methodology was the need to gain an in-depth picture of perceptions and experiences of mentors and trainees about the implementation of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training in Ghana. This means examining the diverse and different views and experiences about mentoring and the factors that might have contributed to the way in which it is perceived. Thus, since issues about context and experience are important to the different perceptions and experiences the research requires the use of qualitative approaches. As Greene (1994) points out:

When...information needs comprise multiple perspectives, contextualised meanings, or the experience of programme participation,...then qualitative methods should be employed (Greene1994, p.539).

4.2 The Rationale for Qualitative Design

Four main reasons informed my choice of a qualitative research design for the study. The main purpose of the study is to provide an illuminative evaluation of the practice of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training at the post secondary teacher training level (PSTT) in Ghana. Thus there is the need to understand how the introduction of mentoring is viewed by those directly affected by it, that is, mentors, trainees and tutors who are involved in the process. I feel there is the need for information on how tutors in the training colleges, mentors and trainees perceive the newly introduced system of teacher training; what factors influence what and how tutors and mentors assess trainees and whether trainees felt the new system is making an impact on their teaching skills. As Broadfoot (1996) points out, "...the content of assessment procedures is very significant for the way in which it is likely to affect the entire teaching/learning process in both form and process"(p. 28).

For example, is the content of mentors and link tutors assessment and support exerting positive influence on teaching and learning? Another issue was whether certain considerations rooted in the values and beliefs of mentors and link tutors define their support and assessment culture and agenda which were influencing their perception and interpretation of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training. What would really be crucial for mentoring to be practised in a way that could enhance trainees' professional learning and development? These questions or issues are raised not to rehearse the main research questions already discussed in chapter one but to highlight why there is the need for qualitative approaches. These issues from my point of view require information that reflects programme participant perspectives. It is therefore, important to hear mentors, trainees and tutors talk about the meanings they attach to the

introduction and practice of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training and to reflect on these meanings in order to understand what had influenced them.

This meant the use of naturalistic research inquiry approaches (Lincon & Guba, 1985, Greene, 1994) which has the potential to reveal the influence of context (social, institutional, personal etc.) on perceptions and practices. The approach of naturalistic inquiry, as Maykut and Morehouse (1994) point out, requires the researcher to be part of the investigation through observation and in-depth interviewing but also to be removed from the research situation to rethink the meanings of the experience. It is also important to identify some positive things that the new teacher training system has brought into teacher training and to understand how they are used. There is also the need to interview officials from the Teacher Education Division and Lecturers from the University of Cape Coast and Winneba who are closely connected with the formulation and the implementation of this new teacher training programme. This is to help gain an understanding of their perspectives on the policy for the introduction of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training.

Also focusing on the ways in which mentoring is implemented and practised in the areas of study was a way of "...assessing the points at which policy and practice converge" (Vulliamy, 1990), and to offer the opportunity for the research to highlight the gaps which often exist between policy directives and actual practice (Adams & Chen, 1981). It is also essential to identify the positive things that the new teacher training programme had brought into teacher training and to understand how they were caused. Thus, it was the information needs and the kind of methods that would provide answers and insights into the research issues that suggested the research approach (Burgess, 1985).

Secondly it is intended that findings from the research would help to point out changes that would have greater chance of success and be acceptable to tutors, mentors and trainees as a means of improving teaching and learning in Ghanaian schools. This however, would mean paying attention to the perception of those directly involved and using the results to suggest changes that are responsive to actual needs and concerns. In this respect the research could be described as “responsive evaluation”(Stake, 1994) since it seeks to uncover and address the concerns of key participants towards the improvement of practice. Greene (1994) is also of the view that improvements are “more likely if local rather than remote concerns are addressed...and if local rather than remote values are explicated and used to make judgements (p.538). In this study for example, it is important to consider the motivators and capabilities of mentors, tutors, headteachers and other teachers in the school environment who are involved in providing support for trainees since these are critical for any improvements to practice.

The third consideration for the choice of qualitative approach stemmed from the recognition that a hands-off distant research approach would not delve below the surface of issues. Besides, the persistent warnings from the Ministry of Education and the Teacher Education Division to teachers in the schools and tutors in the colleges that they would send officials to schools to check mentors and tutors about their seriousness to the new system may influence the way tutors and mentors will respond to inquiries that do not attempt to delve deep into perceptions and practices. It is therefore, important to be in sufficient contact with the research subjects and the setting to understand fully the issues inherent in the system, which the research seeks to unravel. More so, (the affirmative culture of most African societies) it could be argued, makes this approach even more important. In many African cultures, there is the tendency

towards an affirmative view of life as reported by Stephens (1990) in his study in Nigeria. This affirmative attitude often is intended “to minimise points of disagreement and ...to harmonise possible conflicting perspectives”(Stephens 1990, p.146). To reduce such influence it is necessary to place myself into the study situation where responses could be validated, if necessary, for their truth-value. This calls for closer association and the use of more open-ended research approaches.

The final consideration stemmed from the lack of research into mentoring in Ghana, which is, sensitive to context and reflects ‘insider’ accounts or participant experience of mentoring programmes and innovations. The lack of such research is a problem in the wider educational research culture in Ghana which seems to place more emphasis and value on quantitative research approaches than on its qualitative counterpart (Agyeman, 1991). Agyeman is of the view that this overemphasis and reliance on quantitative research approaches has contributed a blunted meaning to the analysis of education in African societies and has led to policy measures based on half-truths. The result of this he adds, is the lack of better understanding of the experience of teaching and learning and other educational phenomena that constitute the internal system of the educational enterprise in most African societies.

Supporting Agyeman’s view Griffiths & Parker-Jenkins (1994) writing about the methodological and ethical dilemmas they faced in doing research in Ghana, argue that quantitative survey-type research will have limited value if “...high-level qualitative work has not been done to discover what categories, terminology and forms of approach should be employed” (p.455). My view is that there is still a lack of this preliminary qualitative work in the educational research community in Ghana on the subject of mentoring. Though quantitative approaches have the potential to provide education

policy-makers with indications of the outcomes of innovations, nevertheless they often fail to provide insights into unintended consequences and to address the concerns of those directly involved with the innovations (Parlett & Hamilton, 1987).

For instance in my study of teachers' and students' perception of the Life-skills programme in Ghana (Kankam 1998), and in that of Amadahe's study of teachers' attitudes towards the use of Continuous Assessment (Amadahe 1999), in which we both used the Likert type scale questionnaire to collect data, we both came to the conclusion that "teachers and students have positive attitude towards Life-Skills (p.11) and towards the use of Continuous Assessment" (p.8). Though these conclusions may be by themselves sufficient in suggesting some level of initial preparedness or agreement with the principles of the two innovations they do not answer some critical concerns of educational change or innovation. For instance were these teachers implementing Life-skills or using Continuous Assessment in the way they are suggested by the official policy guidelines, or had any 'mutual adaptations' (Fullan, 1982) occurred between the policy and the teachers who implement them? As Fullan (1991) points out "it is possible to value and even be articulate about the goals of...change without understanding their implications for practice" (P.40). These are necessary questions to address in any educational innovation or change like mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training, which is the focus of this study. It is important to know how the policy is being carried out and whether the implementation corresponds to policy guidelines and whether the guidelines are sensitive to the context of application. Fullan (1982) argues that the results of educational policy issues, which adopt quantitative input-output design, are often difficult to interpret because of assumptions they make. He claims that most of the time they make the assumption that the policy is actually

implemented and that the process of implementation corresponds to the policy directive itself.

The decision to adopt a qualitative research approach therefore, was the need for a research strategy that would not only fill the gap between policy and the practice of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training in Ghana but also in response to calls for more qualitative approaches to research into educational problems particularly in developing countries to further their understanding (Fuller&Heyneman 1989, Agyeman, 1991, Akyeampong &Murphy 1997).

4.3 Theoretical Orientation

The quantitative tradition employs standardised statistical methods designed to confirm or refute a proposed hypothesis of social or educational phenomena with the intention towards generalisation. However, with qualitative research, relatively little standardised instrumentation is required since the researcher is essentially the main “measurement device” in the study (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Therefore, diverse and flexible approaches which reflect the different purposes of qualitative inquiry and corresponding styles of analysis are admissible in qualitative studies. For instance the quest for lawful relationships within a phenomenon with the intent on theory development (Grounded Theory) would require a highly systematic approach to data collection and analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). On the other hand, an interest in the phenomenological experience of people with emphasis on thick descriptions (Geertz 1973) that lends itself to “multiple compelling interpretations” (Miles and Huberman, 1994) is derived from a more holistic approach to data collection and analysis.

However, these differences aside, all qualitative researchers share some similarities in their sources of data: interviews, field observations as well as documents and regard the researcher as the key instrument in the collection and analysis process (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). Again, qualitative research also shares a common underlying philosophy which is that the understanding of social or educational phenomena requires the perspective of 'insiders' and takes into account the context in which the phenomena occurs. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) claim qualitative research "values context sensitivity" and seeks to understand phenomena in all its complexity and within a particular situation and environment (p.12). It needs pointing out that these similarities aside, there are, however, some differences in the approach to data collection and analysis in qualitative research, which reflect different theoretical and methodological stances. As Fetterman (1988) points out, one approach may appear radically phenomenological; another mildly positivistic in style, tone, and formation (Fetterman, 1988; P.3). These two approaches are discussed in the next section.

Miles and Huberman (1994) are of the view that qualitative research can be conducted by making it lean more towards formalisation and structure of methods (e.g. predetermined conceptual frames, pre-coding, highly structured protocols and analysis procedures etc.) like quantitative designs. Proponents of this view however, stress that the intended purpose is to provide thoroughness and explicitness of the data collection process and ensure that the evidence gathered is based upon rationality and trustworthiness of methods (Miles and Huberman 1994). Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Guba and Lincoln (1994) in contrast to Miles and Huberman argue that there are intrinsic criteria embodied within the qualitative research paradigm and ways of operationalising them to ensure or provide an alternative to reliability and validity in

quantitative research. They propose two primary criteria for assessing a qualitative study which are trustworthiness and authenticity. Trustworthiness, they claim is made up of four criteria, each of which has an equivalent criterion in quantitative research. These are credibility, which parallels internal validity; transferability, which parallels external validity; dependability, which also parallels reliability, and confirmability, which parallels objectivity. A major reason for Guba and Lincoln's uneasiness about simple application of reliability and validity standards to qualitative research is that the criteria presuppose that a single absolute account of social reality is feasible. They argue that there can be more than one and possibly several accounts. The significance of multiple accounts of social reality is especially evident in the trustworthiness criterion of credibility. It needs pointing out that if there can be several possible accounts of an aspect of social reality, it is the feasibility or the credibility of the account that a researcher arrives at which determines its acceptability to others.

Bryman (2001) states that the establishment of credibility of findings demands that the research is carried out according to the canons of good practice and by submitting research findings to the members of the social world who were studied for confirmation that the researcher correctly understood that social order. This technique he referred to as 'respondent validation or member validation'. Qualitative research usually entails the intensive study of small groups or individuals and shares certain characteristics (that is depth rather than breadth) which are a preoccupation of quantitative research. Qualitative findings therefore, tend to be directed to the contextual uniqueness and aspect of the social world studied and thus have a problem of transferability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) commenting on the problem of transferability in qualitative research put it thus: 'whether findings hold in some other context, or even in the same context at

some other time is an empirical issue' (p.316). Qualitative researchers are therefore, encouraged to produce 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973), that is rich accounts of the details of a culture. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that a thick description provides others with a database for making judgements about the possible transferability to the other milieu. Dependability is another cardinal issue in research. Guba and Lincoln (1994) commenting on dependability as a parallel to reliability in quantitative research argue that to establish the merit of the research in terms of trustworthiness researchers should adopt an 'auditing' approach. This they claim can be achieved by ensuring that complete records are kept of all phases of the research process: problem formulation, selection of participants, fieldwork notes, interview transcripts, data analysis decisions and others in an accessible manner for peers to act as auditors during the process of the research to ascertain how far proper procedures were followed. This should also include assessing the degree to which theoretical references can be justified. As regard confirmability, which is also an aspect of trustworthiness of qualitative research Bryman (2001) writes:

Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that while recognizing that complete objectivity is impossible in social research, the researcher can be shown to have acted in good faith...that he/she has not overtly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of the research and findings derived from it (p.274)

Guba and Lincoln propose that establishing confirmability should be one of the objectives of auditors. They also suggest the criteria of authenticity in addition to the four trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Bryman (2001) claims the issue of authenticity raises a wider set of issues concerning the wider political impact of research which are: fairness, which seeks

to find out whether the research fairly represents different view points among members of the social setting; ontological authenticity which also seeks to find whether the research helps members to arrive at better understanding of the social milieu; educative authenticity which also seeks to find whether the research helps members to appreciate better the perspectives of their social class setting; catalytic authenticity which also deals with whether the research has acted as an impetus to members to engage in action to change their circumstances and tactical authenticity which also seeks to find out whether the research has empowered members to take steps necessary to engage in action. All these Bryman claim help to ensure that the research is conducted in a proper and credible manner. Hammersley (1992a) proposes a midway approach between the criteria of qualitative research and quantitative research. For Hammersley (1992a) validity means that an empirical account must be plausible and credible and should take into account the amount and kind of evidence used in the account. By such stance, Hammersley shares with realism the notion that there is an external social reality that can be assessed by the researcher. He also simultaneously shares with the critics of the empirical realist position in the rejection of the notion that such access is direct and, in particular, that the researcher can act as 'a mirror on the social world' reflecting its image back to an audience. Instead, the researcher is always engaged in representations or constructions of that world. The plausibility and credibility of a researcher's 'truth claims' then become the main considerations in evaluating qualitative research. Hammersley also suggests relevance as an important criterion of qualitative research. Relevance is assessed from the vantage point of the importance of a topic within its substantive field and the contribution it makes to the literature on that field. It also concerns itself with the question of whether the concerns of practitioners (that is people who are part of the social setting being investigated and have vested interest in the

research and the implications of the findings deriving from it) are an aspect of consideration. He notes, practitioners are likely to be interested in research that helps them to understand or address problems with which they are confronted. In this way the Hammersley (1992a) approach thus touches on the kind of considerations that are addressed by Guba and Lincoln's authenticity criteria (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Guba and Lincoln 1994).

The idea of validity and reliability in research as they pertain to qualitative research has been discussed and highlighted in this section of the thesis to provide a pointer to the way they will be addressed subsequently to ensure that findings of the research are trustworthy and authentic. Stake (1995) adds that because qualitative inquiry is essentially subjective, it does not require "widely agreed-upon protocols that put subjective misunderstanding to a stiff enough test (p.45), although validation of evidence must be considered important. The primary intention of qualitative research however, is to provide "thick descriptions" of phenomena based upon insider accounts of reality and validation of information is reached through triangulation and in one particular form-methodological triangulation in Case Studies. The triangulation involves the multimethod approach of observation, interview and document review to bear on evidence. (Stake 1995.)

The two approaches or perspectives described above appear to have their roots in certain philosophical positions about social or educational inquiry. The structured approach appears to reflect the idea that phenomena, social or educational, consist of a subjective reality embodied in some lawful and reasonably stable relationship that links

various aspects of the phenomena. It is based on the understanding that "...individuals and groups interact to produce social phenomena (...policies, educational change programmes) which exist outside any given individual" (Fullan, 1992, p.37). The methodological implication of this is that one should admit certain pre-structured qualitative protocols or tools that attempt to discover and describe the phenomena from the perspective of key participants but in the context of links and relationships that might be operating within the phenomena. Thus, one could incorporate systematic collection and analysis procedures cyclically to findings that provide a causal description of the forces at work leading to a theory (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The other perspective sees things as rather more complex and fluid and places more emphasis on the role of values and context in the understanding and interpretation of phenomena. It also sees the investigator as a critical part of this process. Thus, from this perspective, the researcher is viewed as much a part of the research 'content' as his/her subjects or interviewees. The real issue, therefore, is not a matter of structured method but rather the question of openness, dialogue and negotiation in the whole research process (Smith, 1989). Qualitative researchers, therefore, enter the research setting as learners acknowledging that they know little about the salient issues,

The emphasis of approach therefore, is on the investigator as primary gatherer and interpreter of phenomena with a "highly adaptable instrument that can enter a situation without prior programming but can after a short period begin to discern what is salient and focus on that"(Lincoln & Guba 1988, p.105,). Havelock and Huberman (1977) see this approach or perspective as a systematic or scientific research process, which is more than a series of procedures or instruments. Havelock and Huberman (1977) point out:

An epistemological view of how we can 'know' what is happening in schools...in ways that assume our knowledge is neither subjective nor unreliable (Havelock & Huberman, 1977 p.275).

The methodological implication that can be inferred from the above statement is that less structure in terms of prior design and formalised procedures are required, with analysis focused on discovering themes and patterns from the data to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena or issues. The intention here, therefore, is not to develop theory but to understand meanings attached to an issue from the perspective of those studied. Critical to this endeavour is the role the researcher's own experiences and value orientation play in the research process and also the prevailing conditions of the phenomena or innovation. It needs pointing out that the point about these two methodological perspectives is not whether there is a right or wrong approach, rather which reflects one's personal values or philosophical stance regarding qualitative inquiry; and also which is more appropriate given the objective of the research. Moreover, many qualitative researchers are agreed on the fact that no study conforms exactly to a standard methodology and that researchers often adapt methods and procedures of analysis in relation to their research focus (Strauss & Corbin 1994, Miles & Huberman, 1994). The comparative approach to data analysis of Glasser and Strauss (1967) can help explain this point better. The constant comparative approach to data analysis (Glasser & Strauss 1967) was meant for theory building but now finds application in other qualitative studies that are not intent on theory building. Researchers like Maykut and Morehouse (1994) have suggested its use is to generate themes and patterns from qualitative data in an attempt to develop a holistic understanding of social or educational phenomena. Lincoln and Guba (1985) have also

illustrated its use in the context of “descriptive and explanatory categories” (p. 341) to help in understanding educational or social issues.

4.4 Background of Methodological Position of Researcher

As stated earlier, researchers like Agyeman (1991), and Griffiths and Parker-Jenkins (1994) have advocated for a more qualitative approach to research in developing countries like Ghana to help understand issues better. Akyeampong and Murphy (1977) crystallised this position by also arguing for qualitative approaches in studying and understanding problems facing educational innovations in Ghana. They argued that:

The problems of education are varied, interconnected and often contextual. The research tools required... therefore need to be adaptable and flexible ...Great disservice is done to educational development when we attempt to implement new educational strategies and innovations without sufficient understanding of both classroom and school-community contexts. To understand such realities researchers need to become more involved with those they study in order to gain a deeper understanding of how educational phenomena or practice is perceived by them. Only then can research findings be applied to real and relevant issues in education (Akyeampong & Murphy 1997, p.5).

These observations naturally influenced me but the methodological approach adopted for this study was influenced largely by my own philosophical inclinations to qualitative inquiry which reflects an eclectic stance of the two positions discussed in the previous section. Even more important is my personal philosophy of the methodological approach which reflects the needs of the research. My philosophical position has its roots in how I have come to view the nature of certain aspects of educational settings and their needs, as I have become more accustomed to them. A major contribution of this viewpoint was due to my involvement in an Action Research project and in the designing of in-service training programmes and workshops for teachers in Ghana. Through these projects and the interactions that occurred with teachers, I came into face

to face contact in a new way, with the realities of issues of teacher training. Many factors came to light apart from lack of physical infrastructure and learning materials, which often mitigated against effective teaching and learning. For instance on the part of tutors, there were often some invalid assumptions about how students can be helped to learn. These assumptions had negative consequences on the way new materials and innovative approaches introduced through projects were applied. Some of these realities challenged some of my previous values about educational research. Among the most powerful influences were spontaneous comments made by teachers during in-service training and research interviews. Some of these comments were rich with meaning and left lasting impressions on my mind about the need to adopting a humane face to inquiries into educational problems.

This position of mine is in conformity with a methodological framework that places value on the researcher as the main data collection instrument with adaptive and flexible research tools for studying the effects of educational innovation or challenge. With regard to the particular problem being investigated in this study, (see Chapter 1) there is the need for interpretation of mentoring policy based on insiders' value perspectives especially perspectives suggesting problematic issues and concerns from mentors, trainees and tutors and also highlighting the positive effects (intended or unintended) of the mentoring programme. It is, therefore, important to be less prescriptive about the evaluative approach to help get a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interactions or meanings that come into play when innovations are introduced into a system (Fetterman 1988). Such an understanding I feel is important to inform ongoing policy debate on the ways in which mentoring can be used to enhance the professional skills and experiences of trainees as well as contribute to pupils' academic achievement.

4.5 Plan and Conduct of The Research

4.5.1 Development of Interview Protocol

The development of the interview protocol was a pivotal area of the research. The semi-structured approach to interviewing was used mainly to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that insights could be developed from how mentoring is perceived by mentors and trainees. The semi-structured interview questions based on issues identified from the research questions were partly shaped by my earlier professional involvement with tutors and mentors at workshops and at in-service training programmes and also from the policy document; the handbook for mentors and trainees and from the literature on mentoring.

4.5.2 Access

In qualitative research of this nature, the question of access was central since the richness of the data to be collected ultimately depended upon what access was given to what sources of data. Also people who granted interviews needed to be convinced that the research was of some value to them and be given assurances of the researcher's integrity so that they offer a spirit of co-operation during interview situations. Hammersley and Atkinson (1993) commenting on the importance of access in conducting research point out that:

The problem of access is not resolved once one has gained entry to a setting, since this by no means guarantees access to all the data available within it...not every one may be willing to talk, and even the most willing informant will not be prepared or perhaps even able to divulge all the information available to him or her (p.76).

One can infer from this assertion that access therefore, has two sides. First the official permission and, once in the field, the negotiated aspect with potential subjects. These

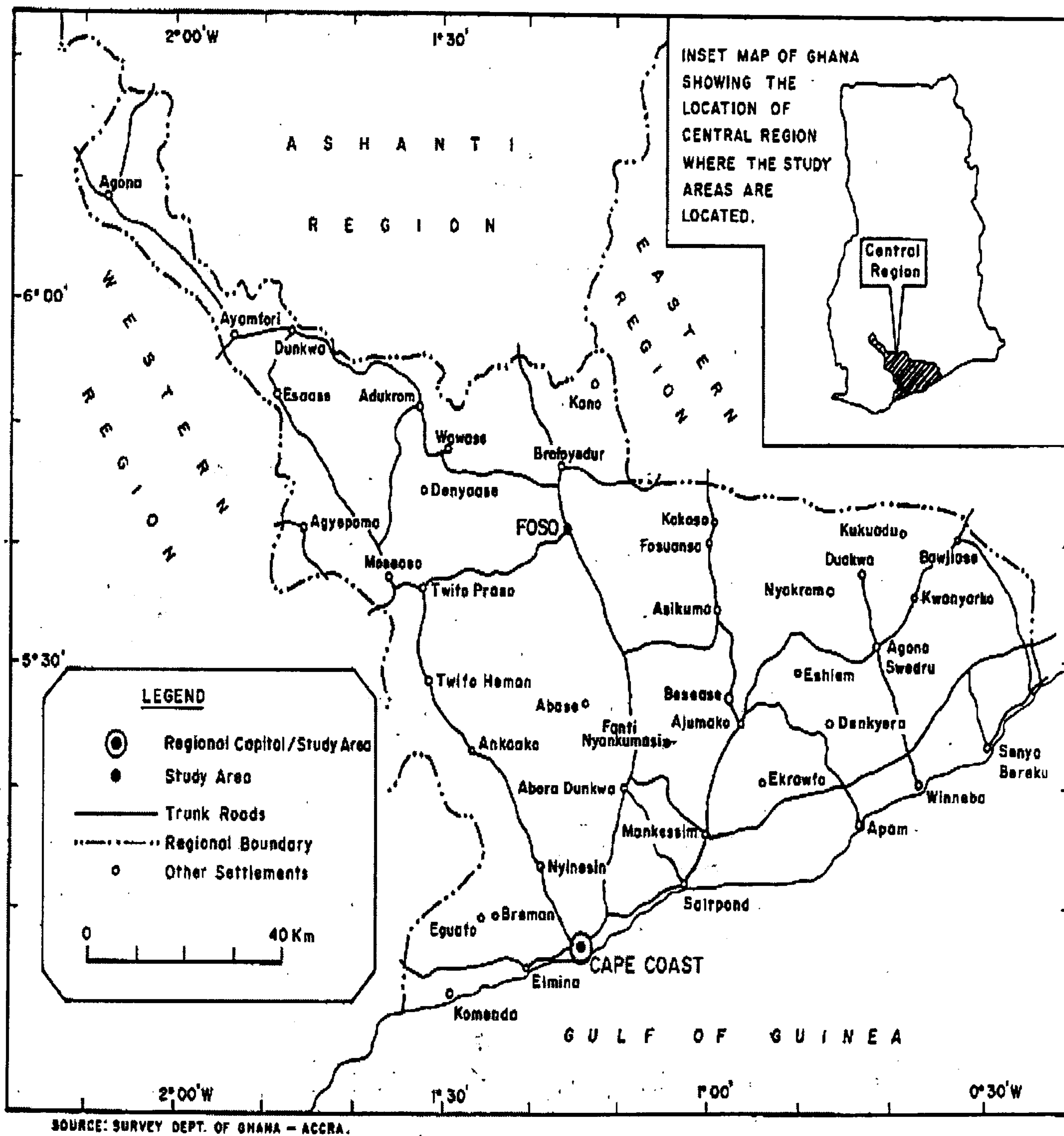
two aspects of access were taken into account in this study. Access to the selected areas of study with regard to schools was sought by obtaining a letter from my supervisors from the Centre for Educational Studies, University of Hull to the Director of Teacher Education in Ghana explaining the purpose and importance of the study and request for permission to visit the schools. The Director of Teacher Education in response wrote a letter to the District Directors of Education in Cape Coast and Foso requesting the selected areas for access to be given for the fieldwork.

4.6 The Fieldwork

The fieldwork was conducted in two stages. The first and the main fieldwork took place between December 2002 and February 2003. The second took place between July-September 2003. The July- September 2003 fieldwork was undertaken to address further issues that emerged from the analysis of the first field data. It also served as a validating exercise for the findings as mentors, trainees and tutors were presented with summaries of the emerging findings and asked to comment on them. Partly because of constraints of time and resources the first fieldwork was conducted at Cape Coast and Foso and the second field work was also done at these two places. Approximately three months were spent in each case study area. The case study areas chosen could be described as convenience samples but were considered to be typical in essential characteristics to the remaining regions and districts in the country. Although many researchers advocate ensuring anonymity of institutions and participants in school based research (for example Hitchcock & Hughes, 1992), this was not considered important in this study as any description of the case study areas was not considered an ethically sensitive issue because the findings were not intended to be reported in relation to any one school. Fig.4.1 is a map of Ghana showing the case study areas which are

highlighted.

A MAP SHOWING THE STUDY AREAS, CAPE COAST AND FOSO, IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA.



I also felt that the introduction of mentoring into initial teacher training and its implementation or practice in Ghana can be understood if the views of those entrusted with developing the policy and laying down the guidelines for its operation are examined. The group in this category came from the Teacher Education Division of

the Ministry of Education, and university lecturers from the Faculties of Education, University of Cape Coast and the University College of Education, Winneba. Accordingly, certain members in this category were interviewed during the fieldwork.

Another element of the fieldwork involved a meeting with the Director of Teacher Education in Ghana. I felt this meeting was important as she deals directly with the Principals and Tutors in the teacher training colleges who are responsible for the training of teachers. This meeting also afforded me the chance to discuss issues about the policy of mentoring and some major concerns about its practice, which she can discuss with the tutors and principals which in turn, provided rich information for the study. I felt interviewing and holding discussions with a cross section of people either directly or indirectly involved in the introduction of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher training in Ghana provided a rich and illuminative perspective on the issues under investigation in this study. Details of data collection during the field work are presented in table 4.1. The study focused on mentor support and assessment of trainees, the relevance of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher education and the preparations made before the start of the new approach.

This was done as they were issues which were thought would enhance the professional development of teachers. The details of the main field work in the case study areas are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Details of Main Fieldwork Schedule in Case Study Areas

Case Study Areas	College	Link Tutors	Schools	Number of Mentors	Number of Mentees	Number of Lead Mentors
Cape Coast	OLA Tr.College	2	Philip Quague Boys' Sch.	3	6	2
			A.M.E .Zion School	3	4	2
Foso	Foso Tr.TR.College	2	Foso D/C	3	4	2
			Catholic J.S S	3	6	2
Total		4		12	20	8

4.7 Data Collection

4.8. Interviewing

4.9 Interviewing Approach

The most important sources of data were mentors, trainees, and tutor interviews. This took a major part of the fieldwork. As stated earlier, the semi-structured approach to

interviewing was used to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words to help in drawing insights from them. During the interviews interviewees were given considerable latitude to pursue a range of issues which they considered relevant to the subject of discussion. This was done to ensure that they got the opportunity to shape the content of the interview and to introduce their own agenda regarding the discussion. They were also assured of confidentiality and anonymity at the beginning of each interview session. As the study was conducted in two areas it was necessary to ensure that the data collected was of comparable nature particularly across interview subjects. This element of comparability was achieved by covering similar agenda in the interviews within and across the study areas. The desire to achieve the degree of comparability influenced my reason for using a semi-structured interview approach, which is often formulated around some foreshadowed research issues or questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Also the semi-structured interview approach allowed depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewees' responses. (Hitchcocks & Hughes, 1992 p.83). It needs pointing out that, though the semi-structured interview approach can facilitate comparability, it has some disadvantages.

Bodgan and Biklen (1992) commenting on the disadvantages associated with the use of the semi-structured interview approach indicated that with the semi-structured interview approach one often loses the "opportunity to understand how the subjects themselves structured the topic at hand" (p.97). In this study it was crucial to allow interviewees to shape the content of the interview to bring out the complex and intricate issues of teaching and learning as far as mentoring is concerned. To achieve this I operated between the semi-structured and unstructured interview mode but ensured that often issues raised by interviewees were similar to the study agenda even though

occasionally other important concerns that I was not aware of might come up. Details of the data collection process is indicated in Table 4.2

Table: 4.2 Details of Data Collection

<u>Target of Investigation</u>	<u>Methodology</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
<p>1. Mentors, Trainees, Link Tutors</p> <p>(b) Director of Teacher Education and lecturers from the University of Cape Coast and Winneba</p>	<p>Semi-structured interview</p> <p>Interviews</p>	<p>-To discover and describe their perceptions and experiences about mentorship as an approach to initial teacher education in the case study areas.</p> <p>-To gain an in-depth understanding of the factors and influences that have shaped perceptions about the mentorship scheme in the context of teacher education and the perceived effects on trainees' professional development.</p> <p>(b) To have policy issues/views on mentorship</p>
<p>2. Documentation on the Mentorship scheme</p>	<p>Documentary analysis</p>	<p>-To study reports on teacher education and policy guidelines for the implementation of the</p>

<p>3. Classroom teaching</p>	<p>Observation/ Interview</p>	<p>mentorship scheme. The intention was to trace how these have influenced mentor and trainees' perceptions and the practice of mentoring.</p> <p>-To relate mentor assessment and trainees' teaching to classroom context in order to understand how mentor support helps in trainees' professional development</p>
<p>4. Mentor Assessment</p>	<p>Content analysis/interview</p>	<p>-To gain understanding of the focus and purpose of mentor assessment</p>
<p>5. School characteristics</p>	<p>Observation/interview</p>	<p>-To gain a broad view of the school environment or the context in which the mentorship scheme is nested and the nature of its influence on trainees' professional development.</p>

4.10 Piloting the Interview Protocol

The suggestion of Bodgan and Biklen (1992) about approaches to interviewing was modified and used in this study as a means of piloting the interview protocol. Bodgan and Biklen suggest that:

At the beginning of the project, for example, it might be important to use the more free-flowing, exploratory interview because your purpose at that point is to get a general understanding of a range of perspectives on a topic (Bodgan & Biklen, 1992 p. 97)

Thus, in this study interviews at the first study site were exploratory, as such, considerable time was spent there to evaluate the adequacy of coverage of the semi-structured interview schedule and the appropriateness of the questions asked. This helped in effecting minor changes especially semantic ones and possibly the addition of some questions to the interview schedule. The long stay in the first study site therefore, served as a means of pilot testing interview questions, reviewing the research agenda and modifying approaches to data collection. Powney and Watts (1993) also emphasising the need for piloting interviews point out that:

Running a few pilot interviews focuses the mind wonderfully on potential data collection problems and gives the interviewer a chance to modify practices, before the investigation proper begins (Powney and Watts, 1993, p. 125).

In this study the piloting also helped to practise the social interactive skills required in interview situation and helped in conducting the fieldwork in a worthwhile and credible manner.

4.11 Method of Recording the Interview Data

As stated earlier mentors' and trainees' interviews were the main source of data for the study. The interviews were recorded mostly by audiotape recording supplemented by note-taking. The value of tape recording interviews is widely recognised by social and educational researchers. Powney and Watts (1987) point out that:

Using a tape recorder frees the interviewer to concentrate upon the task at hand-exploring the interviewee's account....Truth lies on the tape, it becomes objective fact through transcription, whilst the researcher's own understanding of what was happening and being said in the interview are relegated to 'unreliable' data (Powney & Watts, 1987, p.147).

Audio recording in spite of the fact that it holds the truth on the tape has some recognisable disadvantages. It can have an effect on the interviewees by making them "more guarded about what they say (and how they say it), especially when sensitive material is being discussed" (Vulliamy, 1990, p.105). It can also not capture important characteristics, which give additional layer of meaning to spoken words like gestures, facial expressions and postures (Powney & Watts, 1987). Furthermore, mechanical or technical problems may arise which can lead to loss of valuable information. Tape recording therefore, can have its drawbacks. To minimise some of these problems associated with the use of tape recording, I made note-taking an important part of all interview engagements whether formal or informal during the fieldwork. To reduce reactivity too as a result of the use or the presence of the recording machine, I used a pocket size recorder with an inbuilt microphone but interviewees were made aware of it.

4.12. Mentors and Link Tutors Interviews

The mentors and Link tutors interviews were conducted on an individual basis unlike the trainees/mentees interviews, which were done in groups as there had been initial

group discussions with the mentors and link tutors. As discussed earlier, most of the mentors and link tutors knew of my interest and professional background and I often attempted to use it to my advantage by building a relationship of common concern for problems about the implementation of mentoring. In the interviews, I adopted the stance of an 'embattled colleague' (Vulliamy, 1990) identifying myself as someone who had similar professional concerns to theirs. This had a positive effect on the interview atmosphere with the mentors and link tutors ready and willing to share candid opinions about the problems associated with the introduction of mentoring. Most mentors and link tutors seem to welcome the idea of talking to someone about mentoring particularly how it had affected their work and the strategies they had adopted to cope with its demands.

I faced some unexpected difficulties in my attempt to seek information about other mentors and link tutors attitudes towards mentoring for understanding the general school attitude and the extent to which they represent shared values. Some mentors and link tutors were unwilling to respond to questions that sought to seek information about how they viewed other mentor's and link tutor's attitudes towards mentoring. A few were, however, willing although with some hesitation. I subsequently abandoned this perhaps direct line of inquiry to gauge the general school and college attitude through informal discussions outside the formal setting of the interviews. I took opportunities at leisure times to get into conversations with mentors and link tutors outside the primary sample identified. This proved to be helpful in shedding more light on the general school and college attitude towards mentoring.

All mentor and link tutor interviews were recorded on audiotape and nobody objected to this.

4.13 Mentees/Trainees Interviews

It is the expectation and the opinion of some educational researchers (e.g. Vulliamy, 1990) that, in interviewing students in groups sometimes students' 'true' views would be suppressed because they may be contrary to the views of the majority of the groups. However, I found the opposite. In my experience interviewing students in pairs and groups of three or four generated healthy discussion and enriched the data. The decision to use group interviews with the students was fuelled by my earlier suspicion during trial interviews that students may be either exaggerating or misrepresenting the truth. Consequently I put them into groups of two or four and stressed at the beginning of each interview that each give me an honest individual response or opinions to each question. The disagreement or agreement expressed within a group about an issue served as a useful validity check. A beneficial aspect of the group interview was also that it allowed trainees to engage in focus group discussions and enriched the data.

All trainee interviews took place in a quiet and comfortable environment with little possibility of distraction or intrusion. Powney and Watts (1987) point out that being within earshot or eyesight of other people significant to the interviewee, noisy environment, and spaces liable to constant interruption can adversely affect participants involved in educational interviews. For this reason, care was taken to locate trainee interviews in places where they were unlikely to have any outside interference and trainees could talk freely. Interviews were conducted at times which suited the trainees and in places of their choice. Most of the interviews were held in the afternoons and in their resource room or at the head teacher's office with permission.

4.14 Observation

Observation as a research technique was also used in the study. The focus of observation was to develop a sense of how adequate facilities and equipment were for supporting trainees and mentor assessment and also teaching. Observations in this context were guided by the following key questions:

- (i) What facilities are available to support mentor assessment of the practical teaching skills of mentees?
- (ii) What kinds of curriculum materials are in use (text books, other reading books and equipment) to support trainees in learning to teach?
- (iii) What is the nature of class enrolment and what effect does it appear to have on classroom interaction and management by trainees? For example are the classes of average enrolment so that they can support classroom group learning activity?
- (iv) One of the key areas of the new programme is reflective teaching. What resources are available in the school and in the classroom to help trainees improve upon their teaching? For instance, are there sufficient and adequate basic materials and equipment to help trainees improve upon their teaching or to help them reflect?

By undertaking the fieldwork and visiting the schools and the colleges and listening to mentors, trainees, link tutors and other staff conversation on the subject of mentoring and attending some of the study circle meetings I was able to acquire a sense of place and value of mentoring in the case study areas. Also by following the example of Lewin (1990) in noting the dust on the science apparatus, in this instance students' files, assessment materials and profiles, I assessed how frequently mentors and link tutors

used or made reference to them. All of these “unobtrusive measures” (Webb et al., 1966 cited in Lewin, 1990), provided a valuable source of corroboration or contradiction of data collected and therefore, served as an important means of triangulating some aspects of the data. Observation also focused on trainees’ profile samples. The key observation questions were: How have tutors assessed trainees’ teaching and what comments (if any) have been written as feedback to trainees? Secondly, what do these samples of trainees’ assessment emphasise? Another important aspect was also classroom observation. Here the focus was on the nature of classroom teaching and learning, and how that might shed some insight into the nature of mentor assessment of trainees. These observations also served as a form of triangulating data obtained from interviews and documents and helped to provide a fuller picture of the culture of mentoring, teaching, learning and mentor support to trainees in the case study areas.

4.15 Documentary Sources

Documentary sources were also used for the study. Yin (1994) points out that documentary information is of importance to every case study topic and therefore should be the object of explicit data collection plans. Furthermore, it can serve to corroborate or augment evidence from other sources. Documentary sources were an important focus of this study. The documents that were used were the policy document, which reflects the changing forms of initial teacher training in Ghana and highlights the current policy of mentoring at the post-secondary teacher training level in Ghana. Specific documents in this category that were used were the Guidelines/handbook for mentors and profiles of students. Other documents were the Report of the National Conference on Teacher Education and its Agencies in Ghana (University of Education Winneba 1998), Impact Study Report, the Basic Education Sector Assessment School

Review: Curriculum, Instruction and Teachers' Report on Teacher Training in Ghana (Ministry of Education, 1995) and the Report of the Education Commission on Teacher Education, June 1993).

All these documents helped in building a comprehensive picture of the key concerns and practical strategies adopted in resolving problems at initial teacher training in Ghana since the introduction of mentoring. They also helped to develop an understanding of the extent to which views and practices reflected policy developments in initial teacher training since the introduction of mentoring.

4.16 Validity

The main disadvantage with conducting research in a very familiar setting or using informants, who know the researcher in the context of professional practice, is that objectivity in the research process may be undermined with subsequent effect on the validity of the findings and analysis. It is therefore, important to set clear guidelines on how I conducted myself during the research process in order to reduce any unintended influences that might adversely affect the validity of the study. The method or strategies I adopted to ensure that the findings and the analyses are valid are discussed in the subsequent sections.

(a) The Identity of the Researcher in the Field.

In this study my identity was very important because of my previous professional involvement with some of the tutors and mentors. This could raise concern about the validity and trustworthiness of the data and its interpretation. From September 1993 to September 2001 I was a member of the Faculty of Education and the Psychology and Education Department of the University College of Education of Winneba, which is charged with designing pre-service and in-service training programmes for teachers in

Ghana. I have been involved in the planning and designing of pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes. Thus my professional involvement with the programme's development or introduction will possibly influence what programme participants say when interviewed. Cotterill and Letherby (1994) have noted that once in the field "the researcher is both put and puts himself into different roles which are relevant to the identity of the researcher as a person" (p.116). Citing evidence from their research and others, they point out how personal identity in relation to a research topic can encourage positive effects in research. In their view, being perceived by those studied as a person who share similar experiences seems to eliminate fear about the purpose of the research and can pave the way for very informative talk. Though the cases they cite were often dealing with highly emotive topics, such as women's experiences with miscarriage and it could be argued these benefit from shared experiences, and in such instances a model of understanding of research issues could be developed through empathy between the researcher and the researched. Nevertheless, my professional involvement in a less emotive sphere like designing pre-service teacher education programmes like the one being studied can influence informants perceptions or experiences in relation to the research topic. This could hinder rather than promote development of understanding and could also affect the validity of the study. Thus, although in qualitative inquiry the identity of the researcher in relation to the research topic can be useful, it would appear that the important thing is how the researcher's identity is managed in the research process to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the data and its interpretations. Since I was known to some informants, and also familiar to the research setting from that point of view I could be labelled as a partial 'insider'. My previous experiences in the research setting gave consequences to different roles which I often had to assign to myself during the conduct of the research

and the implications it had for the data collection. Two of the roles which I identified for the fieldwork were the “expert” and the “kindred spirit” roles described by Cotterill and Letherby (1994) as roles that might have effect on the research process. Whilst in the field there were occasions when I was viewed as an “expert” with ready-made solutions to the problems being faced with mentoring because of my previous involvement and more so because I was coming from the U. K to evaluate the programme. Hammersley & Atkinson (1993) commenting on the role of the “expert” state that:

the model of the expert often seems to suggest that the social researcher is, or should be, a person who is extremely well informed as to ‘problems’ and their solution (p. 75).

This role was sensed from mentors, link tutors and also some colleague lecturers from the University of Cape Coast and University College of Education of Winneba who anticipated that having returned from Britain, I have some ready-made solutions. This required a lot of tact especially when I was confronted by mentors, tutors and link tutors and colleague lecturers who wanted ‘expert’ opinion about mentoring. In fact showing knowledge and experiences and giving support when asked would prejudice the views of the informants so I avoided this, or when it was necessary I reserved such comments or requests to the end of the fieldwork.

Another role I identified for the fieldwork is the “kindred spirit” role. Cotterill & Letherby (1994) also commenting on the “kindred spirit” role state:

The kindred spirit is a role which may be allocated to the researcher by her respondents or may be one she seeks to adopt herself. This can occur when the focus of the research concerns complex experiences (or issues) which both the researcher and her respondents share (p. 120)

I felt it was most likely that some mentors, link tutors and colleague lecturers would view me as one who shared their concerns beyond mere research interest. As pointed out earlier, even though I did not behave as an “expert” and give promises or answers, as someone sharing the same concerns beyond mere research interest worked to the advantage of the study as it made mentors, tutors, trainees and colleague lecturers show great enthusiasm about participating in the study by expressing their views which provided rich information for the study. I, therefore, capitalised upon it by suggesting that expressed views would be useful in addressing future changes.

(b) Confidentiality

Again, while in the field, I took deliberate steps to reassure informants about confidentiality and to stress that the investigation was meant for research purposes. Suspicion, as Hammersley and Atkinson (1993) point out, may be fuelled by the way activities of the fieldwork are carried out.

(c) Spending considerable length of time in the study areas before formal interviewing:

I also spent some considerable length of time in the study areas before engaging informants in formal interviewing. During this early period, I engaged mentors, tutors and trainees in informal discussions about social life or general issues relating to mentoring and school experience or teacher training which provided insight into some of the issues to be captured in the formal interview session. Hammersley & Atkinson (1993) point out the value in doing this by stating that:

Especially in the early days of field negotiations it may be advantageous to find more ordinary topics of conversation with a view to establishing one's identity as a 'normal' 'regular'; 'decent'

person...they can throw additional and unforeseen light on informants, and yield fresh sources of data (p. 82).

Thus, between two and four days were spent in this activity. During this period, I asked trainees questions such as:

What are some of the important things you have learnt on your teacher training course through mentoring?

The mentors were also asked about their general impressions about the current teacher training programme which hinges on mentoring. This strategy enabled me to develop insight into some of the concerns about the new teacher training programme, which I entered as field notes and helped to put views and issues about mentoring into proper perspective.

(d) Using similar data collection techniques in the two study areas:

Furthermore, to ensure consistency and preserve the validity of the study, similar data collection techniques were used in the two study sites. This took the form of:

- (i) Semi-structured interviews that were formed around the key identified issues of the study.
- (ii) Samples of completed trainee profile work, which were derived from those who were interviewed.
- (iii) Observational questions, which were used to guide the research in what to look out for while in the study, site.

- (iv) Observation of classroom teaching and interactions between mentors, trainees and pupils.
- (v) Additional observation of classroom interaction between mentors, trainees and pupils during the second fieldwork to serve as a means of validating views about classroom teaching and learning through mentoring from interviews.
- e) Undertake a second field trip in September 2003:

I also undertook a second field trip in September 2003, which offered me the opportunity to revisit issues for clarification, and authentication, which also served as a means of validating the findings to ensure its trustworthiness. During this visit, a summary of the findings and the interviews were played back to the interviewees and they were asked to comment in writing or through discussions. Bryman (2003) refers to this approach as 'respondent validation' and he concludes that it is an important way of ensuring authenticity and trustworthiness in qualitative research. I believe this approach added to the credibility of the study findings, as it provided the research participants the opportunity to have access to what they said through the interviews. Adherence to the strategies described undoubtedly improved the data collected, although it must be pointed out that certain factors were beyond my control. For example it is quite possible that some of the interviewees might perceive me as an expert given my status and position. However, triangulation of the data helped to ensure the validity of the study.

(f) Triangulation

Another way by which information gathered in the study was checked for its validity was through triangulation. Lincoln & Guba (1985) commenting on the importance of triangulation in ensuring the validity of research findings state:

Triangulation of data is crucially important in naturalistic studies. As the study unfolds and particular pieces of information come to light, steps should be taken to validate each against at least one other source (for example, a second interview) and/ or a second method (for example, an observation in addition to an interview (p.283).

Furthermore, information gathered in the study was checked for its validity through seeking other opinion on issues in which interviewees seem to contradict each other. For instance, if there was doubt about information being given, I repeatedly raised it in subsequent interviews with interviewees to help, to get to the bottom of issues. I also made use of group interviews to help validate the information given.

In summary, my identity was critical in the research process and therefore, steps were taken to ensure that the data collected was a true reflection of the views of the interviewees and actual practices. I therefore, ensured that during the field research I did not provide what might be considered as an expert's advice; spent considerable length of time at the areas of study before any formal interviewing, and engaged in general issues; maintained the confidentiality of the respondents, used similar data collection techniques in the two study areas, and undertook a second field visit to validate the findings and finally, triangulated the data

4.17 Data Analysis

I envisaged a serious challenge at the formal analysis stage of this research as far as data analysis was concerned. Going through the qualitative research literature, it is clear that there is no one outstanding method or 'cookbook recipe' for analysing qualitative data. Stake (1994) points out, qualitative "method...provides persuasions, not recipes" (p.77). Approaches therefore, differ depending on the purpose and design of a particular research study. There is also lack of detailed and comprehensive analysis procedures in qualitative research reports to guide one in considering suitable approaches. This situation, perhaps, is in character with the complex and diverse nature of issues qualitative research addresses, which also renders its data analysis process equally complex and diverse. These problems notwithstanding, there are principles outlined in the research literature, which can provide useful guides in developing an appropriate framework for analysing qualitative data. Watts and Bentley (1985) argue that in developing an approach to qualitative data analysis there is need for "methodological congruence". By this they claim the analysis of the data should be consistent or compatible with the general underlying philosophy of the research. In this study I undertook to ensure congruence between the approach to analysis and the philosophical underpinnings of the research as described in section (4.4). This position may be summarised in terms of the purpose of the study.

In this case study my interest was on the experience of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher education, in particular the perceptions, experiences and values attached to its practice. Another important dimension of the study was its evaluation focus. Viewed in terms of educational innovation as indeed the introduction of mentoring in Ghana is, it was necessary to understand what was needed for effective implementation

of mentoring at initial teacher training in Ghana. The suggestion of Stake (1994) about analysing case study data was useful in deciding on an appropriate analysis framework for this study. Stake (1994) points out that with case studies, the primary task is to come to understand the case through teasing out relationships, probing issues and aggregating the data categorically. This essentially is a thematic approach to data analysis and involves developing themes and patterns from the data (Glasser & Strauss 1967, Guba & Lincoln 1985). The way in which this was done in this study is the subject of the next section.

4.18 The Data Analysis Approach: Extracting Themes for the Analysis

The analysis of the case study report in chapter 5 was based on ‘thematic’ analysis of a set of data gathered in the form of interviews, observation, field notes and relevant documentation. The documents were of use in providing general philosophy and workings of implementation of the mentoring programme at initial teacher education in Ghana. The data providing insights into the practice of mentoring came mainly from interviews and observation notes. Although there were anticipated issues investigated for understanding, the analysis was not subordinate to this. I set out to construct distinctive descriptors of the major themes that emerged from the data. This is in keeping with the advice of Hitchcock and Hughes (1992) that:

It is important to note that the materials themselves are placed against the research focus and not the other way round which might lead to forcing the materials into the researcher’s prearranged ideas and hypotheses (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1992, p.98).

By doing this a different dimension of the analysis emerged. The analysis primarily involved an iterative process of reading, reflecting and coding the interview transcripts and then drawing out major themes and patterns of views from it. It also involved

inductive reasoning and in some respects reflects the constant comparative method of analysis (Glasser & Strauss, 1967) as described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p.126-`47). This meant asking pertinent questions of the data (or ‘interrogating’ the data) with questions such as:

- What are the recurring words, phrases, and topics in the data?
- What concepts did interviewees use to capture what they say or do?
- What emerging themes or patterns can be identified in the phrases, propositions or questions? (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).
- What assumptions underlie what mentors, trainees and tutors say about mentoring, teaching and teacher education?

It has to be reckoned that not all the interview data were helpful in this respect. There were certain portions that offered little or no insight into the research focus. These were subsequently discarded, they were however, few.

The data processing involved cutting out sections of the interview data on particular subjects or themes, and grouping them for description and analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). I typed all the interview data onto a computer and produced copies for the analysis. Various sections of the transcribed interview data were cut under different topics and themes and the issues they address were summarised and used in the write-up of the analysis. I constantly referred to my field notes for clarification on some of the interview statements and also went to and fro in the transcribed data to gain understanding of the issues to help me draw connections and conclusions. The result is Chapter 5 which focuses on the analysis of the research findings. In summary, the principle behind this section of the formal analysis stage is that of reconstructing the

data to answer the questions posed by the research. As it was a qualitative study the researcher's values informed this process of analysis. In fact I was as much a part of the research content as my interviewees, as on some occasion, it was pertinent to contribute to the discussion in an attempt to engage in more constructive discussions.

Thus, the analysis was informed by the way I sought to construct the meaning of issues as I came to understand them and by the objectives of the study. As pointed out by Powney and Watts (1987)

An analyst of interviews does not merely recognise facts and phenomena present in the responses of the interviewee. Rather on the basis of that we perceive things from a point of view, our intentions inform our attention. That is analysis is a reconstructive and not a reproductive process (Powney and Watts 1987, p.162).

It was sometimes necessary to edit the interview transcripts to help provide clarity. This was necessary because often the interviewees used local jargons or colloquial phrases that might have been difficult to understand by an unfamiliar audience. Quotations were used to provide evidence of the views expressed. In selecting the quotes, I took into consideration the relative emphasis they gave to particular issues and views on those issues. More than one quotation was used to show the variety in the way interviewees shared a common view or the kind of emphasis they gave to particular issue. Together, these quotes served as an index of validity for the study and thus added credibility to the issues that emerged from the study.

4.19 The Case Study Report

The case study report centred on three important areas. One area focused on the description of the case study areas. It discussed features and characteristics of the case study areas which helped to put the substantive issues (i.e. the main analysis of findings)

into perspective. The second aspect which is the main analysis is covered in chapter 5. The findings are reported and analysed based on data pooled across all the two case study areas. In other words it was not restricted to one site but involved a cross-site analysis. However, issues particular to one site but not to others were noted and their significance explored and discussed. The key findings were supported for the most part, by illustrative quotations.

A discussion of the key outcomes of the study is reported in chapter 6. This includes the lessons learned, personal reflections and recommendations for further research. The shortcomings of the research are also noted, and finally suggestions for improving mentoring at the post-secondary teacher education level in Ghana are made.

The review of the relevant literature played an important role in the construction of meaning from the data. Parts of the analytic process involved applying concepts or issues from the literature review to the raw data in an attempt to make meaning of them (Hughes, 1994). Thus, portions of the reviewed literature (Chapter 3) served to illuminate the issues that were discussed in chapter 5. The literature review also represents my own journey of understanding into issues associated with mentoring.

The next chapter focuses on the data presentation and analysis.

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the data from the two case study areas are presented and analysed. The data to be analysed included interview transcripts, sample of trainees' profiles and dairies, trainees' self assessment files and field notes. Other documents such as official documents and booklets were also used.

Data analysis according to Bogdan & Biklen (1992) is a continuous process. The analysis of the raw data begins simultaneously when the interviews are conducted. This study adopted the same procedure. According to Bodgan & Biklen (1992), there is a general understanding of the process of analysing qualitative data as they put it:

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others. Analysis involves working with data, organising them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesising them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992, p.153).

The study involved a multi-site case study approach in Ghana focusing on two areas which were the Cape Coast and Foso districts. These two areas were chosen for the study by convenience sampling (Refer to Chapter 4). The data represents information collected on two field research visits. The data brings together views expressed by mentors[n=20], trainees[n=20], link tutors[n=4] and officials[n=6] from the University of Cape Coast and University of Winneba, the Teacher Education Division and two Teacher Training Colleges in Ghana respectively making an overall sample of fifty [n=50]. The interview transcripts from this broad spectrum of respondents and information

from trainees' profiles, trainees' self assessment files and dairies and official documents provided a rich source of data for the study. Brief descriptions of the case study areas are presented in Appendix (4) of the thesis.

The data has been organised to find answers to the following research questions and the issues raised in the study:

- 1 How adequate was the conceptualisation of the mentoring policy for the teacher education context in Ghana and how does it affect the implementation process?
- 2 As a process of change what experiences were required for the implementation of mentoring as an approach to initial teacher education?
- 3 How well do mentors feel prepared in providing support for trainees during school experience?
- 4 How do trainees perceive the support and assessment of mentors in enhancing their professional development?
- 5 How do trainees perceive the training programme in helping them to acquire the skills and confidence to teach in the schools?
- 6 What problems, if any, do trainees face by studying in the colleges and practising in the schools and how are they striving to overcome them?
- 7 What problems have confronted the effective implementation of the mentorship scheme as an approach to initial teacher education in Ghana?

The data represents views of the interviewees across the two case study areas. It is important to stress that the data has been presented to reflect the consistency with which the evidence is replicated from one case study area to the other. As such, the data

is presented to reflect the similarities and differences of the views expressed in the two case study areas. This underlying principle is in line with conducting a multi-site case study research. Yin (1994) has emphasised that replicating logic in case study research is more important than sampling logic; as Yin (1994) puts it:

Across cases, the report should indicate the extent of the replication logic and why certain cases were predicted to have certain results, whereas other case,-if any-were predicted to have contrasting results (Yin, 1994, p.51).

As indicated in Chapter 4 the data is presented using direct quotes of the interviewees and more than one quotation is used to emphasise the issues which emerged from the themes.

The data reconstruction involved interrogating the data to find the recurring words or phrases, the concepts the interviewees used to capture what they said and the emerging themes or patterns that were identified in the phrases or statements of the interviewees. Essentially, the data reconstruction involved a thematic approach. (Refer to Chapter 4). As a result of the iterative process of reading and interrogating the data to find connections or themes, it was organised into various themes to reflect the views of mentors, trainees, link tutors and the officials and to answer the research questions posed by the study. The data is therefore, presented under the following themes:

- Mentors' views about the introduction and purpose of mentoring at initial teacher education in Ghana;
- Trainees' views about the introduction and purpose of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher training in Ghana,
- Mentors' views on in-service training in mentorship,
- Mentor support and assessment of trainees;
- Trainees' views about mentor support and assessment,

- Mentors' views about the use and development of assessment criteria in the mentorship scheme,
- Trainees' views on the development and use of assessment criteria,
- Trainees' views on the use of feedback in the mentorship scheme in monitoring and promoting their progress and learning,
- Views of significant others or officials about the implementation of the mentorship scheme (and),
- Constraints on the effective implementation of the mentorship scheme.

These views are also augmented with observation notes made during the field work and also documents collected especially the policy document for the implementation of the mentorship scheme at the Post-Secondary Teacher Training level in Ghana (PSTT).

The next section presents the data or the views of mentors, trainees, link tutors and officials in that order about the introduction and the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana.

5.2 Mentors' views about the Introduction and Purpose of the Mentorship

Scheme at Initial Teacher Training in Ghana.

One of the major reasons for the introduction of the mentorship/school attachment scheme at the post-secondary teacher training level in Ghana was to use mentor support and assessment information from mentors to enhance the professional development of trainees and also to help trainees to acquire appropriate school experience (refer to Chapter 1). The mentors were therefore, interviewed to express their views and experiences about the importance of the scheme in helping trainees' in acquiring

appropriate school experience. More than three-quarters of the mentors shared the view that the mentoring scheme was helping trainees to gain adequate school experience. The following statements illustrate mentors' perception about its purpose:

“The new programme is a way of helping student teachers know more about pupils and school life . I am happy the trainees like it themselves” (Mentor, Zion JSS, Cape Coast).

“In fact, the reason for the introduction of the school attachment programme is to help trainees acquire knowledge and skills so that they can appreciate the complex nature of teaching. I think all things being equal this programme can produce better teachers” (Mentor, Foso Training College).

These views clearly suggest an underlying conviction that the mentorship scheme is a mechanism for promoting trainees' professional development is held by the majority of the mentors in the case study areas. They however, suggested that they had very little understanding of what they might do in providing support and in assessing trainees' which will create opportunities for their professional development and learning. The general perception regarding the educational value of the mentorship scheme as put by the majority of mentors (80%) was:

“It has been introduced to help the student teachers have knowledge about teaching through the support mentors provide..... the problem is it is not easy to use the student files to plan to assist them. We have a lot of workload.... we teach large classes and we need proper training in the areas to assess the student teachers” (Mentor, Foso District Council JSS).

“ I think the reason for the introduction of the programme is to help the students learn about school life and pupils and to manage the classroom well. We mentors have a problem for this programme is more than teaching practice that we knew before ... we are supposed to do a lot of things for the students which we are not very sure of...and the large class size and the work load make things difficult for us. I am happy the students are forced to study and do their best because of fear of failure” (Mentor, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS).

“I think the programme is meant to help the trainees acquire knowledge about school experience to come out as good teachers. The major problem for me is the support from the mentors as most of us do not have the skills and the time to assess and provide the needed support for the trainees. All the same most of the trainees are doing very well so that they can get their certificates” (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

As discussed earlier, generally the mentorship scheme was introduced to help trainees’ professional development and learning through mentor support. In other words, mentor comments and assessment from trainees’ files were seen as the organising framework for the professional development and learning of trainees. This was to serve as a source of motivation to improve trainees’ professional development and learning. The majority of the mentors interviewed about (75%) reported that they had come to appreciate the value of mentoring through mentor support that required trainees to show greater commitment in professional development and learning.

However, more than three quarters of mentors’ understanding of mentoring for improving trainees’ professional development and learning was not particularly in terms

of using comments or notes from trainees' files or profiles in promoting intrinsic commitment from trainees to foster professional development or learning.

Instead, it was more of a conviction of creating a situation where the student teachers are "forced" to spend time learning to teach or do their best because of support and assessment from mentors which will help them to earn certificates in the end as seen in the statements above. The expression that was used repeatedly to describe how the mentorship scheme and mentor support can improve trainees' professional development and learning was "the new programme forces students to study and to learn to teach so that they can have their certificate". Such a perception of mentoring is in sharp contrast to one in which the focus is on the opportunities mentor support and assessment provide for trainees to engage in "deep learning approaches and reflection" (Ramsden, 1992; O'Neil, 1995; Butler & Winne, 1995; Schon, 1987).

In fact, very few mentors articulated a conception of mentor support in which the emphasis was on adopting support and assessment strategies "in which trainees gain awareness of their own learning strategies and efficiency" (Gipps, 1994a). It could be argued that although mentor support and assessment can provide extrinsic motivation for learning, what would help trainees to enhance their professional development and learning comes from effective mentor support and assessment strategies (Fish 1995).

Similarly Broadfoot (1996) touching on assessment strategies in promoting school learning rightly states:

The type of assessment we use will play a large part in determining the learning attitudes and strategies that learners adopt, and also in influencing the extent to which learning, whether in school or in professional settings offers the opportunity to develop learning ability" (p.32).

It can be inferred from the statements of the majority of the mentors that their support and assessment strategies were not helping trainees to develop their learning ability.

The lack of effective mentor support and assessment in the case study areas raise questions about the adequacy of the mentorship scheme for teacher training in Ghana. Klenowski(1997) and Schon (1987) have stated that mentor support and assessment should encourage the development of "...metacognitive skills, independent learning, critical self evaluation and reflection in trainees" but these were missing in the teacher training context in Ghana.

A reasonable explanation why this does not feature prominently in views and insights into mentor support and assessment practices was because even though mentor support and assessment in teacher education has been conceptualised to embrace these notions as the evidence discussed in Chapters 1 & 3 illustrate, the main emphasis of mentor support and assessment for the teacher training level in Ghana was to provide marks or grades for certification due to mentors' inability to use comments from students' files and profiles to help their professional development. The following comments from the majority of the mentors about (70%) tend to sum up this view:

"It is difficult to use the students' files to plan for there is no time. How do we teach these large classes and at the same time have time for the notes in the file to plan for the student teacher? Teaching practice is now considered very important in getting a certificate it is difficult to stay with a colleague as a friend in the classroom, assess him, and say he has failed to deny him of a certificate" (Mentor, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

"It is simply not practicable to do all the things we are expected to do as mentors in this programme..... I wonder whether the planners were aware of the large classes we

teach and expect us to do all these for the students. For me it is very difficult to fail the student. You know as teachers we all need certificates”. (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

In fact, the focus on “assessment for certification” appears to overshadow the professional importance of using mentor support and assessment practices to enhance trainees’ professional development and learning.

As indicated the majority of the mentors about (70%) saw the “assessment for certification” as one purpose of mentor support and assessment of trainees. As one mentor in Philip Quaque Boys’ put it “ the introduction of mentoring has brought seriousness into teaching for the students are now working hard to get their certificates and the mentors are also happy working with them”.

There was evidence from observation and comments that the implementation and practice of the mentorship scheme bore little relationship to the rationale for its introduction. This was because as the comments above suggest many mentors had found a different role for it. As the research revealed, what was really valued about the mentorship scheme has very little to do with the philosophy behind its introduction for enhancing the professional development and learning of trainees.

From the views expressed the main things valued about the mentorship scheme could be summarised as follows:

- Trainees now show seriousness about teaching practice because of the mentorship scheme
- The mentorship scheme has provided extrinsic motivation for trainees to practise the act of teaching

- The mentorship scheme has compelled mentors to put in effort at providing support for trainees because as one mentor put it “we are duty bound to assess the student teachers”.

The high-stakes context in which mentor support and assessment of trainees was being conducted had focused much attention on providing support and assessing for “certification” and was therefore, an over riding factor on the implementation of the mentorship scheme. What we have therefore, are mentors choosing support and assessment strategies based on the extrinsic worth in relation to providing what they considered valid data about a trainee’s performance. Therefore, although the intrinsic merit of mentor support and assessment for promoting trainees’ professional development and learning was acknowledged and desired this was not the case. The problem of large pupil enrolment also prevented mentors from having time to use information from students’ files to develop strategies aimed at enhancing trainees’ professional development and learning. The next section discusses trainees’ views on the introduction and purpose of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher training in Ghana.

5.3 Trainees’ Views about the Introduction and Purpose of the Mentorship Scheme in Initial Teacher Training in Ghana.

Fishbein and Azan (1992) state that for any innovation to gain the desired impact the people for whom the programme is made and the implementers must be able to perceive clearly what the programme is about. Trainees who are expected to benefit from mentor support in the mentorship scheme were interviewed to find out their views about the mentorship scheme. There was a view shared by the majority of the trainees about

(80%) that the mentorship scheme was helping them to gain appropriate school experience. The following statements illustrate mentees' perception about the mentorship scheme:

“ I think the programme is to help us teach better.... by staying in the schools for a long time and interacting with the teachers and the pupils we learn real things about the school and teaching which will help us become good teachers after our training”
(Mentee, Zion JSS, Cape Coast).

“In the old system the four weeks for teaching practice was too short I think it did not help trainees to know much about how to teach and handle pupils. With this new programme we at least have some time to learn how to teach in a real school environment with pupils, it will help us to know the children better and know more about school life”(Mentee, Philip Quaque Boys' JSS, Cape Coast).

The majority of the trainees about (75%) also felt the school attachment programme provided them with the opportunity to practise what they have learnt in college. A sample of their views is as follows:

“The school attachment is to help us to practise what we have learnt in the college in the classrooms. I have seen that even though we learn a lot of things in the college it is during teaching practice that we try the things we learn in college. I think you can become a good teacher by practising or experiencing teaching in the schools” (Mentee, Foso District Council JSS).

Like the views of the mentors these views of trainees clearly suggest an underlying conviction that the mentorship scheme is viewed as a mechanism for promoting trainees' professional learning and development. However, more than three quarters of the trainees about (80%) also felt that in addition to enhancing their knowledge in school experience it also served the purpose of helping them to obtain certificates. A sample of trainees' views on this issue were expressed as follows:

“In this new programme the marks you get from your mentor is added to your final examination mark before you are given a certificate. You know we want to get the certificate so we have to work very hard during teaching practice” (Trainee, Foso District Council JSS).

“This time teaching practice is very important for the marks from teaching practice forms part of the final examination grade. I think this new programme was introduced to make trainees attach importance to teaching practice” (Trainee, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

On their part the majority of student teachers admitted that the introduction of the mentorship scheme had indeed contributed to improving their knowledge of teaching and encouraged them to attach importance to teaching practice. As they put it:

“The new programme keeps us on our toes, it provides us with real things about teaching and help us to test and remember some of the things we have learned in college. We have seen that teaching is a very challenging, interesting but a difficult task (Trainee, Foso D/C JSS).

“The school attachment programme has changed the old teaching practice when students go to teaching practice to do their own thing. This time you have to stay in the school and take part in all activities in the school so you get to know a lot of things before you finally become a teacher after leaving college. Mentors’ assessment in all these areas will help you get your certificate” (Trainee, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS Cape Coast)

Clearly, the idea of certification has featured so prominently in the views of both mentors and trainees to the extent that it needs to be discussed further to understand the underlying factors causing this belief as there is a mismatch of the philosophy of the introduction of the mentorship scheme and what pertains in the schools. The next section discusses further mentors’ and trainees’ views on the “certification syndrome”.

5.4 Assessing for Marks or Certification “Syndrome”

Both mentors and trainees alike felt that in its current form, mentor support and assessment of trainees in the mentorship scheme was intended mainly for providing grades or marks for the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast to make certification decisions. At the Zion JSS in Cape Coast, a mentor’s comment encapsulates this common feeling:

“What we are trying to do now is to assess the student teachers to help them get certificates from the Institute of Education. When you look at the handbook the areas to assess the student teachers are just too many, the impression you get is that the whole teacher training programme expects us (mentors) to assess the trainees to have marks or grades to qualify them for certificates for teaching” (Mentor, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

This was a view shared by trainees too about (75%) of whom also suggested that this was actually what the mentor support and assessment focused on:

“We hear our mentors saying we assess you to get grades or marks so that in the end you get your certificates” (Trainee, Foso D/C JSS).

“I know the whole programme was designed to help us become good teachers through the help from mentors and their coaching. The problem is the mentors keep telling us the whole programme is new and the areas they assess us are too many.... so they are doing their best to help us get marks or grades to qualify us for certificates. As for us we are doing our best to get good grades from the mentors to get our certificates” (Trainee, Philip Quaake Boys’ JSS Cape Coast).

Another trainee speaking about the Teaching/Learning Aid he had made to use for teaching added:

“We spend time to make Teaching Aids to help us get good marks so that we shall pass and get our certificates” (Trainee, Foso D/C JSS).

It was evident from such views and other observations that the need to provide grades/marks completely dominated mentor support and assessment in the schools. The whole practice of mentor support and assessment in the mentorship scheme focused on this and again raised the question about whether any gain was being made from it professionally. Focusing on grades/marks to credit achievement in a teacher training context could limit the validity or rationale for the introduction of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher training in Ghana as there will be instances in the professional learning process where scoring performance numerically will have no clear professional

meaning or significance. The Handbook on Mentorship and Supervision of Trainees (GES/TED 2000) recommends that professional qualities of teacher development such as preparation of schemes of work, lesson planning, lesson delivery, using student-centred approaches; classroom organisation, management and control; assessing pupils' performance and learning and production, and use of teaching/learning materials and ability to instil interest and enthusiasm, should receive credit in the assessment process of trainees (GES/TED 2000 p.20). In practical terms this is not being implemented.

Yet no provision is made in mentor support and assessment to give credit to the professional development qualities of trainees. Rather, mentor support and assessment information focus more on grading or marks to help trainees pass or obtain certificates.

As Moon & Mayes (1995) point out, it is important to integrate values into the structures of an assessment scheme for initial teacher training because:

(it)...ensures a holistic approach to assessment and one that emphasises the unique significance of preparing for entry into (the teaching) profession” (Moon & Mayes, 1995 p.240).

It would be important, for instance, for trainees' to see that affective qualities and values help in making decisions about the readiness to teach. The case study evidence showed that there was very little awareness of such issues by mentors. It needs pointing out that, only about (25%) mentors showed concern for these issues. A typical comment was:

“We try to score high marks for students to help them pass but there is no point scoring high marks and passing the students when our assessment tells us very little about the trainee” (Lead Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

It can be inferred from the comments made above that assessing solely for marks or grades undermines the validity of teacher education support and assessment programme like mentoring where feedback from mentors is essential and could give the trainee a misleading picture of his/her teaching capabilities. As well as doubting the value of a mark as the final arbiter of teaching qualification, relying solely on marks overshadows the areas of weakness or strength of the student (Sadler, 1989).

Mentors were required to write comments on the professional learning domains of the trainees and their ability at showing resourcefulness in making use of the context before awarding the final marks or grade but the majority of the mentors use grades or marks due to lack of time.

Furthermore, aggregating issues from various assessments without clear descriptions of the professional learning domains they represent makes the total difficult to interpret in terms of what has or has not been achieved. This was a problem I faced when trying to make meaning of mentors' assessment of trainees in their profiles or files when some trainees told me that grades or scores from their mentors provided them with a picture as to whether they will get their certificates or not as the following comments illustrate:

“My mentor does not have time to discuss my teaching with me but he tells me my grade after teaching and I'm able to guess from the grades whether I am getting closer to getting my certificate or not” (Trainee, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

“My grades tell me where I am heading towards for my mentor tells me my grades after each lesson” (Trainee, Foso D/C JSS).

A few trainees about 5(25%) disagreed with the type of assessment received from their mentors which was based on grades and said it did not tell them much about their achievements and capabilities. Murphy and Joyce however, argue that marks are not necessarily bad and that:

Whether they are or not will depend first upon the quality of the assessment proceedings from which they are derived and secondly upon the understanding of their meaning possessed by those who use them (Murphy & Joyce, 1996, p.269).

From a careful inspection of samples of mentors' assessment from trainees' profiles and files there is considerable room for questions of their usefulness in promoting the professional development of trainees. Also mentors were not conducting their support and assessment under clearly defined plan or structure. A sample of mentors' comments sum up what was going on in the case study schools.

"We are simply not sure of what to do at times. The areas we assess the trainees are too many and every body does what he/she thinks can do. It is just up to the individual, it is not a jokeall we are concerned is to help the trainees get something" (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

There were however, few mentors about (25%) whose post-lesson discussion went beyond giving grades or marks for certification as indicated by the comments of a few mentors as they put it:

"We have too much work to do so we are doing the best to help the student teachers come out well . As for me I at times allow some student teachers to observe the trainee in my classroom and to discuss her teaching with her and this has been helping her to improve upon her teaching day-by-day" (Mentor, Philip Quaque Boys' JSS Cape Coast).

“I allow the student teacher some time to assess his teaching by asking him which aspects of his teaching he could have taught better....and how? I have also had a few discussions with him after observing his lessons and I think he is very happy with that”
(Mentor, Foso Catholic D/C JSS).

Evidence from the content analysis of trainees’ files showed that the content items varied widely in their scope and depth from mentor to mentor. Consequently, as Crooks et al (1996) point out this “...will limit interpretability and usefulness of the aggregated scores” (p.273), within and across the schools. In fact, it was difficult to attach any clear meaning to mentors’ support and assessment of trainees in relation to their professional learning and development. The marks or grades from mentors’ assessment of trainees would have had clearer meaning if the assessment were carefully planned to enhance their professional learning and development. The case study evidence showed that mentors’ support and assessment of trainees was not operating in this way in the schools. One other limitation of the current mentorship scheme in Ghana is that mentors’ assessment of trainees has been structured to contribute marks for use with the trainees’ examination marks to arrive at a final pass/fail grade. It could be argued that this imposes limitation on how the mentorship scheme could be used to help the professional development of trainees. As it has been discussed earlier in this section, mentor support and assessment in the schools operate wholly at odds with an approach which allows reporting professional attributes of trainees.

Another observation made was that assessing for “grades/certification” had resulted in mentors not having post-lesson discussions with the trainees. The following comment from a trainee at Foso D/C JSS sums up this:

“My mentor tells me I have been scoring high grades and I will surely get my certificate but he has never had time to coach me after teaching” (Trainee, Foso D/C JSS).

The case study evidence indicates that the current mentor support and assessment of trainees in the mentorship scheme in Ghana is making very little contribution as far as support and promoting trainees’ professional development and learning are concerned.

The “assessment for grades/certification syndrome” so prevalent in the case study areas had so skewed mentor support and assessment of trainees that it had led to a wrong perception of what mentor support and assessment of trainees in a teacher education context should be about. It is reasonable to state from the evidence gathered that the practice of assessing for certification or grades is the result of a poorly conceptualised scheme of mentorship for teacher education in Ghana.

There is the need to consider more carefully the possible concerns and preoccupations that may influence the practice of mentoring and limit its intended impact. This is why this research is important, because it attempts to understand some of the critical concerns within the school environment that might affect how and why mentors provide support and assess trainees in the mentorship scheme in Ghana. Some of the questions that need to be tackled are:

- What are some of the pressing problems in the school environment regarding the work of mentors and how do they affect the effective practice and implementation of the mentorship scheme?
- What should be done to improve conditions as the mentorship scheme is being implemented?

- How can the mentorship scheme be used in other ways unrelated to its original purpose without the risk of losing its focus?

It is clear from the case study evidence that to improve the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana these questions or issues need to be addressed and this will be done in the recommendations section of this thesis.

In addition, both mentors and trainees expressed concern about the number of assessment trainees should have to qualify them for certification as the Handbook for Supervision of Trainees (GES/TED 2000) is silent about this. The case study evidence showed an interest from both mentors and trainees to move towards a more prescriptive or specific system in which every mentor did the same number of assessment for trainees. It is fair to add that this interest had gained currency because the Handbook for mentors and trainees did not give any indication. A typical comment from the majority of mentors was:

“ We do not know the number of assessment a trainee should get to qualify him for a certificate. This means some trainees will have a lot whilst others will have few. I think this is not fair to mentors and the trainees” (Mentor, Zion JSS, Cape Coast).

“ We should be told the number of supervision a trainee should get to pass...I believe this will help us to assess trainees well” (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

“Knowing the number of assessment reports to pass a trainee is very important. The Ministry of Education and the teacher education division should be specific about this” (Mentor, Foso D/C JSS).

Trainees were also of the view that there should be some prescriptive form of assessment in which every mentor did the same number of assessment for trainees. A sample of the views of the majority of the trainees about (90%) was:

“ Some of us have got a lot of supervision from our mentors ...it is cheating because some of my friends say they have very few. We all need the same number of supervision” (Trainee, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS, Cape Coast).

“We have to know the number of reports that will qualify us for a certificate so that we prepare well. I am sure this will help us” (Trainee, Zion JSS, Cape Coast).

“My mentor tells me he does not know the number of reports to qualify me for a pass. I feel both mentors and trainees need to know this for them to plan teaching and supervision” (Trainee, Foso Catholic JSS).

It could be argued that a certain amount of prescription or specificity is necessary, but it could lead to the introduction of the mentorship scheme becoming “certification conscious” thus limiting its formative assessment purpose as a mechanism for improving trainees’ professional development and learning. A compromise would be the provision of a flexible number of mentor assessment of trainees to guide mentor support and assessment. This will have the advantage of helping to promote consistency and fairness and also provide the yardstick for monitoring mentor support and assessment of trainees.

In summary of this section, it is evident that mentors have been influenced largely by factors such as conditions in the schools which drive mentors’ actions, the summative

focus of mentor support and assessment of trainees and the lack of clarity in the practice and understanding of the mentorship scheme. The way in which mentoring is perceived and practised leaves considerable room for questioning whether its introduction has made any significant impact on trainees' professional development and learning. The findings clearly point to the need for a review of the mentorship scheme as a tool for teacher education in Ghana, particularly its conceptualisation and implementation. This is to ensure that the focus is on process to ensure the professional development of trainees and also to ensure that both mentors and trainees have a clear and consistent understanding of its purpose for teacher education.

One of the more pervasive views emerging from the case study was what I termed "certification syndrome". Time and again, as I talked to mentors and trainees there appeared to be a perceived notion that the purpose of the mentorship scheme is to use school experience for teacher certification in Ghana.

The next section discusses in-service training that mentors attended before the mentorship scheme started and how these courses prepared them in providing support for trainees.

5.5 Mentors' Views on In-Service Training in Mentorship

A section of the interviews concentrated on the type of in-service training (INSET) courses mentors and link tutors had attended and how the courses had prepared them in acquiring skills and knowledge in providing support for the trainees. In an attempt to investigate the initial preparations made in terms of training in preparing mentors and link tutors before the programme started, questions were asked about the relevance and

adequacy of the INSET course(s) attended. The case study mentors and link tutors had no exposure to the concept and practice of mentoring/mentorship during their own training as teacher trainees and therefore, the only training programme to expose them to the requirements and challenges demanded of the mentorship scheme was through INSET courses. The mentor and link tutor interview results revealed that majority about (90%) of mentors and all the 4(100%) link tutors received INSET directed specifically at the development of knowledge and skills in mentorship practices before the mentorship scheme started, as indicated by a sample of views from mentors and link tutors:

“We were given in-service training in mentoring for a period of about one month. The courses focused on mentoring.....how to provide support to the trainee as a mentor and how to assess the trainee’s teaching. The courses were well organised and we thought we had understood the points or what we should do with the student teachers in the classroom ... the problem started when the student teachers came to the schools. Truly, we saw that the training was not enough and there was the need for serious training”
(Mentor, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

“I attended in-service training course in Cape Coast and I remember we were taught a lot of things about mentoring and about how to keep the profile of trainees and a lot of things. I’m ashamed to say that I cannot do most of the things I was taught because I don’t have the skills..... I’m not sure of what to do”(Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

Case study mentors (about 90%) blamed many of the problems associated with the implementation of the mentorship scheme on the organisation of the INSET courses

before the start of the programme. A statement from a dejected mentor at Foso Catholic JSS sums up the views and the feelings of the mentors better as far as their preparation in providing support for trainees through INSET was concerned::

“We had in-service training before the programme started but the organisers or the “experts” who were mostly from the universities treated us as university students. The in-service programme was like lectures so we did not understand the things we learnt. We have been with the trainees for about a year, we have not had any further training to help us provide the support needed for the trainees” (Mentor. Foso D/C JSS).

The next section provides views of link tutors on the way they perceived INSET courses organised for them before the mentorship scheme started.

5.6 Link Tutors’ views about In-service Training in Mentorship

Link tutors who are also expected to work with mentors in the schools and liaise between the schools and the colleges were also interviewed to find out how the in-service training prepared them to assist mentors and the trainees in the schools. All the 4(100%) link tutors interviewed were not happy with the INSET courses received. The following are samples of the views expressed by them:

“In-service training was given by lecturers from the universities and personnel from the Ministry of Education and the Teacher Education Division, ... I think we have a problem because the in-service training was organised in the form of lectures and not workshops so most of the mentors did not understand what was taught, they do not have the skills in providing support for the trainees, we need another training” (Link Tutor, OLA Training College Cape Coast).

“There has not been any in-service training after the initial one which had a lot of problems. Even tutors who recently came to the college to teach have not received any in-service training. I think they have to organise workshops for us to at least expose us to what we are expected to do as link tutors” (Link Tutor, Foso Training College).

When I asked about the kind of training in mentorship they would most want to receive, many of the mentors and link tutors indicated that they would want training in how to assess trainees and how to use the information in trainees’ profiles to help them plan strategies/plans towards the targets for development. This statement of one mentor sums up the feelings of the majority of the mentors:

“We want training in how to assess the student teachers and how to use their profiles to help them reflect and teach better. We were told to use the guidelines in the Handbook but we want a new training that will help us to understand what we are expected to do better”(Mentor, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS Cape Coast).

Another link tutor indicated that what he felt they lacked most was:

“Assessing the student teachers to reflect their professional qualities as far as teaching is concerned, how to observe them as they teach and assess their abilities and counsel them after teaching.... For teacher trainees, I feel we should dwell more on their professional abilities but our training was not enough to help us do this” (Link Tutor, Foso Training College).

The majority of the mentors about (75%) and the 4(100%) link tutors also pointed out that apart from the training in assessment techniques and profiling of trainees they would need practical support in how to implement techniques and relate with trainees in

the classroom since they had no exposure in mentorship during their own training. These mentors and link tutors explained that the planners of the mentorship scheme were ignorant of the problems they face in implementing the scheme and argued that, any training should extend to the practicalities. As one link tutor put it “the training should be related to the real situations in the classroom and in the schools and not theoretical for we are not university students” (Link Tutor, Foso Training College).

This view is related to a point in the literature that for INSET courses to be effective they should probably include:...theory, demonstration, practice, feedback and classroom application (Joyce & Showers, 1980 p.379).

According to Joyce and Showers, these five components of INSET are essential if teachers are to transfer acquired skills into the practical teaching situations.

Furthermore, from the reviews of INSET and its impact on new practice, Joyce and Showers (1980) point out that, knowledge of a programme alone is an insufficient condition for impact of training. They state:

organised knowledge that is not backed up by the acquisition of principles and skills and the ability to use them is likely to have little effect (Joyce & Showers, 1980; p.380).

From the accounts of mentors and link tutors the practicalities involved in mentorship scheme require that organisation, content and delivery of INSET should extend beyond merely providing information about mentoring in the guidelines or the Handbook. This view was echoed by the principal of Foso Training College who was unhappy with the use of lecturers or “experts” in the planning and the delivery of INSET courses who might not be conversant with conditions prevailing in the schools. He referred to two INSET courses that he and other colleague principals of training colleges attended when

the mentorship scheme was being introduced as example of what he meant. He argued that:

“We need to be aware of the realistic conditions in the schools and the classrooms. Any workshop on mentorship should reflect conditions in the schools. A one or two day workshop where people from the universities or “experts” tell mentors, link tutors and principals how to go about mentorship is not sufficient for these experts do not know the problems and difficulties teachers face in the schools”(Principal, Foso Training College).

The view above brings into focus the unhappy relationship or tension recognised to exist between primary school teachers and so called advisors or “experts” who many teachers in the primary schools feel are not in touch with the realities of everyday classroom practice. It appears “outside experts” would be more appreciated if they collaborate with teachers to implement change rather than to offer advice. The evidence from the case study suggest that mentors and link tutors feel that policy makers or programme advisers are often out of touch with the realities in the school environment or are unsympathetic to the problems they face in the implementation of the mentorship scheme. The comment of one of the mentors sums up the feelings of many mentors regarding this issue:

“We use the guidelines to help us in assessing trainees but if you follow what is in the guidelines you will use a whole day in assessing the trainees. The planners..... I mean the experts do not know how difficult or impossible it is to assess trainees in all the areas listed in the Handbook. I think they don’t know what happens in the schools for how can we do all these with the large classes we teach” (Mentor, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

The majority of mentors about (75%) and all (4) link tutors suggested that they would prefer INSET courses in which outside experts worked in close partnership with them to help them acquire the knowledge and skills needed for the effective implementation of the mentorship scheme. The principal of Foso Training College pointed out that what would have benefited the mentors and link tutors were workshops which took mentors and link tutors through the processes of reflective teaching, assessment and profiling. He added that lack of regular INSET courses had eroded the benefits that might have been gained at the outset of the introduction of the mentorship scheme. He also felt that regular INSET was vital in view of the high turn over of tutors and teachers in the colleges and in the schools.

There were also complaints from link tutors that INSET courses concerning link tutors work were attended by vice principals instead of tutors. Link tutors suggested that when their vice principals attended the INSET courses they failed to communicate decisions reached on return to the college. From comments made by the Director of Teacher Education it was assumed that vice principals who had attended INSET courses will organise meetings with their staff to disseminate information. In other words, that information, skills and knowledge acquired at INSET courses will “cascade” from top to bottom. This didn’t take place and some link tutors felt the lack of communication of proceedings of INSET courses had hindered the smooth implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana. A similar finding was made by the ODA/JuSSTEP impact study (1993) when college tutors were interviewed on the usefulness of INSET courses organised under the JuSSTEP reforms. According to the ODA/JuSSTEP report:

Very little post-INSET dissemination of ideas (was) taking place on return to the training college....Most Heads of Department claim to brief tutors on INSET seminars attended. However, it appears that this is limited to making INSET documents available (ODA/British Council/GES, 1993)

The report noted that the lack of post-INSET dissemination of ideas in the training colleges had particularly affected newly appointed tutors who were ill-prepared to deal with the new teaching methodologies. Unfortunately the situation had not improved at the time of this research and reasons have been given above in this chapter why such a problem persists .(see section 5.5).

The majority of mentors about (70%) also complained about the lack of support and supervision from the District Directors of Education. These District Directors should see to it that the Circuit Advisors in the Inspectorate Divisions in their districts went round the schools to assist and collate information regarding the implementation of the scheme. Surprisingly, the Circuit Advisors from the District Education Offices do not go round the schools and are out of touch with the way the implementation of the mentorship scheme is going. A sample of the views of mentors explained this vividly:

“We have serious problems in the schools but there is no one to contact at times and it is difficult to always fall on the lead mentor since he is also not sure of what to say at times. The Assistant Director and his Circuit Advisers do not come to the schools to help us. Perhaps the meeting you have arranged with us and the Assistant Director is the first time of meeting him for almost a year now” (Mentor, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS Cape Coast).

“There is nobody to assist us for the trainers were from the universities and the Ministry of Education and the Circuit Advisers do not visit the schools to help us We need district support and the Directors of Education are not serious with the implementation of the programme because they do not supervise the Circuit Advisers to go to the schools to see what is happening. If you want us to support the student

teachers well, then the Directors will have to be serious to collect information and send them to the Ministry of Education and the Teacher Education Division” (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

These views expressed above clearly indicate that there is a problem with the organisation of INSET and the way mentors were trained before the scheme started. There is also lack of local support from the District Education Offices. The next section discusses mentor support and assessment in the mentorship scheme.

5.7 Mentor Support and Assessment of Trainees in the Mentorship Scheme

Mentor support, assessment, profile building and keeping of teacher trainees’ files and feedback form an essential part of providing information on the progress trainees are making towards the targets for development in school-based teacher education. As stated earlier in (Chapter 3) mentors are key persons for trainees in school-based teacher education (Fish, 1995). Mentors are therefore, expected to use information from assessment records to help trainees to achieve professional development and learning from assessment information, profiles and feedback (Chapter 3). Fish (1995) commenting on mentor assessment of teacher trainees states that student teachers’ assessment must take account of the special nature of professional knowledge and the necessary preparation and procedures which allow entry into the profession. She added that the purpose of all ITE assessment should be to aid educational development of the students as well as to fulfil the gate-keeping requirements. Fish concluded that assessment of teacher trainees should be holistic.

Mentors were interviewed to indicate the areas they assessed trainees in, the purpose of their assessment, the stages of trainees' teaching when assessment is started and whether they discussed the criteria for assessment with trainees.

The next section presents views from mentors about their support and assessment of trainees. The following is a sample of mentors' views:

"We assess the trainees to know their strengths and weaknesses by using the competences in the Handbook..... and we at times consult it when trainees are teaching to list the competences as they teach"(Mentor, Zion school Cape Coast).

"The competences in the Handbook are the primary tools for assessment. I refer to it and put down the main things the student teacher does and then score it at the end of the lesson" (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

As to what stage of trainees' teaching mentors begin to assess trainees' the majority of mentors (about 70%) indicated that they begin to assess trainees the moment trainees' started to teach. As most of them put it:

"I start assessing the trainee from the presentation of the lesson to the conclusion stage. I usually refer to the competences step-by-step and then put down the final marks" (Mentor, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

Mentor interviews revealed that not much interpretation could be made of mentor support and assessment information in terms of providing insight into trainees'

professional development, for by using the Handbook and trying to reduce teaching into bits mentors were failing to appreciate the complexity of the nature of teaching.

As indicated earlier, the majority of the mentors about (80%) presented assessment information on trainees in the form of grades or scores. A few of the mentors 4(20%) presented assessment information about trainees by writing comments which centred on their strengths and weaknesses and made suggestions for their improvements. Interview discussions and content analysis of mentors' assessment information revealed that they focused more on students' subject-matter knowledge than methodology or pedagogical content knowledge. Mentors' explanation was that the majority of the student teachers possessed weak subject-matter knowledge. A sample of their views as they put it was:

“My student teacher has very weak knowledge in science....I was surprised at the way he taught the human skeleton to the children in my class. Almost all the labelling were wrongly spelt” (Mentor, Philip Quaque Boys' JSS, Cape Coast).

“I am worried about the way the trainee in my class teaches mathematics to my children. She really has a very weak background in mathematics” (Mentor, Zion JSS, Cape Coast).

“The trainee teaches Social studies as if it is all about economics... but social studies is more than economics. He needs to read more about it” (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

This observation of mentors is disturbing for teacher trainees as prospective teachers need to have a solid foundation knowledge in subject-matter so that they will be able to impart them confidently to pupils. This issue will be discussed further in this thesis.

The next section presents trainees' views on the support and assessment they receive from mentors.

5.8 Trainees' Views about Mentor Support and Assessment

Trainees, as recipients of the knowledge and skills acquired by mentors through INSET courses, were interviewed to indicate the way they perceived the support and assessment received. Trainee interview results also showed that majority (about 70%) of trainees felt that not much meaningful interpretation could be made of mentor support and assessment in terms of providing insight into their professional development. The following comments from trainees tell the story:

“My mentor usually observes my lesson as I teach and he puts down points by using the Handbook. He tries in the end to put the comments under the various headings as they are listed in the handbook but he does not discuss them with me at the end of the lesson” (Trainee, Foso D/C JSS).

“The mentor I work with is a good friend and she refers to the Handbook as I teach because she says she is not familiar with the competences. My worry is that we do not discuss the lessons for she says the class is too large and there is no time, all the same she keeps telling me that I am doing very well” (Trainee, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

“My mentor is very friendly and he observes my lessons using the Handbook as a guide and writes his comments as I teach. He has discussed his comments with me on only two occasions and I found them very helpful I wish he can discuss the lessons I teach with me but he does not”(Trainee, Foso Catholic JSS).

Trainees were also interviewed for their views as to how mentor support and assessment helped them to gain the knowledge, skills and the confidence to teach. The views of trainees regarding this was important to the researcher for as competent, secure professionals, who are able to analyse their own practice, are capable of reflecting on it and profiting from that reflection, their views regarding this was essential to allow effective mentoring strategies to be adopted. Interview discussions and case study evidence indicated that the majority of the trainees felt that mentor support and assessment were not helping them to gain the confidence to teach and to reflect over their teaching. As the majority (80%) put it:

“We were not allowed to teach at the beginning but after staying with the mentor for some time I started to teach and I started gaining confidence....But my mentor never discussed my teaching with me and I do not know whether my teaching is good or bad. If I look at the whole thing I feel I haven't gained much to help me get the confidence to teach and examine myself” (Trainee, Foso Catholic JSS).

“ I feel my mentor has not helped me to gain confidence to teach because he did not have time for me. To be frank I have not benefited from my attachment with him....I need to learn more about teaching myself after this programme when I become a teacher” (Trainee, Zion JSS, Cape Coast).

A few trainees 4(20%) felt that mentor support and assessment had helped in creating in them the confidence to teach and reflect over their teaching. As they put it:

“My mentor was very friendly at the beginning and I could sit and talk frankly with him. After some time I had difficulty going near him for he was too critical. He criticised my

teaching and made a lot of suggestions after my lessons. I thought he was disturbing me but I am happy to say that he helped me to learn a lot of things and I now have the confidence to teach effectively” (Trainee, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS, Cape Coast).

“ The mentor in my class was too strict and this forced me to prepare very well for lessons I taught. He has made me a good teacher” (Trainee, Foso District Council JSS).

It can be inferred from the above quotes that the majority of trainees were of the view that mentor support and assessment was not providing what trainees expected of them. That is, the support being provided by the mentors was not helping trainees to reflect upon their teaching to help them develop professionally. Thus, generally mentor and trainee interview results showed little concern or interest as to whether the current framework for the mentorship scheme at the initial teacher education level in Ghana was adequately serving the needs of teacher education. The majority of the trainees (about 80%) also expressed misgivings about its appropriateness and its effectiveness for meeting the objectives or the goals for which it was introduced in Ghana. Their view was that the present system of mentor support and assessment focuses on the competences instead of looking at the general skills, knowledge, capacities and context.

A sample of their views was:

“Mentors open the Handbook on mentorship and supervision as they assess us. I think this assessment is focusing more on recording the headings in the handbook than focusing on the way we teach and the things we do in the classroom” (Mentee, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS, Cape Coast).

process to help in developing the qualities of reflection and self evaluation in the trainee instead of focusing on the outcomes.

An interesting question arising from the case study was whether any meaningful interpretation could be made of mentors' support and assessment, in terms of providing insight into trainees' professional development. The case study produced evidence of the nature of mentors' assessment which revealed several limitations regarding providing insight into the nature of progress trainees were making professionally. Mentor support and assessment was not guided by specific professional learning domains or competence specifications as found in some teacher education establishments in Britain. It needs pointing out however, that the Handbook on Mentorship and Supervision of Trainees (GES/TED 2000) did, make it clear that:

The competence or learning tasks and activities on which trainees are to be assessed and evaluated are preparation of scheme of work and weekly forecasts, lesson planning, lesson organisation, management and control, assessing pupil performance and learning and production and use of teaching and learning materials(GES/TED 2001 p.20).

A close inspection of the Handbook on mentorship and supervision of teacher trainees however, reveals that no concrete assessment was recommended for acknowledging and crediting trainees for displaying learning tasks listed in the Handbook. It is therefore, not surprising that there was no evidence of mentors considering such professional qualities, learning tasks and values in their assessment of trainees.

Clearly then, it is evident that mentor support and assessment were not providing much meaningful insight into the professional development of trainees. Mentors, by using the competences as the main instrument and by trying to reduce trainees' lesson delivery under the various competences as they teach were treating teaching as if it were an occupation and distorts the professional and the complex nature of teaching. Fish (1995)

commenting on this reductionist approach of teacher assessment states that such an approach treats teaching as a factory work where there is only one right way of doing things and this is incompatible with a professional activity like teaching

Similarly, Bridges et al., (1986) commenting on the use of competences also state that competences are not attributes of individuals which exist independently of the context in which they are realised; but they are qualities of the relationship between the individual and the context in which he or she operates. The achievements the individual makes depend upon the individual understanding the context and understanding himself or herself as capable of realising that ability.

The evidence from the case study areas revealed that mentor support and assessment of trainees was not in tune with the suggestions of Fish (1995 & Bridges et al., 1986).

Classroom observation of trainees' lessons by the researcher provided a more vivid evidence of the nature of mentor support and assessment of trainees. A common occurrence of post-lesson discussion between mentors and trainees indicate remarks from mentors which sum up their reasons for assessing trainees. A few examples of such remarks from my observation notes provide examples of remarks from mentors which explain their reasons or the purpose for which they assess trainees.

Mentor: *"This lesson was well taught but I had difficulty placing what you did under the competences as you were teaching. The point is the areas where we are to assess are too many but we try to make sure that at least we do something so that in the end you will get your certificate"* (Observation Notes, Philip Quaque Boys' JSS Cape Coast).

Mentor: *“It is not easy to teach when you are being observed for the fact that somebody is watching you and putting down points about what you are doing is difficult. You can at times become nervous and confused. I am careful that you will pass and get your certificate”* (This remark was made after a mentor had observed a trainee at Foso D/C JSS).

In fact, reference to the requirements of “certification” or external examination was rampant in mentors’ remarks. It is reasonable to state from case study evidence that much of what mentors do in providing support for trainees is influenced by their desire to help them get certificates or pass. Research evidence in the literature suggests that high-stakes assessment can influence teachers’ instructional and assessment practices to a significant degree. An example of the extent to which examinations or “certification” can influence teachers’ practice in schools was provided by Morris (1985). Morris investigated the barriers to the implementation of teaching and learning innovations in Hong Kong schools and came out with some interesting results. He located his study in the context of educational literature concerned with “barriers to change”, viewing teachers not as resisters of change but as rational decision makers concerned with factors which can limit successful implementation. He conducted semi-structured interviews with 45 secondary school teachers of economics each from a different school. He also observed these teachers in action in classroom and later asked about the factors that had influenced their approach in teaching. Apart from the need to cover the syllabus and the students’ expectations, most of the teachers cited public examination system as the main influence on their teaching. Morris argued that the teachers were making rational choice among alternatives by using an approach that would maximise their students’ potential in passing examinations. The case study evidence showed that the forms of mentors’ assessment in the mentorship scheme are on measurement of

learning and not on the process of learning. When one considers the fact that these trainees are being educated as teachers it is fair to suggest that the mentorship scheme is doing very little to focus attention on the processes involved in developing knowledge/skills and attitudes of teaching and learning. Clearly, the mentorship scheme requires further development in the teacher education context in Ghana to ensure that the professional benefit to trainee students is maximised. Some of the issues that need to be addressed include: the development of an assessment system whose focus is on trainees' professional development and learning and also on mentors professional development as assessors to enhance the quality of their assessment. These issues will be discussed further in the next chapter.

As discussed earlier in this thesis (see Chapter 3), an important aspect of the professional learning process in teacher education is its formative and developmental element. This focuses on trainees' progress towards the qualities which will enable them to become effective teachers. There is a recommendation in the Handbook on Mentorship and Supervision of Trainees that this should form the basis for the framework of the mentorship scheme. (GES/TED 2001 p.8).

Unfortunately, there were no suggestions about how this developmental framework of the mentorship scheme should be realised. In fact, it was not clear what this really entailed or meant in practical terms.

In summary, there was ample evidence from the interview results and observation to lead to the conclusion that the framework for the mentorship scheme in the schools as far as mentor support and assessment of trainees is concerned is "measurement driven". Mentor support and assessment of trainees were directed towards helping them in getting certificates as has already been discussed in the previous section. From mentor

interview results there was clearly a lack of focus on the formative and developmental aspects of the teacher education programme.

It is reasonable to conclude from the case study evidence that the framework for the mentorship scheme adopted by the planners was inadequate because it lacked emphasis on the professional and formative purposes of assessing trainees. As the review in Chapter 3 shows the ethos of teacher education and development implies that its assessment processes place sufficient emphasis on a developmental framework ; one where the processes of professional learning are acknowledged, documented and reported as part of the assessment process. The next section discusses mentors' view on the use and development of assessment criteria.

5.9 Mentors' Views about the Use and Development of Assessment Criteria

One of the issues which repeatedly surfaced in the discussion with mentors about the mentorship scheme was the whole idea of the role of mentor support and assessment criteria in trainees' professional development. Mentors were asked whether they discussed with trainees (written or verbal) the criteria on which trainees were assessed. The views on this issue were of interest because it revealed something about the professional culture of mentors in relation to providing support and assessing trainees. Mentors generally expressed the view that they discussed assessment criteria with trainees during the observation period before trainees were allowed to do actual teaching. The following quotations represent the views of about (70%) of mentors regarding the discussion of assessment criteria.

“It is very useful for trainees to know about the assessment criteria to teach better or know what to do when teaching. You know in this new system we the mentors play a key role in the training so we discuss issues with the student teachers so that things are clear to them to put in their best and in the end get their certificates or pass”(Mentor, Foso D/C JSS)

“If you provide trainees with what they are to be assessed on and the reasons for assessing them, it gives them an idea of the way things are and I think it motivates them to learn to teach better get good marks, or good assessment comments. The problem is that we were not trained this way so the idea of teaching for the students to observe and to assess them creates a problem for some of us” (Mentor, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

“Telling trainees the assessment criteria or discussing it with them make them teach better for they know what to do at least and it helps them to do their best when teaching because they are aware of the reasons and the areas that they are assessed in”(Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

These views reveal a notion of mentor support and assessment as something that is shared with trainees and not as something done to them. The comments suggest that mentors saw explaining assessment criteria to trainees as something that will help trainees teach better or as a motivating mechanism. It also illustrates how mentors see their role in supporting and assessing trainees as something not different and detached from trainees' role. The quotations also reveal the influence of high-stakes context of mentor support and assessment system or their attitude to assessment of trainees. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, the assessment environment under which the mentorship scheme was operating in the schools was summative in orientation geared towards helping trainees to get certificates. It would be fair to describe it as what Wood

(1986) describes as "...the constructive (or collaborative) outlook on assessment where the aim is to help rather than to sentence the individual" (Wood, 1986; p.2194).

The findings about mentors' views towards their support and assessment criteria runs counter to a study commissioned by the Ministry of Education (1995) to examine issues about assessment and curriculum in the teacher training colleges in Ghana. Among other things, The Ministry of Education's study sought the views of tutors in four teacher training colleges on issues of the assessment component and the assessment of trainees during the implementation of Continuous Assessment. The result revealed that:

The majority of the tutors (95%) did not understand why students should know or be made aware of the criteria for assessment; 68% of the tutors did not take time to explain the purpose of the assessment

About 73% of the tutors did not clearly identify what is to be learnt (Ministry of Education; June 1995).

The result of that study showed that tutors perceived assessment as an individualistic and competitive experience which is not shared. The evidence from the two case study areas in this thesis suggest that the way in which mentors about (75%) perceived the notion of mentor support and assessment criteria is atypical. The implications of this as mentor quotations above suggest is that offering guidance in the form of assessment criteria makes things clearer for trainees and helps them to learn to teach better. What we have therefore, is a mentor philosophy of providing support and assessment that can be described essentially as "Vygotskyian". The Vygotskyian model is one in which student and teacher "collaborate to produce the best performance of which the student is

capable, rather than withholding such help (through for example, clarifying assessment criteria), to produce typical performance” (Gipps 1994a; p.9). (This notion of assessment has been discussed in detail in Chapter 3).

An important aspect of this view of assessment is that, it is an attempt to “display to the learner models of performance that can be emulated and also show the assistance, experiences and forms of practice required by learners to move towards more competent performance”(Glasser, 1990; p.477). It is essentially a formative model of assessment. The evidence from this case study leads to the conclusion that the mentors appreciate the role or the importance of formative assessment in helping to enhance the professional learning and development of trainees but they lack the skills of assessing to achieve this. Mentors’ views were contrasted with trainees. The next section presents the views of trainees on the development and use of assessment criteria.

5.10 Trainees’ Views on the Development and Use of Assessment Criteria

Trainees were interviewed to find out the importance they attached to their being made aware of the criteria for assessment. On the question of what trainees felt most unhappy about the mentorship scheme, as far as mentor support and assessment were concerned about (70%) of trainees cited the quality of mentor support and lack of clear guidance of assessment criteria. Some case study trainees felt the lack of certainty of mentors as to what to do at times and the lack of clear guidance of support and assessment criteria has led to lack of guidance or “coaching” from mentors. The following comments present the views of a cross section of trainees:

“It is frustrating to teach and after that not have any discussions or coaching from your mentor. The problem is...most of the mentors say they were trained differently and they are still learning how to support and assess us. As a matter of fact, they are at times not sure of what to do or say” (Trainee, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

“My mentor is not helping me much for he is not sure of himself. Some mentors are not good...so their assessment is not helpful. You know, most of them do not discuss anything with us after teaching” (Trainee, Foso Catholic JSS).

“We were told that the mentors will assist us when we have problems but some of them are not good. I think we are not getting the support we need” (Trainee, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS Cape Coast).

According to Butler (1994) if students misperceive the goal that a teacher intends when assigning a task, they may engage in inappropriate tactics for completing the task or they may adopt inappropriate reference for monitoring qualities of their work. Very clearly, the above trainee quotations show that trainees would have appreciated more guidance or clarity in the areas of mentor support and assessment in order to enhance their professional development and learning. Unfortunately, this was not forthcoming as far as they were concerned. Throughout the interviews with trainees it became evident that many of them were not entirely happy with the kind of support and assessment they were receiving from their mentors. However, the responses from mentors suggested that they were aware of what to do but lacked the skills of doing it.

My own view is that the lack of proper conceptualisation of the mentorship scheme by the planners in Ghana and the skills in assessment procedures are the major contributory factors to the uncertainties that mentors face in providing support and in assessing trainees properly. Sadler (1989) has noted that this is one of the drawbacks on students' progress in learning and achievement. He points out that failure to provide students with explicit characteristic properties of an exemplary piece of work, works against the interest of students. He believes that it makes the students depend on the teacher's judgement of quality which is subject to existential determination. It was clear from the quotations of the trainees that they felt there was some element of existential determination of their teaching and assessment quality by some mentors. These trainees were obviously frustrated by the uncertainty surrounding some mentors assessment criteria for their teaching and general support being provided.

The next section analyses trainees' perceptions about the use of feedback to monitor their progress and learning.

5.11 Trainees' Views on Use of Feedback in the Mentorship Scheme in Monitoring and Promoting their Progress and Learning.

The opportunity the mentorship scheme presents for feeding back the results of mentor support and assessment directly and almost immediately into the teaching and learning process of teacher trainees is one reason many teacher educators recommend it for the training of teachers. "Feedback helps the student to assess his own ability and improve his performance" (Chansarker & Rautroy, 1981; p.49) (See Chapter 3). Studies do show that feedback is not only crucial for motivating students to learn, but can also contribute positively to their progress in learning and raise their achievement levels

(Crooks, 1988; Gipps, 1994; Bangert-Drowns et al (1991); Butler & Winne, 1995). It is also recognised in the literature that to improve learning and performance, feedback has to address specifically students' learning difficulties. In a review of literature on feedback and its effects on achievement, Bangert-Drowns et al., (1991) concluded that feedback is effective to the extent that it "empowers learners with strategically useful information" (p.214) to address learning-related problems. What this implies is that not all feedback is helpful or useful in helping the learner to make specific improvements in learning (See Chapter 3). In the case study I was interested to know the range of feedback trainees received from mentor support and assessment. I also wanted to know what they felt about the feedback for promoting understanding about their learning. In the interviews I was particularly interested to know whether mentor support and assessment of trainees was useful for trainees in helping them to keep track of their progress and provide the basis for further improvement; and if it did, what aspects about it were felt to be most useful. More than three-quarters of the trainees cited the responses and the participation of the pupils they teach as their own evaluation and peer observation or feedback from their friends as ways of evaluating their teaching. The following presents a sample of trainees' views on feedback:

"You know.... our mentors do not have time to discuss things with us after teaching because of large classes they teach and the number of pupils' work they mark. Also because the programme is new some of them are not confident and do not know what to do. They allow our friends to sit in our lessons if they are free so most of the time we share ideas with our friends and look at the way the pupils also participate as we teach"(Trainee, Zion JSS, Cape Coast).

“For almost the whole term my mentor has discussed my teaching with me only once. Most of the time she tells me I scored you 60, 70, A or B, that is the way I judge my progress. The mentors do not have time for us... they have large classes and they are also not given any allowance” (Trainee, Foso D/C JSS).

“Through our own efforts and the informal discussions with the mentors you get to know that you have to work hard to improve or fail. The desires in us to get our certificates make us do our best” (Trainee, Foso Catholic JSS).

This perception was not restricted to trainees alone; the majority of the mentors about (70%) also expressed similar views. The next section presents the views of mentors on the way they judged the progress of trainees to ascertain their progress. The subsequent quotations illustrate their views:

“After observing the trainee you get a good idea of whether the trainee is doing well or not by looking at the pattern of his scores or grades. When you look at this you can tell whether he is doing well or not” (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

“You usually give the trainee the final grade and this can let you know how he is doing” (Mentor, Foso D/C JSS).

“The grades tell you whether the trainee is pulling her weight or not, from the grade you get an understanding of how the trainee is performing” (Lead Mentor, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS Cape Coast).

Basically, these trainees and mentors were saying that it was mainly through scores or grades by which trainees’ progress could be understood. Generally, mentors also agreed that through the teaching process they could discern the potential and the capabilities of

trainees and that this often reflected in their performance. In judging from the haphazard and the unsystematic manner in which mentors conducted their support and assessment of trainees it can be argued that very little meaning in terms of the rate and state of progress could actually be made of their support and assessment. Nevertheless, there was quite clearly a belief by many mentors about (75%) and about (70%) of trainees that assessment marks or grades provided an understanding of trainees' progress.

Evidence from the literature rather suggests that the results of feedback produced a motivational effect on students' learning when they are specific and focus on students' strengths and weaknesses. It is likely that mentors and trainees confused this with the role mentor support and assessment can play by providing understanding of progress in relation to some specific performance criteria or goal. The following comments from a trainee sums up how fixated trainees' perceptions were of mentors' score or grades in providing understanding of their progress in the mentorship scheme:

"You can tell how you are faring from the score your mentor tell you or the grade you get.... We are all working very hard to get our certificates" (Trainee, Philip Quaake Boys' JSS Cape Coast).

As earlier analysis in this Chapter shows, an increase in motivation in learning arose actually because of the linkage of mentor support and assessment with "certification" or external examination. Thus, it was more likely that mentor support and assessment were providing extrinsic motivation for learning than as was being suggested providing understanding of trainees' progress. It is also doubtful whether anything significant concerning the strengths and weaknesses can be learned from purely scores of assessment without additional information describing specific learning achievements

relative to goals. Butler and Winne (1995) following an extensive review of the literature on feedback define the monitoring process in learning as “the cognitive process that accesses state of progress relative to goals and generates feedback that can give further action” (p.259). This suggests that more elaborate feedback from assessment would have the potential to enrich the processes by which students monitor their learning or performance for improvement. By this definition much more information in relation to goals will be required than scores or grades if students are to develop the capacity to monitor their learning or progress from assessment. Sadler (1989) argues against the view that by “looking at the sheer magnitude of results” (p.125) of a series of assessment, it is impossible to gain understanding of a student’s progress. On the contrary, he points out that by providing clear descriptive criteria upon which students work is judged it is possible to produce reliable judgement of progress or performance. Unfortunately, as it has been shown earlier in this Chapter, the use of such mentor support and assessment criteria was missing in the mentorship scheme in the case study schools or areas. In the two case study areas there were very few comments in trainees’ files but mentors preferred rather to communicate scores or grades to the trainees.

Gipps (1994a) has noted that it is the fundamental judgements of the assessments which are important and not the scores or grades in providing understanding of progress in learning. Murphy and Torrance (1988) stressed that grades or scores from assessment by themselves offer no means of understanding learning difficulties that would lead to improvement in performance. They argued that:

The idea that a student might diagnose particular learning difficulty from a single letter (or number) grade...is in itself laughable....Furthermore, the widespread practice of notentering into any kind of post-assessment discussion of the work of the individual destroys most if not

all educational benefits which could be derived from it (Murphy & Torrance, 1988, p.15).

Thus, among education experts there is a strong consensus that scores from assessment done with only grades or scores are of little or no benefit in providing clear understanding of ones performance. What score or marks particularly fail to show is the nature of specific strengths and weaknesses exhibited in the performance unless there is some learning-related feedback on the performance.

Thus, the interviews from the two case study areas produced very little comment about using mentor support and assessment as a learning experience for trainees as the literature suggests happens with mentorship schemes and teacher education programmes. (See Chapter 3).

The results of both case study mentor and trainee interviews showed that there were two main forms of feedback trainees received from mentors after assessing their teaching performance. These forms were common in all the two case study areas. The first was feedback which came in the form of grades or scores, which had been discussed in the previous section. The second could be called “verbal motivational feedback” or effort feedback” (Schunk & Cox, 1986) and as the phrase suggests, it was mainly intended to encourage trainees to work harder. It came as a form of praise after trainees’ teaching. Trainees’ comments showed that some mentors used expressions such as the following to explain to them how they had performed at the end of their teaching sessions:

“Most of you are doing very well”

“Good but there is room for some improvement”

“This session is better than the previous one you have to work harder”

Such comments showed that mentors were trying to encourage trainees to “try harder or “work harder”, a practice which Sutton (1997) points out it is quite common with teachers. A few trainees about (25%) however, suggested that sometimes very few mentors took the time to discuss with them specific areas where they had difficulties. For example, as one trainee explained:

“Sometimes after observing my lessons my mentor asked me to talk about the areas I thought I can improve in my next lesson. He will then discuss specific things like questioning techniques use of the chalkboard and others with me.... which I find very useful in next lessons” (Trainee, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

Further evidence from observing some lessons by the researcher showed that some mentors painstakingly did hold post-lesson discussions with trainees as a form of feedback. There was a story of one link tutor from Foso Training College. This link tutor made considerable effort to discuss and explain specific issues about a lesson he had observed to a trainee. In sharp contrast to lessons of trainees’ observed as far as post-lesson discussions were concerned, this link tutor at the end of the lesson asked the trainee to give a self-assessment or evaluation of his teaching. After this he discussed the trainee’s style of questioning, use of chalkboard, and strategies for further planning for the next lesson. In fact, the atmosphere during this session was very supportive and very different from any other mentor or link tutor’s post-lesson discussion observed. In the interview following this, he pointed out the need of giving or providing trainees’ feedback as a form of enhancing their strengths and addressing their weaknesses which in the end help trainees develop confidence in teaching. It also became clear that his philosophy of classroom instruction had a lot to do with the emphasis his overseas background training placed on promoting classroom atmosphere

that will give students confidence in their ability. This illustrates the role training could play in changing classroom teaching and the learning environment so that it promotes feedback related to students' learning and development.

The case study interviews suggested that what trainees would appreciate was more individualised attention from mentors that would address some of their weaknesses. Clearly, this could be difficult to achieve given the workload of the mentors and the large pupil numbers they were dealing with in the schools. The majority of mentors about (75%) suggested that the lack of feedback was due to the problem of workload and the marking of pupils' exercises. As they put it:

"The workload is too much.... we teach a lot of pupils and by the time you finish marking their work you are already tired. ...you cannot simply have time to discuss issues with the student teacher. Another thing is that we are also not given any allowance to motivate us and we wonder whether the planners of the programme were aware of all these problems" (Mentor, Foso D/C JSS).

"Because of the workload it is difficult to have time for the student teachers. You just can't have any time to discuss points with them to cover the various areas we are expected to discuss with them. Most of the time we postpone it and discuss it later at times in an informal manner" (Mentor, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

In effect what the mentors were saying was that the sheer number of pupils they were dealing with coupled with the lack of incentives makes it virtually impossible to provide more individualised feedback. Mentors also indicated that it was difficult to provide

feedback at the time it would perhaps be most useful to trainees' learning because of the time it took to mark pupils' work and the lack of incentives.

Sutton (1997) has also reported similar difficulties in South Africa where teachers may see in one week about 100 to 500 students or more. Crooks (1988) has pointed out that "feedback should take place while it is still clearly of relevance. This implies that it should be given soon after a task is completed and that the student should be given opportunities subsequently to demonstrate learning from the feedback" (p.469).

In a teacher education programme where trainees are expected to reflect about their performance with the view to improving their teaching, the idea of Crooks (1988) should be the rule and not the exception. Unfortunately, the workload problem and lack of incentives in the case study areas obviously made giving and using feedback in this manner impracticable. A mentor's statement encapsulates the feelings of most of the mentors:

"We are expected to support and assess the student teachers and provide feedback to them..... to be honest with you this formative assessment will only be possible when we have few pupils to teach and also if we are given some allowance....then we can pay attention to the individual problems of the student teachers" (Mentor, Philip Quaque Boys' JSS Cape Coast).

There is another complication to the issue of feedback. Other mentors felt that the focus of their assessment (providing assessment marks for certification) had shifted interest away from providing learning-related feedback. (Views concerning this have already been analysed in the earlier section). In effect, there was no incentive in engaging in

mentor support and assessment which was formative-orientated to enhance trainees' professional growth and development. A sample of the views of mentors is as follows:

“What we are trying to do is to help the student teachers do their best... pass and get their certificates but to combine this with feedback as a form of diagnosing their problems is difficult because of the workload” (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

In summary, the case study evidence showed that trainees received feedback mostly as simple knowledge of results (marks or grades) or as verbal motivational comments from mentors. The majority of the trainees about (75%) suggested the feedback they were receiving was not helping them to improve upon their teaching and called for feedback that would address their specific and personal problems of teaching. However, the case study evidence showed that this would be quite difficult to achieve due to the problem of large pupil numbers, excessive workload and lack of incentives.

Thus, the formative function of mentor support and assessment in the mentorship scheme in Ghana which should entail feedback and discussion with trainees for the purpose of improving their teaching performance appear to have eluded most case study trainees. Reasons given for the lack of learning-related feedback in the mentorship scheme were due to excessive workload, large pupil numbers or enrolments, the shifted focus of mentor support and assessment from the formative-oriented to certification, lack of incentives and lack of knowledge and skills needed by mentors in providing support to trainees. Judging from the case study evidence, there is perhaps the need to introduce some descriptive 'standards' to focus feedback more clearly on trainees' teaching and learning-related issues. The problem here again is that, most mentors may

lack the expertise and may not possess the relevant conceptual tools to enable them to operate a “standards referenced assessment” (Sadler, 1989) framework (See Chapter 3). It seems that this is an area where efforts to improve upon the present support and assessment practices in the teacher education programme in Ghana should consider especially if learning-related feedback is to receive the emphasis it requires to help trainees to improve upon their teaching and learning. However, a more critical issue is whether such feedback from mentor support can actually occur looking at the conditions under which the mentors work in the schools. As Sutton (1997) notes concerning South Africa, “The turn around the time for ‘marking’ and ‘grading’ in many of our schools is simply too long for the desired impact to be achieved” (Sutton, 1997 p.3).

The evidence from the case study areas suggest the need to look beyond mentors as the sole providers of feedback from their support and assessment because of the problems discussed earlier in this section. As was discussed in Chapter 3, one way would be to promote the use of feedback that would encourage the trainee to engage in critical self-evaluation and reflection. Obviously, this would imply the development of mentor support and assessment procedures which are closely linked to the concept of developing skills in critical self-evaluation and reflection (Schon, 1987; Klenowski, 1996). Unfortunately, the mentorship scheme as it operates currently is in a context and under conditions which are wholly at odds with this philosophy of mentor support and assessment because mentors’ assessment is more oriented towards measurement than the process of learning.

In summary the overall picture gathered from the case study evidence is that mentor support and assessment in relation to feedback served very little purpose in promoting trainees’ professional development and learning. The evidence indicated that the problem of combining mentor support and assessment with promoting teaching and

learning of trainees was not simply due to practical constraints, but that there was a technical dimension to the problem. It seemed that the mentors' knowledge and skills in the way support and assessment should be used as part of the teaching learning process is very limited. Majority of the mentors about (75%) admitted that they lacked the competence in using trainees' profiles to help them develop strategies to enhance their teaching. The problem most of them pointed out was how they were to do this in practical terms. The principal of Foso Training agreed to this sentiment as he explained:

“I think we expect the mentors to do a lot but we have not questioned whether they have the ability and the capabilities to do those things. You see... most of them do not have the skills in providing support to help the student teachers.. When you talk about using support and assessment as part of the teaching-learning process many of them do not know how to do this” (Principal, Foso Training College).

Comments from mentors suggest that majority of them about (75%) lacked the knowledge and skills of using their support and assessment techniques to enhance the professional development of trainees which is the main focus of the mentorship scheme.

The following statement illuminates the knowledge and skills of mentors as far as mentor support and assessment of trainees were concerned:

“It is difficult to assess the student teachers for we can't have much time for them because of workload. At times it is difficult to assess the student teacher when he is teaching for you cannot place all the things he does under the various headings in the handbook.... so you have to let him finish teaching and consult the handbook to find out the competences he has mastered” (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

These comments clearly point to the fact that for most mentors, assessment and teaching or learning stand apart. As Darling-Hammond (1994) points out, such teachers (mentors) will have little opportunity to use assessment results to understand the complex nuances of student learning in ways that support more successful instruction and little information to act in trying to rethink their daily practices (p.20).

The case study evidence indicated that in general mentors made very little use of feedback for trainees' development.

The next section discusses the views of significant others, referred to as "officials" in the study.

5.12 Views of Significant Others or Officials on the Introduction and Implementation of the Mentorship Scheme

This target group comprised personnel from the Ministry of Education, the Teacher Education Division, lecturers from the universities of Cape Coast and Winneba and principals from the teacher training colleges. They were in fact those who were consulted or the "think tanks" involved in the initial crafting of the policy document on mentoring. They were also responsible for the designing of in-service training programmes for the mentors, the selection of mentors, placement of trainees in the schools and in defining the roles and responsibilities of District Assemblies in the implementation of the mentorship scheme. In fact, they constitute the key oversight or monitoring body of the scheme. (Refer to Chapter 2). The researcher believes that their views would help gain an understanding of the government perspective as far as the implementation of the mentorship scheme is concerned. There was the view among this cross section of officials that the philosophy behind the introduction of the mentorship

scheme at initial teacher training in Ghana was good but like any innovation the implementation process is bedevilled with problems. Samples of the views expressed were as follows:

“The programme was meant to give trainees adequate school experience... I mean proper understanding of pupils, classroom management and school life as a whole. It was to help their professional growth through mentor support ...I’m worried we are not achieving this now all the same this system is better than the old one. We shall get there....” (Director, Teacher Education).

“What we have now is not satisfactory or good assessment by mentors but what we have is better than the previous system since this provides knowledge and experience to trainees than the old system and also this allows classroom teachers to interact and share ideas with trainees...I am happy we have introduced this programme” (Advisor, Teacher Education Division, Accra).

“Mentors open the Handbook on mentorship and supervision as they assess trainees’ teaching. I think this assessment is focusing more on recording than the process which is important. Mentor support and assessment ought to reflect a developmental process” (Lecturer, University of Cape Coast).

Another official, a principal of a college also felt that the mentorship scheme was better than the old block teaching practice but mentor support and assessment were unsatisfactory. As he puts it:

“Even though support is unsatisfactory the new programme has come to give a new dimension and importance to teaching practice because student teachers are now aware that mentor assessment forms an important part of their certification and this is also forcing the mentors to at least carry out assessment of some sort....The students are also gaining more experience in this new scheme than the old one” (Principal, Foso Training College).

Touching on the preparations made before the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana an official also stated:

“The idea of exposing the student teachers to school life is good but we need to make sure there is appropriate support otherwise we should be joking. The preparations were not enough due to funding and other things...I think the mentors do not have the skills and the knowledge to provide the needed support. We need to work on them through in-service programmes” (Director, Institute of Education).

Another official also added:

“ I think the whole idea is good...but the in-service training did not go down well with the mentors, we need to revisit the approach to in-service training for once the mentors acquire the knowledge, experience and the skills to support trainees the trainees will have the confidence and the skills to teach” (Lecturer, University of Education, Winneba).

These views clearly indicate that the official view is that the mentorship scheme as a mechanism for initial teacher education is viewed as very appropriate for the training of teachers but its implementation in Ghana is faced with some teething problems regarding the efficiency of the mentors and preparations made before the implementation process.

The next section presents views on constraints on the effective implementation of the mentorship scheme by officials, mentors, link tutors and trainees in that order.

.5.13 Constraints on the Effective Implementation of the Mentorship Scheme

Mentorship requirements for the teacher education context in Ghana demand effective support from mentors in developing strategies and a lot of time to trainees to enhance their professional development through effective support and assessment strategies that are formative-oriented. In fact, mentors are the anchor persons for trainees in school-based teacher education (Fish 1995). There were many views expressed and observations made to the effect that mentors lacked the knowledge and skills in providing the needed support for trainees. The official view generally was that the problems about the implementation of the mentorship scheme were mainly because mentors lacked the knowledge and skills and have misunderstood the scheme's intended purpose for the teacher education context in Ghana and were therefore, not applying it appropriately. There was also the view that this has largely contributed to the problem of implementation. The next section presents a sample of views of officials concerning these perceptions:

“I think there is a problem with the understanding and the implementation of the new programme. Mentors were to take into account the assessment and the observation of trainees' learning experiences... their participation in the whole school activities. It is supposed to reflect the whole scope of their professional learning experience but I think this is not what is happening” (Director, Teacher Education Division Accra).

“We were expecting mentors to help develop strategies that will enhance the professional development of trainees by making the assessment of trainees more directly related to information from the profiles.... but this is not what is happening at all” (Subject Advisor, Teacher Education Division).

“Mentors appear to have completely put aside what is being advocated for by the teacher training programme. Some mentors think more of their support of trainees as a way of helping them to pass and obtain certificates instead of basing it on their professional development” (Principal Foso Training College).

“The problem is having the time in providing support to trainees....Teacher workload and large class size need to be addressed. I think this will provide mentors the time to assist trainees” (Lecturer, University of Cape Coast).

The case study interviews showed considerable evidence which confirmed that mentor support and assessments were not directed fully towards the purposes intended in the official document. The evidence also showed that the ineffectiveness of mentor support and assessment of trainees in the teacher training context was not entirely a problem of mentor incompetence in providing support and assessment or misunderstanding of the implementation process. The issues are much more complex than the official views otherwise suggest. Although mentor support and assessment practices are essential in school-based teacher education the research revealed that certain conducive conditions and logistics are critical before there can be effective implementation of school-based teacher education programmes. For example mentorship which requires evidence of professional support from mentors also require that trainees are given a wide range of

learning experiences which will help them to develop a repertoire of teaching skills and experiences.

The case study evidence indicated that these wide range of learning experiences and strategies were “missing” in the training programme. There was ample evidence that time constraints contributed to determine the type of support and the kind of assessment activity that mentors were engaging in. This was acknowledged in the comments and views expressed by mentors. The next section presents a sample of the views of mentors on issues or factors acting as constraints to the implementation process as majority of the mentors about (75%) put it:

“ I don’t think those who planned and designed the guidelines were fully aware of the problems we face in the schools.... they shouldn’t have come up with all these areas of assessment for even if you want to do a good work it is just not possible... if you look at the number of pupils we teach and mark their work and at the same time provide support to trainees” (Mentor, Philip Quaake Boys’ JSS Cape Coast).

“We don’t work with the guidelines in the Handbook because what the guidelines expect from us is too much. What is in it is good but if we are to do all those things it will mean assessing the student teacher all the time without teaching the pupils. It is just not practicable” (Mentor, Foso Catholic JSS).

Time constraint appears to be a particularly serious problem as most mentors interviewed justify their inability to provide adequate support and appropriate assessment on these grounds. As a result the majority of the mentors about (75%) felt

there was no other alternative than to develop their own support and assessment strategies as a means of trying to meet official requirements regarding the implementation of the mentorship scheme as evidenced by the views expressed by some mentors:

“We are expected to provide support for the trainees in all the areas in the Handbook and then write comments about them in their files.... there is just no time to do this. As for me I put down comments about the trainee but I scarcely have time to discuss the points with him. I think it is better than not assessing him at all” (Mentor, Foso D/C JSS).

The next section presents the views of Link Tutors. As liaison people between the schools and the colleges working with mentors their views on constraints to the implementation process were sought. A sample of their views are presented below:

“Suppose a mentor wants to use the comments in the student file to help draw strategies for him... how does he do this if he has to assess the trainee in all the areas outlined in the Handbook?. It is impossible... the areas to assess are too many and the mentors at times have a lot of difficulty indicating the domains of assessment for the trainees (Link Tutor, Foso Training College).

“I think the mentors assess the trainees and write comments in their files but most of them do not discuss the comments with the trainees.... which to me is very wrong because feedback is very important in this programme. When you ask them why, they tell you there is just no time for they have large classes on their hands” (Link Tutor, OLA Training College, Cape Coast).

In a study examining teachers' perceptions of barriers to implementation of pedagogic innovations, Morris (1985) found that factors weighted by teachers were the practicality of the innovation and their congruence with the prevailing conditions. He found "time constraint" (p.16), to be one of the main influences on teachers' pedagogic and assessment approach. Morris concluded that the decision of teachers not to use innovative approaches was a rational choice among alternatives. The case study evidence in this thesis leads to a similar conclusion. Mentors were making what they considered to be a rational choice in the face of severe limitations imposed by large enrolment figures and limited time.

Another dimension of the problem regarding the implementation of the mentorship scheme was the absence of a management support system within the schools to support lead mentors and mentors in their work. Lead mentors and mentors were interviewed to look for evidence as to whether support structures existed to help them overcome the problems they face in the schools in providing support for the trainees. All the lead mentors (100%) and all the mentors (100%) interviewed acknowledged the need for a system of support for their work but there was no evidence that any such system exists in the Districts and even in the schools of the case study areas. In theory, the structure for management support had been outlined (see Chapter 2), but there was no evidence that this was functional. School-based teacher education which hinges on mentorship can become a complex exercise especially where mentor support and assessment are to cover a wide range of professional development. Meetings to review progress of trainees, clarify procedures and discuss constraints limiting its effective use and subsequently develop strategies for improving its practice and implementation are crucial. In all the case study areas visited, there was evidence that a lot of this was

lacking because of the absence of a system of management support within the Districts and the schools. For example none of the District Education offices and the schools and colleges in the case study areas met regularly to review their work. As one mentor pointed out:

“Your meeting with us is the first time we have met the District Director to discuss some of the problems we face with him. We have serious problems in the schools but there is nobody to report or advise us” (Mentor, Philip Quaque Boys’ JSS Cape Coast).

Another mentor in Foso Catholic JSS also said that:

“Even if we meet it is to talk about the areas of assessing student teachers but there is no one to consult. The problem is that nobody appears to be confident in what to say but the district directors who are to assist do not also bother to come to the schools to help us”(Mentor, Foso D/C JSS).

The blame for the inoperative management support system regarding the implementation of the mentorship scheme was put mainly on the District Directors and the Principals of the training colleges who were accused of not living up to their professional responsibilities as indicated by the Director of Teacher Education below:

“I think the main problem with the implementation of the new programme is that District Directors and the Principals of the colleges lack the commitment and leadership qualities to encourage and support mentors and link tutors in providing support for trainees.....the problem facing the implementation of the programme is mainly of supervision” (Director, Teacher Education Division, Accra).

Such allegations raise questions about the type of training provided for key personnel to facilitate good management of the teacher education programme before it started. The Handbook for mentors, link tutors, trainees and principals (GES/TED 2001) revealed that INSET training on management skills was organised for principals, vice principals, district directors and all tutors of teacher training colleges before the programme started. A supporting Handbook for principals and District Directors (GES/TED 2001) was developed to provide guidelines on the development of organisational and administrative structures at the colleges and the district levels to support the scheme. As the study pointed out, these structures were meant to enhance communication and inter and intra district, college and school administration in providing support for the implementation process (GES/TED 2001, p.16).

The case study produced comments and evidence that suggested that these changes and the training provided before the start of the programme had made little impact. As far as college and school support for the implementation of the mentorship scheme in terms of offering professional guidance at review practices, the evidence showed that this is virtually non-existent. A similar finding was made in a study commissioned by the Ministry of Education (Ghana, Ministry of Education, June 1988) to look at among other things, college/departmental and school management support systems for the effective practice of Continuous Assessment in the first cycle schools. The authors of the study found that a major short coming of the implementation of the innovation in the schools and colleges was the lack of good management. The study recommended that efforts should be made to increase and improve management training workshops and put into place a system of external monitoring to enhance quality and efficiency in the schools and the colleges. Though such recommendations make good educational sense,

the findings of this research suggest that a fundamental problem is that of link tutors' and mentors' own perception about collaboration at the college/departmental and school management levels.

It needs pointing out that one could achieve greater efficiency by providing more workshops or training to ensure that everyone is aware of their role and responsibilities, and provide supervision or external monitoring to help the practice and implementation of the mentorship programme for it to achieve greater quality and professional development. The response from link tutors 4(100%) and majority of mentors about (80%) however, suggested that the problem was more deep-seated and had to do with concerns about the possible problems of internal monitoring relationships. The evidence was that the problem of poor management stemmed also from a break down of intra-college/departmental and school cooperation among staff members regarding implications on staff relationships. For instance, for most link tutors any act of supervision or quality control by the head of department or any other staff would have been interpreted to be mistrust or "bossy" and therefore, an affront to their professional integrity. A sample of the views about link tutors as put forward by heads of departments were as follows:

"Some link tutors do not like head of departments asking questions about their work with mentors in the schools... because they feel they want to exercise authority over them and this breeds tension if it is not handled well. It is therefore, difficult to supervise link tutors and know what exactly is happening in the schools as far as providing support to trainees is concerned" (Head of Education Department, Foso training college).

Another link tutor also said:

“You know... we are equals so you can't put pressure on your colleagues to do what he is expected to do especially when money for transport and vehicles are difficult to be released by the college for link tutors to go to the schools. Some link tutors are not serious with the whole programme but if you want to inspect the work done and offer advice they feel hurt and uncompromising” (Head of Department, Maths, OLA Training College).

“It is difficult to sit down with your colleague and make comments about his work because if you are not careful it may affect your relationship with him. It is the responsibility of Heads of Departments to do this but they also at times have difficulty getting money and transport for the link tutors which also make their work difficult”(Link Tutor, Foso Training College).

Similarly, some mentors also expressed views which suggested that there were deep-seated problems in the schools regarding internal monitoring on relationship as majority of them put it:

“You know the good thing is that because the programme is new we consult one another when there are problems... but because we are at times not sure of what to say we are very careful about the suggestions we make so that we don't offend our colleagues” (Lead Mentor, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

“We discuss issues and make suggestions but we try not to make statements that will create problems between one another” (Lead Mentor, Foso D/C JSS).

Clearly then, it is evident that some mentors and especially link tutors are very sensitive in taking any measures, procedures or suggestions that in their view could cause friction between themselves and their colleagues. This is a major limiting factor on promoting effective intra-college/departmental and school management of the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana. Mentors' especially lead mentors and link tutors' idea of internal monitoring lacks that important professional and collaborative dimension based on healthy discussions where the aim is to cooperate to help each other which will facilitate corporate learning and staff development to enhance the implementation of the scheme. The next section presents views of trainees about constraints to the implementation of the mentorship scheme.

5.14 Trainees' Views about Constraints to the Implementation of the Mentorship Scheme

Mentees/Trainees were also interviewed to find their views on constraints to the implementation of the mentorship scheme. A sample of the views expressed by majority of the trainees concerning the problems they face are presented below:

“The programme provides us with knowledge about life in school and teaching in particular but we face serious problems like going to the college every two weeks to collect our allowance and seeing our supervisors to mark our long essays, it is not a joke at all” (Trainee, Foso D/C JSS).

“We face a lot of problems and we at times ask ourselves whether the planners of the programme anticipated all thesethe Distance Learning Materials (DLM) do not give adequate information to help us in writing long essays and we have to travel long distances to the college most of the time for information and at the same time some of

us face accommodation problems where we are practising....these are frustrating”
(Trainee, Zion JSS Cape Coast).

These views expressed by trainees are worrying for, as beneficiaries of the system, their basic needs should be provided to help them form positive attitude towards the mentorship scheme.

Another constraining factor which came up in the case study areas was about INSET. The final section presents the “official view” about problems connected with the organisation of INSET to improve upon practises in the mentorship scheme.

5.15 Views of Officials about Organisation of INSET Programmes

The Director of Teacher Education and the Deputy pointed to the problem of funding as the main hindrance to the effective organisation of INSET before and after the start of the mentorship scheme. As she puts it:

“We have been lucky that the programme has chalked these successes.... in spite of the problems for we could not organise the in-service courses the way we would have wished.... and at a point in time we had to shorten the duration all because of funding. We have achieved these successes because of the knowledge gained from the pilot phase. I am sure with time funding will be provided and all the rough edges will be straightened” (Director, Teacher Education, Accra).

“The problem with INSET is mainly due to availability of funds and also partly to technical experts with knowledge in mentoring..... we would have organised INSET for further training but there is no money so the programme is on paper awaiting funding

and that is why we haven't organised any training" (Deputy Director, Teacher Education Division Accra).

My own experience as a teacher educator having been involved in the organisation, planning and delivery of INSET courses and having worked with teachers in Ghana for a long time provides evidence of the lack of technical expertise in mentorship training and development especially those skilled to offer leadership and guidance in promoting its development at the college and district levels. The lack of technical expertise and the consequences of that problem were vividly illustrated at one of the INSET courses organised for the introduction of the mentorship scheme to introduce the guidelines to principals, vice principals and tutors. As a member of the resource team from the universities I had discussion with some of the tutors and the principals after the INSET. My fears were confirmed by the interview I had with one of the principals during the field work. This principal recounted his experience about the organisation of the INSET courses which sums up the feelings of the participants:

"The resource persons introduced mentorship and the roles of the mentors and link tutors to us at the training sessions..... there were a lot of questions and discussions from both ends.... but I think we did not agree on most of the things and I wonder whether we as principals and tutors can go back to our colleges to explain the whole thing and what it entails to our colleagues. There was no clear understanding of what the whole thing was about" (Principal, Foso Training College).

It is clear from this statement that many principals and tutors did not understand issues about mentorship and therefore, will not be able to "cascade" information, skills and knowledge to their colleagues at the college level. It is important to point out that the

mentorship scheme for the post secondary teacher training in Ghana was developed by an expatriate who worked at the Teacher Education Division as a consultant. The result was that the consultant conceptualised and developed the guidelines for the mentorship scheme but left the task of introducing it to local “experts”. It is therefore, not surprising that there was a problem of the scheme’s conceptualisation and how it was to operate in practice. Evidence from my experience at the INSET courses and the case study areas suggested that inadequate coordination at the conceptualisation, planning and development stages of the mentorship guidelines between the consultant and the local “experts” is part of the problems of implementation.

According to the principal of Foso Training College, the content of the INSET courses to introduce the mentorship guidelines was inappropriate. In his view it had very little relationship to the task of supporting and assessing student teachers and using their profiles to help them develop towards the targets for development. His expectation was that topics should have been treated in a practical way or in the form of workshops with direct relevance to supporting trainees and helping them to develop professionally. As he puts it instead it focused on such issues as:

“Long lectures in explaining the guidelines and arguments” (Principal, Foso Training College).

Thus, the organisation of the INSET courses demonstrated an assumption that principals of colleges and tutors would be capable of “cascading” the knowledge and skills of mentoring and therefore, the focus was the explanation of the guidelines to them. The case study evidence however, suggests that, principals, tutors (link tutors) teachers (mentors) feel they need practical training in the techniques of providing support and

assessment and in using trainees' profiles to help them develop professionally. One can conclude that, for the case study areas, link tutors' and mentors' practical training and support in implementing the mentorship scheme was considered more important than the provision of a set of guidelines or handbook.

From the evidence available one can draw some conclusions about the INSET courses organised for principals, vice principals, tutors (link tutors) and teachers (mentors) before the implementation of the mentorship scheme at the post secondary teacher training level in Ghana. First, the INSET course organised for mentors and link tutors to provide them with knowledge and skills needed in providing effective support for trainees in the classrooms and in the schools was seriously lacking. This being an innovation or a new approach at initial teacher training one might have expected that regular INSET will be organised for mentors and link tutors to prepare and equip them with the knowledge, skills and the experience of implementing the mentorship scheme. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

Second, it appears that college/school officials such as principals, vice principals, tutors and lead mentors who attended INSET courses were expected to disseminate what they had learned on return to their colleges. The case study evidence indicates that no activities were organised at the college level to communicate proceedings of INSET courses on return to the colleges or schools. In other words, the cascade model of INSET had not worked as intended. Some tutors (link tutors) especially the recently appointed ones, are therefore ignorant of the knowledge and practice of the mentorship scheme. This is because the colleges have been unable to organise training courses as a

form of staff development training or corporate learning for in-coming tutors about the principles and practice of mentoring.

The research evidence indicates that a weakness of the INSET system was that no serious attempt was made to train personnel at the district or local levels who would continue with the training of teachers or mentors at the district level. Although this has been outlined in detail in the handbook there appears to be a lack of personnel at the local level to train mentors to acquire skills, knowledge and experience in the practice of mentorship. There was indication that mentors and link tutors would want such training but in a way where the “experts” would work in close collaboration with them to address the problems they face with implementation of the mentorship scheme.

Undoubtedly, one can conclude that the implementation of the mentorship scheme at the post secondary teacher training level in Ghana suffered serious setbacks because of inadequate preparation via INSET courses. The case study evidence clearly suggests that there was the need for regular INSET courses to help mentors and link tutors acquire the knowledge, skills and experience needed in providing support for the trainees.

The few successes chalked up during the implementation process in spite of the difficulties perhaps, is not surprising when it is considered that majority of the mentors and link tutors have had quite a long teaching experience. As table 5.1 shows that all 4(100%) of the link tutors and about (75%) of the mentors have had more than five years teaching experience at either the college level or in the school.

TABLE 5.1 Years of Teaching Experience at the College or School Level in the Two Case Study Areas

Years of Teaching Experience	Number of Mentors	Number of Link Tutors	Remarks
Link Tutors and Mentors with 15-20 years	1	0	This was a Lead Mentor at Foso Catholic JSS
Link Tutors and Mentors with 10-14 years	2	0	These were mentors at Zion JSS Cape Coast and Foso D/C JSS
Link Tutors and Mentors with 5-9 years	15	4	These were two link tutors from OLA Training and Foso Training College respectively, and eight mentors from Cape Coast and seven mentors from Foso area
Link Tutors and Mentors with up to 4 years	2	0	These were one mentor from Philip Quaque Boys' JSS and one mentor from Foso Catholic JSS

These statistics suggest that the case study areas did possess a highly experienced and trained cohort of mentors and link tutors to manage the implementation of the mentorship scheme. The dismal picture the evidence portrays and the successes chalked up and the positive attitude formed towards mentorship as an approach to initial teacher training is therefore due to the long teaching experience of mentors and link tutors.

It is reasonable to conclude that the gains expected from mentorship as an approach to initial teacher training in Ghana could only be achieved if link tutors and mentors were sufficiently trained and provided the necessary structural support to develop further their skills, knowledge and experience in supporting and assessing trainees.

It is also clear from the case study evidence that previous INSET courses organised to introduce mentors, link tutors, principals and vice principals to the concept and practice of mentoring were too theoretical and did not address pressing concerns of mentors and link tutors as far as mentorship is concerned.

The philosophy or the principle of mentorship being used as a mechanism to enhance teacher development through mentor support and assessment is therefore, denied in Ghana by the lack of relevant INSET courses.

It is clear that the constraints affecting the effective implementation of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education (ITE) in Ghana is the result of several inter-related factors discussed above. For example the effective implementation of the mentorship scheme is limited by teacher-pupil ratio which according to Djangmah (2002) is on an average of 1:27 in the rural areas and 1:45 in the urban areas (Refer to Appendix 7). This situation leads to a high level of assessment per pupil especially with Continuous Assessment in practice and makes it difficult for mentors to have time in providing support for trainees. The research also identified the following as critical limiting factors: insufficient contact time for discussions with trainees, lack of support from District Directors, principals, link tutors and lead mentors; insufficient and in adequate Distance Learning Materials(DLM) lack of professional confidence from mentors in providing support to trainees and lack of intra-departmental or school collaboration on

tackling problems regarding the implementation of the mentorship scheme because of the worries about the effect it might have on professional or social relations and above all ineffective organisation of INSET programmes before the start of the mentorship scheme.

To make the implementation of the mentorship scheme effective will mean giving more attention to resolving these problems.

In the next chapter some proposals are put forward about improving the present INSET situation to make it more responsive to the challenges posed by the mentorship scheme as revealed in this thesis.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

6.1 Introduction

The aim of the study was to examine the perceptions and experiences of mentors, trainees and link tutors about the introduction and implementation of the mentorship scheme at the post-secondary teacher training level in Ghana. This chapter draws together the outcomes of the issues raised in the study such as introducing school-based teacher education to enhance the professional development of trainees, developing mentors' competence through INSET to provide support for trainees', development of trainees' knowledge, skills and the confidence to teach through mentor support and using mentor assessment information from trainees' files to help trainees develop towards the targets for development. The issues which have emerged from the research evidence regarding the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana are related to the broader challenges associated with changing practice in educational settings (Fullan, 1991). The significance of this process is therefore, discussed in this chapter to highlight the critical conditions that were at stake in the change process associated with the implementation of the mentorship scheme.

The chapter also examines the issue of the interaction between the mentorship policy and its practice at initial teacher training level in Ghana. Conclusions are drawn about how adequate the mentorship policy was in terms of it providing a framework for fostering trainees' professional development and learning. Some basic issues that need

to be discussed and resolved at the policy level to improve the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education level in Ghana are also presented.

The final part of the chapter focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of the study, the challenges faced and the lessons learned from using qualitative methodology in the study. As one would expect from researching into a complex educational issue like mentoring, the research unearthed other issues that need further research and these are also discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

6.2 SUMMARY

The mentorship scheme at initial teacher education level in Ghana is relatively new and like any innovation is likely to encounter problems with its implementation. The study sought to find out how adequate the preparation and training given to the mentors assisted them in providing support to trainees with regard to using trainees' files in helping them develop towards the targets for development. It also sought to investigate whether mentor support, assessment and interactions with trainees in the schools acted as a catalyst to trainees' professional development as regards the extent to which mentor support helped in equipping trainees with the knowledge, skills and the confidence to help them teach and to reflect over their teaching.

Finally, the study aimed at examining the extent to which the practice of mentoring in the schools reflects the official policy. Thus, the study essentially sought to examine the issues that have emerged with regard to the translation of policy into practice.

It needs emphasising that the study was exploratory. To be able to answer the questions and the issues raised in the study, the researcher made use of semi-structured interviews, observations, documentary analysis and note-taking. According to Bryman (2001)

interviews can be 'placed on a continuum with structured interviews at one end and unstructured interviews at the other (p.314). For this research, the interview method used was semi-structured in nature. The interviews were essentially exploratory as this format allowed the researcher to respond to the 'emerging world-view of the respondent and to new ideas on the topic (Bryman 2001, p.315 Merriam 1988, p. 74). The research design adopted involved a multi-site case study approach. The research approach was also essentially qualitative and hypothesis generating rather than quantitative and hypothesis testing. The research data was analysed using 'open-coding' of data (Strauss and Corbin 1990)., which meant breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualising and categorising data. The methods used for the collection and recording of evidence were considered in relation to the naturalistic research paradigm. (Refer to Chapter 4 for details). The outcomes of the research, and the conclusions drawn, are discussed in the next section.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

6.3.1 Perception about School-Based Teacher Education (Mentorship)

The mentorship scheme was generally perceived as a means of improving trainees' knowledge of school experience and teaching. The majority of the trainees about (80%) agreed that the mentorship scheme provided them with the opportunity to teach or learn about teaching better as it afforded them the opportunity to practise what they have learnt in colleges in 'real' teaching situations. They were, however, worried that the support and assessment they received from the mentors was not helping them to develop towards the targets for development as the mentors did not have time to engage in post-lesson observation discussions with them.

Furlong and Maynard (1993) in a school-based teacher training study in England also indicated that both mentors and trainees found the school experience as enhancing the professional development of trainees. They concluded that mentors were happy to be involved in the assessment of trainees. Similarly, in a study conducted by Stephens (1996) he found out that though trainees were happy to have school based training, their professional development depended very much on the time and support provided by mentors to trainees. Stephens (1996) concluded that placing trainees in schools without the proper support from mentors does not lead to their professional development.

Also the majority of the mentors felt that they did not have the needed skills and knowledge in providing the needed support to trainees. This, according to their views, could be attributed to the ineffectiveness of the INSET training given to them before the start of the mentorship scheme. This observation ran counter to the study conducted by McIntyre et al (1992) about the Articled teachers' programme in England. In the study of the Articled Teachers' Scheme McIntyre et al (1992) stated that the programme succeeded and achieved its aim because the mentors had the competence, knowledge and the skills and were therefore, able to provide support to trainees.

6.3. 2. Mentor Support and Assessment of Trainees

Information derived from trainees' files was inadequate and unsatisfactory means of determining trainees' progress and providing a framework for improving their professional development. The research showed that though mentor support and assessment were designed for diagnostic purposes to help enhance the professional development of trainees, in practice however it was more for summative or certification purpose. Some trainees claimed that peer observation and a few post-

lesson discussions promoted self-diagnosis or reflection through constructive engagements. Sadly very few mentors used this kind of approach and therefore such benefit could be considered to be very limited. The perception of mentors towards using mentor support and assessment for enhancing trainees' professional learning and development corroborates other research about assessment. For example, Beecher et. al (1980) found that although assessment schemes are introduced for diagnostic purposes teachers rarely use them for promoting students learning. Similar findings have been reported by Pecku (1991) and Akwasi (1994) in their study of teacher training tutors' assessment of trainees in Ghana regarding the use of formative assessment information in the implementation of Continuous Assessment. They found that generally tutors made very little use of assessment information for professional purposes or in attempting to diagnose trainees' difficulties. Some educational researchers contend that it is because the assessment milieu in many educational systems is measurement driven as such many teachers give little attention to using assessment information for professional purposes.(William and Black,1995, Black, 1993). The evidence obtained from this research appears to support this contention with regard to the way mentor support and assessment is practised in the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana. Thus, the assertion that the introduction of the mentorship scheme will provide opportunity for enhancing the professional development and learning of trainees is something which in reality hardly happens within the teacher education context in Ghana.

Several factors have been expounded in Chapter 5 to explain why in reality the use of the mentorship scheme for promoting the professional development and learning of trainees has become elusive and therefore, requires no elaboration here. One point is however, clear enough, judging from what many of the mentors said. It was obvious

that they were not ignorant about the need to use mentor support and assessment for promoting the professional development and learning of trainees. However, what was clear from the case study evidence was that mentors' professional skills regarding support and assessment in making use of assessment information from trainees' files and profiles to help them develop towards the targets for development was limited by the training they received during in-service training and the conditions under which they worked. For example, because of the large number of pupils mentors had to deal with in the schools it was difficult for them to have time to hold post-lesson observation discussions with the trainees to communicate assessment information to trainees. The mentor (teacher) pupil ratio is therefore a relevant issue to consider if one expects mentors to have time for post-lesson observation discussions and to make use of information from trainees' files to help them develop towards the targets for development. This leads to the need for a mentorship scheme which provides the framework for trainees to actively participate in using mentor support and assessment information to improve their professional development. The research evidence clearly showed that trainees' role in self-assessment or evaluation of their teaching was mostly passive in the sense that mentor support and assessment did not involve trainees in the context where they were "encouraged to evaluate their teaching and to spot where they have succeeded or not", "or reflect over their teaching (Sutton, 1997; Schon, 1983). In other words, mentor support and assessment did not provide the framework for self-evaluation or reflection. The view of this thesis is that a model of mentorship which provides support and assessment procedures and also allows the trainee to undertake self-evaluation within the context of initial teacher education is needed to provide the framework for trainees to be able to develop the skills of self-evaluation or reflection.

The next section discusses the problems that have undermined the effective practice of the mentorship scheme in the case study areas.

6.3.3 Problems that have Undermined the Effective Practice of the Mentorship Scheme in the Case Study Areas.

Problems that have undermined the effective practice of the mentorship scheme in the case study areas included the following:

(i) The excessively high mentor (teacher) pupil ratio. The excessively high mentor/pupil ratio which increases the workload of mentors with regard to marking and recording of pupils' work makes it difficult for mentors to engage in post-lesson observation discussions with trainees and to use information from trainees' files and profiles to enhance their professional development. The research evidence showed that short praises like "you are doing well", "It's getting better" were preferred to extended post-lesson observation discussion and using information from trainees' files.

(ii) Lack of professional support in the schools and at the colleges. There was clearly a lack of a system of internal support at the school and college levels to support mentors and link tutors to help them carry out effective implementation practices. There was also lack of external support at the regional and district levels as the regional and district directors of education did not provide the needed support through the circuit officers at the districts to assist mentors and link tutors to overcome their problems in the schools and the colleges. Thus, institutional support for the implementation of the mentorship scheme in terms of offering professional guidance and addressing problems which mentors and link tutors encountered was lacking.

(iii) Lack of a system for monitoring or moderating mentor support and assessment. The lack of a system for moderating mentor support and assessment leading to uniformity of practice across the schools appeared to have devalued the mentorship scheme in the eyes of case study mentors and trainees many of whom felt mentor support and assessment had not been taken seriously by the teacher education division in Ghana. The lack of a system for moderating mentor support and assessment at the school level casts doubts on the reliability and validity of mentor assessment of trainees as assessment results or information was used as part of the process of certification. The overriding conclusion from all these is that effective mentorship practice depends on effective mentor support, favourable working conditions and supportive structures. Other researchers who have studied the implementation and practice of mentorship schemes have noted similar factors as the above. In particular researchers have noted problems such as assessment of trainees, mentor trainee relationship, mentor motivation and providing support through inspection and supervision (see Fish 1989, Fish 1995, Stephens 1996 , etc.). Stephens (1996) for example, concludes that ineffective mentor support, motivation, time and resources and INSET support are key problems which affect the implementation of mentorship schemes. The evidence obtained from this research however, suggests that the problems of implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana extended beyond structural and logistical provisions and support. The mentorship scheme as discussed in Chapter 3 requires changes in approach in supporting and assessing trainees which the research evidence suggests is not easy to master. The challenge is acquiring the skills and changing attitudes and assumptions about supporting and assessing teacher trainees shaped by previous understanding of supporting and assessing teacher trainees at initial teacher education. According to Fish (1995) mentoring is more complex than teaching practice and

‘trainees assessment should be of a holistic approach than a reductionist approach’ (p159.). Interview evidence from the case study areas suggests that most mentors rely on previous experience in assessing trainees and in making sense of assessment information. This previous experience is mostly based on a reductionist approach to assessment of trainees as this is reflected in the vast majority of mentors’ assessment practices. The lack of effective in-service training means that not much could be achieved or expected from mentors in using mentor support and assessment in the mentorship scheme to enhance the professional development of trainees.

In summary, the problems regarding the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana run deeper than general problems of logistical, organisational, or operational constraints although they are relevant. Certain notions of what counts as supporting and assessing teacher trainees appear to have narrowed understanding of the possibilities inherent in the practice of mentorship as an approach to initial teacher training. This leads to the next issue which is the notion held by mentors and link tutors about providing support and assessing teacher trainees which influenced the way in which mentor support and assessment was conducted.

6.3.4 Views Rooted in the Values and Beliefs of Mentors about Assessing Trainees.

There was clearly evidence of the awareness of the importance of developing and using mentor support and assessment criteria in helping trainees to develop professionally in the mentorship scheme. Generally, mentors felt trainees needed to be told about the assessment criteria as it motivated them to learn and to teach better and it also helped them to evaluate or reflect over their teaching. As stated in Chapters (1&3) the underlying philosophy of the mentorship scheme is based upon a view of support and assessment accomplished jointly by the mentor and the trainee. In principle it is about

mentors and trainees working cooperatively within the school environment to improve trainees' professional development and learning. It therefore, presupposes openness or transparency in mentor and trainee interactions rather than sentence or judge the trainee. Though mentors and link tutors were aware of this need, what emerged from interviews and discussions with mentors and link tutors was that the vast majority of the case study mentors lacked the skills in providing support and assessing trainees and were relying on previous knowledge or experience when they were in the training colleges and were, therefore, supporting and assessing trainees on the lines of the old teaching practice assessment or procedure. Such an attitude towards mentorship quite clearly is inconsistent with the philosophy of mentorship at initial teacher education which primarily aims at helping trainees to develop professionally. Thus the attitude of mentors towards the issue of providing support and assessing trainees in the mentorship scheme reflected more a lack of acquiring the competence or skills needed in providing support to trainees than the view that mentorship is counter productive as an approach to initial teacher education. Content analysis of mentors' and link tutors' assessment from trainees' files indicated that the vast majority of their assessment centred on trainees' subject-matter knowledge to the neglect of their professional knowledge of teaching. In addition, the vast majority of their assessment were not based on contexts that could be described as requiring trainees to reflect on practical professional learning experiences which will help trainees to reflect over their teaching. The gap between the construct of mentorship practice articulated in Chapter 3, and what mentors were doing could be attributed to the lack of pre and in-service training to re-orient mentors in their expectations of the mentorship scheme. Not surprisingly, with the lack of orientation, competence and skills, there was evidence that mentors and link tutors looked to the requirements and expectations of the teacher education external examinations to set the

agenda for the mentorship scheme by supporting and assessing trainees to help them pass or get certificates.

6.4 Implications of Research Findings for Developing Mentor Support and Assessment Policy for Post-Secondary Teacher Education in Ghana

It is my opinion that the findings as summarised in this section have implications for policy on mentor support and assessment at initial teacher education and the development of INSET programmes to train mentors in providing support for trainees. (Some of these implications are addressed later in this chapter). The findings also pose a critical question which lies at the heart of the issues this thesis has been exploring, which is:

- How should the mentorship scheme be modelled to enhance its impact on the professional development and learning of trainees and simultaneously provide information that can also be used for the purpose of certification?

The research evidence suggests that to begin the process of improving the practice of mentorship at initial teacher education in Ghana, this question needs to be addressed. The reason is that some of the difficulties with the implementation of the mentorship scheme in the schools especially in promoting trainees' professional development and learning appear to rise because of the emphasis mentors place on summative assessment or evaluation which is certification rather than the formative evaluation which is the educational importance. Consequently, this appears to have undervalued the use of the mentorship scheme to specifically promote trainees' professional development and learning. Mentor support and assessment for promoting professional development and learning of trainees is, however, at the heart of mentorship as was

established in Chapter 3. There is little doubt that developing a model of mentor support and assessment which maps more closely on to the processes for directly promoting trainees' learning makes achieving comparability more difficult. This is because mentors must develop and relate assessment to the context and needs of trainees, as such assessment will need to be more 'flexible and adaptable' (Fish 1995; Delandshere 1994).

Thus, the conditions of mentor assessment will vary making comparability difficult to achieve. This leads to a further question that needs examining at the policy level, that is: How specific or flexible should the requirements of mentor assessment be and therefore what areas of professional learning should it address or leave out?.

Furthermore, what should be the basis for including mentor assessment of trainees as part of the external examination component? There is no doubt that these questions have no simple solutions. Nevertheless, they are questions that I believe should inform and direct decisions leading to the improvement of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in Ghana. Ultimately the issue about using the mentorship scheme to enhance trainees' professional development and learning and also to use it as part of the certification process is about the status accorded to the professional judgement of mentors. As Gipps (1994a) has rightly put it:

To embrace educational assessment, with the professional involvement of well-trained teachers, will be to harness a powerful tool for learning (Gipps, 1994a; p.176).

Thus, the issue also extends to policy on pre-and in-service training. Sadly, the research evidence on INSET on mentorship shows that the case study mentors lacked the kind of

training that would make them more proficient at carrying out the mentorship scheme, especially to promote trainees' professional development and learning.

6.4.1 Problems Associated with Changing Practice: Lessons from the Case Study

As pointed out in the introduction of this chapter, many of the issues that have emerged from the findings of this research regarding the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana are related to the broader challenges associated with providing and managing change (Fullan, 1991). The research evidence from the case study areas about the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in Ghana is a dismal one but shows some of the classic problems of managing change in educational systems. For example, it highlights the difficulties involved with changing the approach to initial teacher education when new skills must be acquired or additional time must be found to plan and practise new approaches at supporting and assessing teacher trainees. Furthermore, the findings highlight how previous notions of what counts as providing support and assessing teacher trainees can narrow how mentors interpret and approach a new teacher education scheme. Besides, much of what appears to be the problem with the implementation of the mentorship scheme is the result of lack of structural and logistical support, difficult conditions of operation and therefore, cannot be blamed on individual mentors alone. In effect what the findings confirm is the fact that educational change includes but extends beyond the possibility of the individual tutor or mentor. (See, Fullan, 1991 for a comprehensive review of such issues). The evidence leads to the conclusion that the introduction of the mentorship scheme into initial teacher education in Ghana needed more planning and attention than was put in. Consequently, there were no long term plans developed to deal with problems that might arise with its implementation. It is fair to conclude that the fCUBE programme and the planners of

the mentorship scheme especially the Teacher Education Division under the Ministry of Education misjudged the complexity of introducing the mentorship scheme. Too little attention was focused on the conditions and support structures that will be needed to sustain its effective implementation in the immediate and the long term. Lacking these, case study mentors were handling the mentorship scheme in the only possible way they could. Generally, mentors and tutors were clear about the need for change but felt the requirements of the mentorship scheme were impractical given the circumstances under which they had to carry out or implement it. On the mentors' front, the evidence obtained indicated that many were still clinging to the old approach of providing support to teacher trainees in the old block teaching practice without making time for post-lesson observation discussions with trainees. Several reasons for all of these have been sufficiently articulated in Chapter 5 and need not to be recounted here. Thus, the findings that emerged from the research evidence were not surprising as clearly there was a problem with the management of change regarding the introduction of the mentorship scheme.

There are several lessons that I believe can be learned from the findings with respect to promoting and managing new practice in the educational context of Ghana. Two most important ones from the point of view of this study are as follows:

(i) The conditions and assumptions underlying new practice need to be brought to the surface and vigorously examined for the implication of their use in the local context. For example the concept of mentorship has evolved in the western world conditioned by certain assumptions about integrating theory and practice in the training of teachers, teachers' occupational culture, system of support in promoting quality in teacher education and characteristics of the school system. For example the culture of

professional collaboration among teachers operating in the western system may be more developed and therefore teachers/mentors may work more closely together to support and promote new practices that are being introduced. In addition western schools and systems often have the advantage of trained local authority advisors who offer professional advice and are therefore key players in the educational enterprise including the process of change practice. However, in a developing country like Ghana, these conditions, services, and trained personnel are seriously lacking or the professional collaborative culture of teachers/mentors is less developed. Therefore, I believe that reforms or measures will need to focus much more on building sustainable structures and services with actual potential to support new practices. Also more attention will need to be given to raising mentors' professionalism to give them the competence, skills, the confidence and the collective ability to help each other implement change. The point being emphasised here is that although new practices may appear attractive on professional grounds, they will only be viable if levels of professionalism, expertise and support services are high enough to sustain them. These have been found lacking as revealed in this thesis.

(ii) Another important lesson that can be learned from the research findings is that more extensive measures of change may be needed if older practices are to give way or allow room for new practices. For example, it was evident from the research evidence that introducing a guideline document for link tutors and mentors to use to change their practice is insufficient. I am of the view that the guideline document should have been part of other important measures such as long running workshops to address the issues of old notions about providing support for teacher trainees that may be incompatible with the philosophy of the mentorship scheme and to have made the in-service training more practical than the theoretical approach that was adopted. Although the research

evidence established that a few mentors were making the effort to provide post-lesson observation discussions to help trainees reflect or evaluate their teaching, this was more the exception than the norm. As it was established in Chapter 5, several factors some of which were beyond mentors' control had contributed to creating this situation. Thus, the mentorship guideline or document could only be part of the solution to changing or improving the way in which trainees' are supported in the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in Ghana. Orientation programmes designed to encourage mentors to help in the way they support and assess trainees could potentially have made an effective impact on the outcome of the mentorship scheme if much efforts had been put in and the training sessions had taken the form of workshops. However, as the research evidence indicated such activities were not given much attention.

Fullan (1982) has for example, rightly noted that:

The implementation process has frequently overlooked people (behaviour, beliefs, skills) in favour of things (eg. Regulations, materials) and this is essentially why it fails more times than not. While people are much more difficult to deal with than things, they are also much more necessary for success (p.249).

This observation of Fullan is very relevant to the issue of introducing mentorship at initial teacher education in Ghana. Although the fCUBE programme and the planners of the "In-In-Out" programme were seeking a fundamental change in mentors' attitude and approach towards providing support and assessing teacher trainees, the strategy for achieving this focused narrowly on a set of guide lines and ineffective in-service training. What appears to have been underrated was the development of structures for training and supporting mentors and link tutors in providing effective and efficient support for the trainees.

Havelock and Huberman (1977) reviewed some case study evaluations of educational innovations in developing countries and found many of them lacking in the support needed to make the transition from older to new practices. They stressed that:

Plans which assume that people will accept to function in situations of high novelty and complexity without long periods of preparation, safe practice and support are erroneous. They underestimate the psychological importance of order, routine and predictability, although it is precisely these three qualities which careful planning is meant to achieve in facilitating the smooth and durable adoption of an innovation (Havelock & Huberman, 1977; p. 159).

It seems to me that similar errors were made in the planning and the introduction of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in Ghana. The planners especially the Teacher Education Division, I believe, underestimated the need to concentrate on changing attitudes and skills needed for supporting and assessing teacher trainees. If the introduction of the mentorship scheme had been approached with serious planning involving close collaboration with mentors and link tutors by involving them in the planning and delivery of the INSET programmes, I believe the implementation process would have been more effective.

6.5 Wider Implications of the Research Findings and Recommendations for Improving the Mentorship Scheme

As pointed out in Chapter 1 , the rationale behind the introduction of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in Ghana was to provide a meaningful balance between theory and practice in the preparation of teacher trainees and to enhance school experience of trainees with the view to making trainees competent and effective teachers. For example, by staying with teachers and pupils in the schools and the needed support and coaching provided it was envisaged that trainees will be helped to

reflect over their teaching as they would acquire a range of professional learning experiences which would go a long way to enhance their professional development and learning. Thus, the introduction of the mentorship scheme was meant to forge a closer link between theory and practice and the provision of proficient teachers. The conclusion reached by this research is that the objectives are far from being attained as the analysis of the case study suggested.

In this section of the chapter some of the wider implications of the findings will be explored and recommendations suggested for policy makers to help improve the implementation and the effectiveness of the mentorship scheme in Ghana.

6.5.1 Implications for Improving Mentor Support and Assessment of Trainees

One of the important objectives of evaluation research as Beeby (1977) points out is to promote understanding of the way in which a system or programme operates with the intention to submit suggestions for improving it. Unlike traditional research which aims to produce new knowledge with often no specific consequences on practical decisions, evaluation research is deliberately undertaken as a guide to action (Wolf, 1997). It needs pointing out that though this research was not undertaken from a purely evaluative perspective it however, had a similar objective of analysing the system with the intentions of making suggestions for improving it. Therefore, this section provides some suggestions on what could be done to improve the way support is provided to teacher trainees in the mentorship scheme in Ghana. It also needs pointing out that these suggestions reflect my personal journey of understanding into the issue of providing support and assessing professional learning in teacher education as presented in Chapter 3 and what was found lacking in the mentorship scheme at the case study areas.

(i) Adopting a Model of Mentoring that will Encourage Self-Assessment/Reflection in Trainees

Evidence from the case study areas revealed that mentor support and assessment of trainees were not helping the professional development of trainees. Trainees therefore, need to be exposed to a model that will motivate them to show ownership and resourcefulness of their teaching in the form of evaluation or reflection. As stated earlier, the complex nature of teaching and the complex demands required in the preparation of teacher trainees underscores the importance that rather than selecting one mentoring model, parts of the various models should be blended to meet the varied developmental needs of trainees and the context within which they practice. I share this view. I, however, will recommend that from the research evidence as revealed in the case study areas emphasis should be placed on Furlong and Maynard's (1993) stage model in the implementation and practice of the mentorship scheme in Ghana. This model if blended with the others will help trainees to reflect, take ownership of the teaching-learning process and also help mentors to assume different roles like the coach, critical friend, partnership teacher, partnership supervisor and above all provide learning experiences for both mentors and trainees. Thus, the model will encourage mutual respect and team work between mentors, trainees and link tutors and also help in developing initiative and confidence in trainees to teach. (See Chapter 3 for details).

(ii) Adopting Profiling as a Framework for helping Trainees to Develop Towards the Targets for Development in Ghana.

The merits of profiling in relation to teacher education have already been discussed in detail (see Chapter 3), and need not to be repeated here. As was pointed out in Chapter 5, the idea of mentor support and assessment with the aim of helping trainees to have

marks to help them pass has generally undervalued the formative aspect of mentor assessment for specifically promoting trainees' professional development. What this thesis argues for, therefore, is the development of mentorship based on the idea of profiling and where the profiling framework is purposely developed as a developmental tool and not simply as a tool to record mentor assessment results. The outcome of mentor support and assessment under this developmental process could then be reported as a matrix of marks, records of specific achievements with information about trainees' strengths and weaknesses, description of tasks engaged in, etc.

The rationale for suggesting profiling is to place value on a wider range of professional learning which is in keeping with mentorship philosophy. By widening the professional and the evidential base of mentor assessment of trainees through the method of profiling, this could potentially shift attention from mentor support and assessment just for marks as other evidence would be required to satisfy the profile requirements. (The issues discussed about profiling in Chapter 3 could be a useful reference source for guiding policy makers in Ghana on profiling in teacher education).

Obviously, because the system of profiling is new in teacher education in Ghana, it will require very careful planning and introduction. Under the present mentor support and assessment system in the mentorship scheme it can be envisaged that profiling will face two main challenges. The first would be how it combines marks and non-quantifiable evidence about trainees' achievements and targets for redevelopment within the profile matrix. The second is how the results of mentor support and assessment reported as a profile of trainees' achievements can be combined with the external examination results. These are questions which policy makers and programme designers will have to discuss and resolve. They are questions which in my opinion should be at the heart of any

considerations aimed at improving mentor support and assessment in the mentorship scheme in Ghana. It needs pointing out that the central role examinations currently occupy in the assessment system of teacher education in Ghana means that any college-based education needs to consider how it can operate in partnership with examinations without its over dominance. The evidence produced in this research is testimony to the fact that attitudes to providing support and assessment for teacher trainees at initial teacher education can be conditioned by the expectations and requirements of examinations.

The practice of aggregating scores from such diverse areas as subject-based knowledge and methodology to produce an aggregate score in a professional training programme like teacher education needs reviewing for validity reasons.

This is needed so that users of the scores, mentors, link tutors, tutors and external users alike can make meaningful inferences and informed decisions from them (Murphy & Joyce. 1996). Also, as Crooks et al. (1996) point out:

If too wide a range of tasks is included in an aggregated score, many correlations among the tasks will be low, reducing the coherence of the aggregated score. This lack of homogeneity will limit the generalizability, interpretability and usefulness of the aggregated score (Crooks et al., 1996, p. 273).

Obviously this has implications for the design of mentor support and assessment programme. The current mentorship scheme does not stipulate clearly the proportions and aspects of trainees' subject-based knowledge and methodology-based knowledge to be represented in the aggregated score of mentors. This has contributed to the scenario where some mentors' assessment of trainees consisted almost entirely of either subject-based or methodology-based knowledge. In fact mentors' assessment was so diverse in

content and methodology coverage as would make any attempt to interpret or compare the aggregated scores very difficult or unintelligible. This is a fundamental weakness in the mentorship scheme as far as mentor assessment is concerned.

It is well established within the research literature that teaching and learning in any educational context can be profoundly influenced by the type of support and assessment procedures in use (Fish 1989., Fish 1995, Biggs, 1996, Gipps, 1994b; Broadfoot 1996). The evidence obtained from this study suggested that there may be some relationship between mentors' supporting strategy and the assessment approach adopted in the mentorship scheme. Mentors who were observed appeared to be relying on their previous experience and the way they were assessed when they were in training colleges. This indication highlights the importance of improving the support and assessment base of mentors as part of the process of improving the mentorship scheme.

As noted in Chapter 5, classroom observation revealed that mentors did not have time for post-lesson observation discussions with trainees. Also case study mentors admitted when interviewed to not being able to use assessment information from trainees' files to enhance their professional development. Without a system to equip mentors with the competence and skills to use information from trainees files to help them develop towards the targets for development it seems unlikely that any recommended mentorship scheme can have much effect.

In summary, the evidence that emerged about the mentorship scheme in Ghana suggested that it is failing to make the desired professional impact on trainees' development and learning. In this section the implications of some of the identified shortcomings for improving the mentorship scheme have been suggested. It has been recommended that a review of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in

Ghana is needed and certain proposals have been made based on research evidence presented in this thesis. They include the following:

- (i) Using profiling as a framework to help trainees to develop towards the targets for development.
- (ii) Reviewing the current methods of aggregating mentor assessment scores to improve its validity.

6.5.2 Implications for Improving the Competence of Mentors and Link Tutors

There is no doubt that the key to any school-based teacher education scheme like mentoring fulfilling its purpose is the effectiveness of the mentors who provide support (Fish 1995; Stephens 1996; Gilroy 1989). Several instances cited in Chapter 3 clearly showed that for the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in Ghana to achieve the desired results, mentors' competence in providing support would need to improve considerably. Also INSET courses and programmes need to be developed to provide an avenue for continuing development of the skills of mentorship. (This is discussed further in this chapter). In Chapter 5 it was established that previous INSET training had been inadequate because they had not tackled the actual needs of mentors and link tutors with respect to providing support and assessing trainees. Fish (1995) has identified five principles which apply to all learners in educational setting . The evidence obtained from this study suggests that all five if adopted and adapted will be relevant to direct any training in helping mentors in providing support and in assessing trainees in Ghana. (Fish 1995, pp. 149-150).

Although there was evidence that INSET courses were organised for mentors and link tutors before the mentorship scheme started, but the evidence was that practical issues

about it were not the focus. Instead the INSET courses focused on explaining policy guidelines . One very important area mentors reported they needed training in was how to use information from trainees' files to help them develop towards the targets for development. Much it appears is assumed about mentors' ability to integrate their assessment with the professional development and learning of trainees. Most of the mentors' assessment information I inspected lacked the quality of creating a framework for guiding trainees to improve upon their professional development and learning. Nitko (1995) reports of a proposed strategy for building teachers' competence in assessment in Jamaica during the introduction of Continuous Assessment. Although Continuous Assessment is different from mentorship, I believe lessons could be drawn from the Jamaican experience to help improve the mentorship scheme in Ghana. In this scheme a central agency develops certain tools which teachers may use at the school level for diagnosis and monitoring trainees' progress towards the targets for development. The innovation in this scheme is that each school has a specifically appointed senior teacher. This teacher was responsible for ensuring that appropriate assessment procedures were applied in assessing learners and he/she was also responsible for the training of teachers. In the mentorship scheme in Ghana an officer from the training agency in this respect can be some one from the Teacher Education Division and from the Institute of Education University of Cape Coast and University of Winneba. Circuit Officers this time will also have to monitor and offer professional support to the lead mentor at the school level.

This system has similarity with the idea of the 'Circuit Officer' introduced at the inception of the mentorship scheme except that the circuit officer received no special training in how to help mentors or lead mentors professionally in providing support and in assessing trainees at the inception of the mentorship scheme. The circuit officers role

in the implementation of the mentorship scheme was purely administrative (GES/TED, 2001). Their task was to ensure the proper filling in of mentors' assessment information in trainees' files and profiles and collate the marks with link tutors for onward transmission to the Institute of Education University of Cape Coast. Thus Circuit Officers were not provided with the training that would have equipped them to offer professional assistance to mentors in providing support for trainees in the schools. In the Jamaican one proposed to help improve the system the circuit officers will have the training and the skills to provide support to mentors and lead mentors in addition to their administrative function. Had they been equipped to do so they could have assisted the lead mentors in the schools in the absence of personnel from the Teacher Education Division and lecturers from the University of Cape Coast and Winneba who organised the initial in-service training for mentors. As one Circuit Officer pointed out when I asked about how he was coping with helping mentors in providing support to trainees:

“ I just make sure at the end of the day they have filled in the appropriate records and I sign and the link tutor also signs. That's all I can do ” (Circuit Officer, Foso District).

In the innovation proposed above which is the Jamaican situation, the Circuit Officer is given training in providing support and assessing trainees in mentorship so he is able to provide support to mentors in the schools.

Another approach for improving the situation, apart from offering mentors relevant professional training would be to reduce their workload. This would enable them to attend to the needs of trainees and at the same time have time to share ideas with their colleagues. As in the Jamaican example, the Institute of Education acting as the training agency could help develop appropriate models of mentor support and assessment

procedures for mentors to use. It would probably be necessary as in the Jamaican model to appoint trained external officers to help circuit officers in working with and helping to train mentors in providing appropriate support to trainees.

Recently, ten teacher training INSET centres were established across the country and could serve as workshop centres for upgrading the competence and skills of mentors. Thus, what is being proposed is a two-tier INSET system. One at the school level where trained circuit officers in collaboration with Institute of Education staff and personnel from the Teacher Education Division can work together to upgrade mentors' competence, skills and knowledge in providing support to trainees. The other system of INSET could be organised at the ten INSET centres. However, because of the large number of mentors that might need training (judging from the ten regions and the one hundred and ten districts) it would probably be expedient to use the ten centres for training of trainers at the regional level. I believe that the school level training should be built into the programmes and activities of the school and should actively involve teachers in its planning and delivery. The idea is to make the training part of the routine of the schools and not as one-shot professional exercise.

In addition, because of the high staff turnover in the teacher education colleges, it makes sense that the pre-service training of tutors pays attention to newer practices like mentoring being introduced into the teacher education colleges. The rationale behind this would be to ensure that graduating tutors entering the teacher education colleges are conversant with the philosophy and practice of mentoring procedures and models so that they can help trainees acquire some understanding before embarking upon school experience. The wider implications of this with regards to initiating reforms in the teacher education universities will be discussed in this chapter.

6.5 .3 Implications for Restructuring In-Service Training

In-Service training in mentorship was noted in Chapter 5 as one of the areas where there was the need for urgent improvement to help mentors provide trainees with the needed support. The overall research outcome suggests that the solution to the problems regarding the implementation of the mentorship scheme is not simply the organisation of in-service training courses to introduce mentors to new procedures and policy requirements about mentoring. More important, I believe are in-service training course objectives defined more in terms of behavioural or attitudinal changes in relation to providing support and assessing trainees at initial teacher education, instead of defined in terms of introducing policy guideline documents in a theoretical approach. Evidence from the case study areas point to the need for some old attitudes and values in providing support to trainees to change if the new form of providing support and assessing trainees in the mentorship scheme are to function effectively and efficiently.

Therefore, the suggestion is for INSET courses to be designed to actively engage mentors in its planning and delivery and to help challenge old values and traditions about providing support to teacher trainees which were recognised to be limiting the impact of the mentorship scheme. What is being proposed is for the INSET to be introduced within the context of changed values and attitudes.

My own experience and evidence from the case study mentors suggest that INSET programmes where trainers or experts came in just to introduce new guidelines or materials through lectures are ineffective. Mentors who had attended INSET courses felt there should be more opportunity for them to participate in developing INSET programmes so that real needs are addressed by them. Case study mentors who had attended INSET also complained that officials or resource persons never followed-up

the INSET course to offer advice on the problems they faced in the implementation of the mentorship scheme. This appears to be a common experience of many INSET programmes in Africa as Greenland (1983) reports. (See also Ali & Akube, 1988). Greenland (1983) points out that regional and district inspectors appointed as resource personnel often failed to follow-up participants because of bureaucratic pressures and official constraints. He concluded that, as a result, many innovations failed to become rooted at the levels where they were meant to be implemented. The message from this and the present case study evidence is that INSET should not end with the completion of a course or workshop. In other words, a two or three-day workshop would not be an adequate method for implementing innovations or improving practices. Follow-up to offer practical support should be seen as a logical extension of INSET and therefore, needs to be incorporated into the planning and funding.

From the review of research into INSET systems Joyce & Showers (1980) concluded that where mastery of a new approach is needed, INSET courses need to extend beyond the level of presentation and discussion. They pointed out that:

If the theory of a new approach is well presented, the approach is well demonstrated, practice is provided under simulated conditions with careful and consistent feedback, and that practice is followed by application in the classroom with coaching and further feedback, it is likely that the vast majority of teachers will be able to expand their repertoire to the point where they can utilize a wide variety of approaches to teaching and curriculum. If any of these components are left out, the impact of training will be weakened in the sense that fewer members of people will progress to transfer level (Joyce & Showers, 1980, p.384).

Jackson (1981) contrasts two approaches to INSET which he calls the 'defect approach' and the 'growth approach'. He contends that the defect approach is based on the assumption that teachers are deficient in their training, subject-matter and current educational development and therefore INSET activities are directed towards equipping them with specific skills. The growth paradigm on the other hand according to him is also based on the assumption that teaching is a complex and multifaceted activity about

which there is more to learn about and the main source of knowledge about teaching is real experience. He concluded that experience alone is not sufficient to stimulate growth so there is the need for reflection.

Similarly, Eraut (1993) also locates INSET activities as arising from what he calls the 'change paradigm' and the 'problem-solving paradigm'. He states that the change paradigm is based on the assumption that the educational system should change with the cultural, economic and technological changes in society for schools to keep abreast with the changing demands of the time. He contrasts the 'change paradigm' with the 'problem-solving paradigm' and argues that because education is an inherently difficult and complex process and because circumstances are constantly changing problems will inevitably arise in schools and classrooms. Eraut concluded that effective change will only occur in schools and in classrooms if teachers are involved throughout in the planning and the delivery process of in-service training.

Case study evidence from the study indicates that mentors were not involved in the planning and delivery of INSET activities and they were therefore, deficient in the knowledge and skills needed in providing support to trainees and this calls for the need for in-service training that will involve them actively in the planning and the delivery and address their deficiency as raised by Jackson (1981) and Eraut (1993).

Lessons about INSET can also be learned from previous cases in Britain where local authority advisors act as consultants to school staff in the process of assessing their training needs and sometimes in locating outside help.

In this regard I propose a school-focused INSET for improving the competence, knowledge and skills of mentors in the mentorship scheme in Ghana. Hewton (1988) defines school-focussed in-service as:

all the strategies employed by trainers and teachers in partnership to direct training programmes in such a way to meet the identified needs of a school and to raise the standards of teaching and learning in the classroom (p.7)

Hewton (1988) has also outlined some principles of school-focussed in-service training as developed in the SITE project. He indicates that schools should engage in needs analysis to determine the requirements of staff, prioritise their needs and formulate them into a programme of suggestions for in-service activities. He concluded that a co-ordinator should be appointed to facilitate contact between the provider and the school.

Also Bolam (1980) in an attempt to make a clear distinction between in-service and school-focussed in-service and to emphasise the need for school-focussed in-service as helping teachers to own in-service programmes has outlined some characteristics associated with the two (Bolam 1980, p.15).

Thus, school-focussed INSET as explained above by Hewton(1988) and Bolam (1980), operates from a needs analysis base and will therefore allow mentors to identify their needs and the school as a whole and will also allow mentors to be actively involved in the planning and delivery of the INSET programmes. Again, it also allows an outsider as an expert to work in close collaboration with teachers to design INSET programmes to meet the needs of staff and schools and leads to whole school development . In Ghana, school-focused INSET will allow staff from the Institute of Education University of Cape Coast, Lecturers from the Faculty of Education, University of Winneba and personnel from the Teacher Education Division of the Ministry of Education to work with mentors in the planning and delivery of INSET programmes to help mentors own the INSET programmes which will enhance their competence, knowledge and skills in providing support for teacher trainees. The

proposition for school-focused INSET in Ghana is in line with the thinking of McIntyre (1994). McIntyre (1994) lamenting about problems which have faced ITE in Britain states that most past problems related to ITE in Britain have resulted from 'lack of coherence....lack of shared understandings...lack of explicitness about who is doing what and why'. He then draws attention to the solemn and vital responsibility in respect of course planning by stating:

for mentors to be effective teacher educators, they need to become co-planners of the programmes in which they are working, and to do that effectively they also need to become co-theorists about teacher education. The old problems will remain unless mentors accept such responsibilities for thinking about the nature of teaching expertise and how it can best be developed and how therefore ITE courses should operate (McIntyre 1994, p.92)

To become a co-theorist in this way involves having a highly sophisticated understanding of issues in ITE. For example having knowledge and awareness of recent developments in thinking and debates about ITE and of teaching. It also involves being familiar with course design, issues and procedures. School-focused in-service training being advocated in the mentorship scheme in Ghana if handled well could serve to bring mentors and other experts in training closer together and also act as a staff development exercise and eventually help mentors to provide support to trainees to enhance their professional development and also impact positively on student learning. Hopkins (1994) emphasising this point indicated that the process of mentoring can be used as a way of helping whole school management create a climate of 'continuous improvement' and thus an 'effective' school by assisting in the formation of a positive collaborative culture. The process can also be used as a way of creating synergy between individual and organisational development. He concluded that both of these will result in raising the performance of pupils and staff and thus improve the quality of

teaching and learning in school as all these development focus on and have some impact on student learning (Hopkins, 1994, p.66).

In summary, the point being put forward is that INSET programmes need to be a vital part of the teacher education system in Ghana to serve as an avenue for promoting continuing mentor development. What is more important is for the programme to achieve positive results and to do so will probably need to combine theory, modelling, practice, feedback and coaching to application (Joyce and Showers, 1980).

6.5.4 Implications for the Development of a Moderation Scheme for Mentors' Assessment

As pointed out in Chapter 5, even though mentor assessment forms part of the certification process there was suspicion over the validity of mentors' assessment as case study evidence revealed that most of them did not have the competence, knowledge and the skills in providing support for trainees. In Chapter 5, I argued that there is considerable room to question whether mentors' assessment marks or grades gave a reasonable indication of the progress or potential of trainees. This was because mentors were noted not to be using any explicit criteria or goals against which their assessment outcomes could consistently be evaluated to keep track of trainees' progress. There is no doubt that to improve the quality of mentors' assessment and enhance confidence in the inferences from its results some system of moderation needs to be put in place. Also, the introduction of moderation accompanied with a review of the mentorship system could offer the chance for collaborative INSET exercises that would improve the validity and reliability of mentors' assessment of trainees.

The reconciliation model described in Chapter 3 seems an appropriate model to work in close collaboration to achieve common standards. However, as has already been mentioned, case study mentors' knowledge and expertise in assessment techniques were generally narrow and limited. Thus, it may be necessary initially to use moderation as an opportunity for developing further mentors' knowledge and skills of mentorship to the point where they could work in partnership with outside moderators in a group/consensus moderating setting. The purpose of such group/consensus moderation will be to train the mentors to be able to arrive at shared understanding of the criteria that the group has agreed upon. (Issues relating to group/consensus moderation were discussed in Chapter 3). The already established regional INSET centres could serve as venues for such exercises to take place and where samples of mentors' assessment of trainees could be brought for discussion or audit. An additional benefit is that the moderated assessments of mentors at the regional level could be used as points of reference during the school-focused sessions.

Evidence from the guidelines for the introduction of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in Ghana shows that the issues of the characteristics of mentors' assessment regarding trainees' subject or content knowledge and methodology and the nature of assessment criteria was not addressed by the policy planners. It will prove difficult to compare samples of mentors' assessment of trainees if such criteria were not already defined or described to offer guidance in negotiating the quality of sampled assessment of trainees. I believe that this is one of the important issues that the development of a moderation scheme for the mentorship scheme in Ghana has to seriously address to increase the likelihood of the effectiveness of mentor support and assessment of trainees.

Moderation of mentors' assessment of trainees' teaching will undoubtedly be costly looking at the number of teacher trainees from the forty-one teacher training colleges in Ghana. It will therefore, raise the problem of cost and funding. However, from a professional perspective the cost of moderation must be weighed against its value in terms of its potential for supporting and improving the professional development of teacher trainees and mentors' competence. The main benefits are in relation to developing better understanding of the mentorship scheme and what counts as valid support and assessment and how it may best be achieved. In addition, moderation could provide clearer understanding of the objectives or goals the mentorship scheme seeks to achieve in teacher education in Ghana and also help to promote improvements in the quality and products of teacher education.

6.6 General Issues Emerging from the Research for Policy Consideration

6.6.1 Improving Teacher Education in the Universities in Ghana to Support Changes at Initial Teacher Education

The principal objective for the introduction of the mentorship scheme as pointed out in Chapters 1 & 2 was to help trainees gain school experience and to also strike a meaningful balance between theory and practice in the preparation of teacher trainees. Prior to the introduction of the mentorship scheme the 1987 Education Reform Programme and the JuSSTEP reform had made suggestions for improving teacher training in Ghana. The JuSSTEP reformers for instance made the observation that students in the training colleges were:

...largely the passive recipients of 'content' and 'theory' while methodology and practical teaching strategies were largely ignored.....students participation and interactions in schools was almost non-existent (ODA/British Council, JuSSTEP 1993, p.1).

Unfortunately, the evidence from the case study leads to the conclusion that the situation has not improved much because the evidence from the case study indicates that just placing trainees in schools without the proper support does not help their professional development. Consequently, the expected objective of the mentorship scheme to help the professional development of trainees and to bridge the gap between theory and practice in the preparation of teacher trainees has not materialised. Two reasons for this failure have been identified in this study. They are:

(i) Many of the mentors who were initially trained through INSET programmes to implement the innovation did not have the competence, knowledge and the skills to provide support for trainees. In fact of the (20) case study mentors who all benefited from in-service training about (90%) of them lacked the knowledge and skills in providing support for trainees. Thus, many of the mentors were not accustomed to the new approaches demanded by the mentorship scheme in providing support for teacher trainees. It is also important to point out that all of them had no exposure to mentoring during their teacher training in the colleges. This leads to the second reason for the little impact the mentorship scheme appear to have made.

(ii) The innovations at initial teacher education in Ghana as regard the introduction of the mentorship scheme did not come with significant improvements or changes in teacher education programmes at the Universities of Cape Coast and Winneba. (These are the two teacher education Universities in Ghana). As I pointed out in Chapter 1, from my experience as a lecturer the curricula of the universities still remain the same and does not reflect the philosophy of the mentorship scheme. It needs pointing out that even though the University of Education of Winneba introduced the “Out Scheme” in September 2003 the trainees are supervised by tutors in secondary schools who have

not had any formal training in mentorship and in providing support to trainees. Thus, the introduction and the implementation of the mentorship scheme were bound not to have the desired impact because incoming teacher educators (Link Tutors) from the Universities were not equipped with the necessary skills and values required by the mentorship scheme to support mentors in providing support to trainees in the schools. The point is, the innovation should have been part of a wider programme of teacher education in the teacher education universities in the country.

Case study findings suggest that no matter the philosophy and the objectives of the mentorship scheme at initial teacher education in Ghana, its impact will be limited if it does not reflect wider teacher education reforms in the teacher education universities. Therefore, as a proposal for policy makers to consider, it is being suggested that teacher education programmes at the two universities should be reviewed. Attempts should be made to bring them in line with the changing concepts in teacher education especially in the areas relating to mentoring, providing support and assessing teacher trainees, profiling and using trainees files in helping them develop professionally. The research evidence clearly suggested that in-coming tutors to the teacher education colleges (Link Tutors), need reorientation towards new practices being introduced in the colleges and the schools, as they cannot make contributions to the mentorship scheme.

6.6.2 Subject Content and Methodology Dilemma

Another aspect of initial teacher education in need of review is the content and methodology weighting in the colleges. Many teacher education commissions and educators in Ghana have pointed out that efforts should be made to ensure that one is not given emphasis at the expense of the other. (eg. Ghana, Ministry of Education, 1999, 51st Annual New Year School Report, 2000). Case study evidence indicated that there

was clearly a need for some attention to be given to the subject content knowledge as classroom observation and interview evidence suggested. One mentor dismayed about the lack of a trainee's content knowledge lamented:

“One wonders how some of these trainees had the credits to enter teacher training colleges. How on earth could they claim that they got the credits and cannot calculate the area of a triangle” (Extract from my observation notes: Foso D/C JSS, July, 2003).

Similar comments were made by other case study mentors who stressed that most of the trainees possessed a very weak grasp of the subject content. Researchers like Stein al (1990) have suggested that student teachers with weak grasp of the subject content matter tend to instruct pupils in ways that over utilise procedural rules and lead to understanding which is structurally weak. If students coming out of post-secondary teacher training in Ghana have weak knowledge in the subjects they will be teaching, then it seems logical that some effort is made to improve their knowledge so that they develop the confidence and the ability to teach competently. This leads to a very important issue about initial teacher education in Ghana which is entry qualification for Post-Secondary Teacher Training (PSTT). In Ghana the entry qualification for post-secondary teacher training (PSTT) is among the lowest for post-secondary professional institutions. Until 1996 the entry requirement was ‘O’ Level with a minimum of 5 credits excluding mathematics. The inclusion of mathematics as a compulsory element of the 5 credits only took effect from 1998. Commenting on this Antwi (1992) states that in a country where most people opt for teaching as the last resort there is the likelihood of a problem arising if the entry qualification levels are raised as it may result in fewer students qualifying for teacher training. With the demand to train more

teachers to carry out on-going reforms at the basic education level this may not be a welcome alternative.

In my view however, a compromise strategy would be to concentrate in the first year of training on the subject-matter content area leaving the remaining two years of training for combining subject-matter knowledge and also for developing the knowledge and the skills of teaching. This could be one way of clarifying the role of mentor support at the different stages of educating trainees at initial teacher education in Ghana and helping mentor support and assessment of trainees to focus on these two areas.

6.6.3 The Problem of High Pupil-Teacher(Mentor) Ratio and the Lack of Resources in the Schools

In the analysis in Chapter 5, attention was drawn to the high pupil/teacher ratios in the case study areas. (See also Appendix 7) . Mentors explained that their inability to give trainees appropriate and sufficient attention was because they were dealing with very large pupil numbers. For example, a science teacher at Philip Quaque Boys' JSS, Cape Coast explained that he was the only science teacher teaching well over 500 pupils in the school and at the same time had two mentees. Infrastructure-wise problems identified in the case study areas as contributing to ineffectiveness of the implementation of the mentorship scheme were: inadequate provision of instructional resources to support a methodology of teaching and 'coaching' that is congruent with the mentorship policy and inadequate basic science and library facilities. I observed that the combination of high pupil/teacher ratio and inadequate facilities was demoralising for mentors. Many mentors felt that under such limiting conditions the current mentorship scheme could not be expected to achieve much. It needs pointing out that the problem of high pupil/teacher ratio is not only restricted to the case study

adopted in this study made it possible to value the insights generated by close, personal contact with mentors, trainees, lecturers, principals, tutors, link tutors and official from the Teacher Education Division in Ghana and the Universities.

Another strong point arising from close contact with the case study sites was the insights gained about mentors' support and assessment of trainees, infrastructure and support services in the districts and the schools. Together, these enriched the data used for the research and produced better understanding of the problems undermining the effective implementation of the mentorship scheme.

Using a two-stage data gathering strategy greatly enhanced the validity of the data collected. During the first data collection period, a semi-structured interview guide was used to reconstruct views and perceptions held by mentors, trainees, link tutors and officials about the mentorship scheme. Going back on the second field trip reconstructed views in the form of summarised statements, to be tested for their validity were used. (See Appendix 5). The second round of interviews could be described more as "conversations with a purpose" (Roboson, 1993), and were again taped, transcribed and searched for further evidence. These conversations were conducted with mentors, trainees, link tutors, principals, lecturers and personnel from the teacher education division using the summarised statements to provide a framework for the discussions. This technique produced valuable insights into some of the issues that did not surface during the first case study visits.

Again, the use of triangulation also helped in enhancing the validity of the data collected as it involved various data collection techniques like observation, interviewing, documentary analysis etc.

Another strength of the research is the broad spectrum of people it covered. Interviews and discussions with mentors, trainees, link tutors, lecturers, principals and policy planners from the ministry of education broadened the dimensions of the issues being explored and allowed further lessons to be learned. For example, one important lesson learned is that lengthening the time of teacher education and placing trainees in the schools without the proper support structures from mentors and resources does not lead to producing efficient and competent teachers. This was quite clear from case study interviews and discussions. This in itself was revealing as it implied that the planners of the mentorship scheme were short sighted in their planning as they could not envisage some of the problems that might surface with the implementation of the scheme. Detailed discussions of some of the problems regarding the implementation of the mentorship scheme have been analysed in Chapter 5. Thus, expanding the case study sample to cover a broader group of people connected with initial teacher education in Ghana enriched the data and the issues which emerged from the analysis.

Finally, the case study findings indirectly provided valuable insights and understanding about the process of educational change which could have implications for future attempts to restructure or reform the teacher education system in Ghana. As Cronbach (1982) points out:

The proper function of evaluation is to speed up the learning process by communicating what might otherwise be overlooked or wrongly perceived. The evaluator, then is an educator (Cronbach, 1982).

The issues raised by this study as an analysis of the mentorship scheme are valuable for policy makers to address to improve the mentorship scheme and ultimately lead to the production of competent and efficient teachers. Detailed discussions on some of the

issues have been presented in the earlier sections of this chapter and the lessons that could be learned from them have also been explored.

Two main methodological limitations were identified in the research process. The first was the focus on two case study areas or districts. Ghana has ten regions and one hundred and ten districts. Critics could therefore, argue that the sample is too small to form a generalised view of the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana. There is no doubt that using a sample of two districts out of one hundred and ten with limited geographical representation places limitations on the extent of generalisation. However, there were practical reasons for focusing on the two districts. The first was that as a single researcher working within the constraints of time and on a limited budget, it was not feasible to study more districts as might have happened if the research was a team effort and resources were available. Nevertheless, from my previous professional experience of working with teachers in the schools and tutors in the colleges, I am confident that the findings are a fair representation of the situation in the case study districts. In addition, although the case study districts could be described as a “convenience sample”, they share a lot of similarities structurally and logistically with other districts in Ghana. In addition, the Basic Sector Assessment Report, August, 1998, categorised all the educational districts in Ghana into five: A-E based on human and material resources. The Cape Coast district falls under ‘A’ and the Foso district falls under ‘E’. It needs emphasising at this point that the primary intention of the study was not to come out with sweeping generalisations that speak for all the districts in Ghana. The objective was to understand the issues affecting the introduction and the implementation of the mentorship scheme within the context of the case study districts. However, because the basic conditions in the other districts in Ghana are not

very different, I believe the key issues about the mentorship scheme would still be relevant for the vast majority of the districts, if not all the other districts.

It is important to stress that the value of the findings is in the consistency with which evidence is replicated from one case study to the other. Thus, the steady accumulation of research data from one case study site to another produced findings that could be argued to have good predictive validity.

The second methodological limitation of the case study arose from the problem of reactivity. This is a term “used to describe the unintended effects of the researcher on the outcomes of the study” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.155). In this case study reactivity was particularly an issue of concern because of my previous involvement with the planning and organisation of INSET training for mentors. The nature of reactivity experienced in this study was of two kinds. First some mentors and link tutors assumed I should know a lot about mentoring and, therefore, their responses to my questions often reflected an assumption about shared knowledge. It was as if to suggest, “you know most of the things I have to say”. Such mentors, link tutors and principals did not talk about the mentorship scheme in terms of their personal experience and views, but preferred to give theoretical and noncommittal responses. To overcome this problem, I frequently asked them whether what they were saying compared with their own experiences or personal view. This was necessary to get ‘relevant’ and ‘useful’ data. In the end it proved to be very helpful as it made many of them reveal things that fell short of recognised good practice of mentoring.

The second problem of reactivity faced was about the perception that I was a ‘spy’ for the Ministry of Education with ulterior motives for coming to talk to mentors, trainees and link tutors about the mentorship scheme. Some of the fruitless and frustrating

interviews were those in which respondents were obviously trying not to say anything detrimental about the mentorship scheme. I overcame this by constant reassurances that I was there purely for research purposes. It must be pointed out that these problems gradually faded away after constant reassurances. As it turned out most of the case study mentors, trainees and link tutors were extremely frank about their views and experiences of the mentorship scheme.

6.7.2 Some Challenges faced in Interviewing

Doing a purely qualitative study presented some challenges. Relying on “qualitative data, holistic analysis, and detailed description derived from close contact with the targets of study” (Patton, 1988,p.117), meant as a “human instrument” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), my actions and behaviour has become as much important, if not more important, as the overt research instrument (eg. the interview schedule). This demanded maintaining a posture throughout the data gathering period that would not undermine the validity of the views and information from the subjects of the study. I have discussed in detail how this was achieved in Chapter 4. However, there were challenges and lessons learned about using the interview as a research tool at different circumstances and situations. This forms the subject of discussion in this section.

(i)The Challenge of Neutrality

Should one always remain neutral in an interview situation?

What are the advantages and disadvantages?

By neutrality it is meant concealing ones’ own inclinations on the subject of the interview and being passive so that interviewees are not influenced in what they say.

The objective of such neutrality is to obtain honest and personal views that reflect the interviewees experiences or convictions. Throughout the data gathering process, although care was taken not to overtly state my views that would have jeopardised the credibility of the data, sometimes presenting counter positions served to promote more discussions and brought to the surface deeply rooted convictions. It has been my experience from interviewing teachers and students in Ghana that some tend to give very affirmative responses even in the face of compelling evidence suggesting otherwise. (This issue was discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). When I felt interviewees were behaving in this manner, by carefully throwing in some alternate perception or idea, deeper reflections on what had been said was provoked. The signal of a more personal position, view or conviction in contrast to a rhetorical response, could often be detected with statements beginning, “actually what I believe is, or actually what we do is”. This strategy enriched the data as it made it unequivocally clear what mentors, trainees and link tutors felt, or had experienced or believed about the issue of discussion. However, once, with either a tutor, or principal, the strategy seemed to create tense atmosphere because they felt under suspicion regarding what they were saying. Thus there are advantages and disadvantages of suggesting a rival view either from previous interviewees, or from the researchers’ point of view. In this study when applied it enabled some interviewees, mentors and trainees in particular, to say what was useful for me concerning real convictions and experiences.

On the issue of whether one should always try to stay neutral, I believe this depends on the subject of investigation and the extent to which being drawn to take a more active role in the interview dialogue can adversely affect the outcome. In this study, I found that with interviewing tutors, principals and lecturers who it could be said were professionally closer to me, some of them sometimes assumed we shared a common

understanding on certain issues about the mentorship scheme. Therefore, some of these principals, and lecturers did not seem to find it necessary to be more precise and clear about what they meant. For example, a principal would say, “you know the mentorship scheme is useful to trainees because it helps them to teach better”, without explaining clearly what is in the mentorship scheme that makes trainees teach better. He seems to assume that we both shared a common understanding that mentorship was useful to trainees. Further probing by asking for clarification or sometimes ‘challenging’ this assumption revealed that the principal was not exactly sure about how the mentorship scheme achieves this or that what was meant by better was something other than that. Thus, I discovered that sometimes I was inevitably drawn into participating more in the shaping of the issues of the interview through in-depth discussions. This made the interview interaction fruitful and more meaningful and produced data that addressed in-depth, the focus of the research.

In summary, my conviction about interviewing as experienced in this study reflects the position of Platt (1981) who points out that:

In the theory of interviewing it should be recognised that some interviews are as much like participant observation as they are like other interviewsWhatever the style of the research, ... the greater the extent to which interviewer and interviewee already have some direct or indirect social (or professional) relationship independent of the research, the greater the likelihood that the roles of the interviewer and interviewee will not be the only ones present (pp.. 85-86).

(ii) The Challenge of Adapting the Interview

How does one adapt the interview method to the situations and status of interviewees and still get data which addresses the focus of the research?

It became quite clear from the onset of interviewing subjects whom I had previous direct or indirect professional contact with, notably officials from the teacher education division and the universities, that their interview role was going to be different. I decided to use a more unstructured interview approach where the conversation was guided by topical issues which somehow suited their status. However, this at times led to ethical dilemmas. The issue here had to do with “status differentials” (Platt,1980) or more precisely in this study “power relations”. I discovered that in interviewing higher ranking officials I needed to provide more justification for why I needed to interview them. As Platt (1981) points out, “it is difficult to do this without inviting discussion of the study rather than getting on with the interview....”(p.80). On a number of occasions some of the interviewees especially colleague lecturers and personnel from the Teacher Education Division put me in the interviewee position by asking me to explain issues of interest to them about the mentorship scheme and teacher education in general. One colleague lecturer challenged the focus of my research and felt I should be concentrating on Teacher Motivation and Retention since he felt that was more of a problem in Ghana. These situations raised ethical dilemmas which I dealt with by suggesting that we discuss them after the “formal” interview. When it occurred during the interview it was difficult to manage as it seemed to affect cooperation by the interviewee to adopt the subordinate role of respondent.

Two main disadvantages emerged from interviewing colleague lecturers, principals and officials from the Teacher Education Division. One was the relative freedom the unstructured interview approach offered. Often some lecturers, principals and officials from the teacher education division went on to interpret their own views and drew conclusions from them . In effect, what they were doing was analysing their own views. (Something that was my task as a researcher). Secondly, they tended to introduce what

I considered to be lengthy and irrelevant information that was not of much interest to my research focus. Transcribing such interview discourse for analysis was laborious as it meant sifting through volumes of conversational data to gather information that was relevant to the focus of the research.

The perception that I had expert knowledge on the topic of discussion often seemed to make some mentors, link tutors and principals interviewed feel I was testing their competence or knowledge about the mentorship scheme. Steps were taken in the research process to minimise the effect of these on the validity of the data collected and analysed for the study. (See Chapter 4).

In summary, it is useful to adapt the interview method to reflect the status of interview subjects to derive maximum cooperation in addressing the issues and to focus the research. By doing so however, puts heavy demands on interviewing skills as the interviewer has to try to maintain control over the research agenda. In addition, having any direct or indirect professional relationship with the research subjects complicates the interview process and increases the threat to validity. Under such circumstances it is necessary to adopt measures to counteract any potential threat to the authenticity of the interview data. This is especially so when status differential or power relations could have an effect on the outcome of the interview or the interviewer is not an entirely anonymous person.

6.8 Issues for Further Research

Like any other research conducted with the view to finding out the strengths and weaknesses and to make suggestions for improving it, issues surfaced relating to the topic of the study which demands separate research effort to understand them further.

This section discusses the outstanding issues arising from the case study which requires further investigation. Some suggestions are also made about the strategies for researching into these issues.

6.8.1 Examination Practices and its Influence on Teacher Education in Ghana.

One major issue which surfaced in the case study districts was the influence of examinations on preparing teacher trainees in Ghana. As it was noted in Chapter 2, examinations play a big role in the development of formal education in Ghana and has remained an important part of the educational system even in the colonial times. The 1987 educational reforms were the first major attempt on a national scale to break from undue reliance on examinations with the introduction of Continuous Assessment into the schools, colleges and the universities. However, as it has been shown in this study examinations still influence much of what goes on in the preparation of teacher trainees in the colleges.

Research is therefore, needed to investigate the role of examinations in teacher preparation in the colleges and the strategies which would be needed to reduce their negative influence. Some of the questions such research may address are:

- What exactly is the nature of examination culture in the teacher education colleges in Ghana and which educational policies reinforce this culture of examinations?
- Which aspects of this culture are desirable and which ones are not?
- How should the teacher education curriculum relate with examinations to make it serve a more professional function of developing teacher trainees?

These are some of the questions that require answers to guide the development of appropriate strategies to improve both teacher preparation and examinations to improve the mentorship scheme and to ensure quality teacher education in Ghana.

A case study approach is proposed for this study as a first step in research into these issues. A clearer and in-depth study could provide understanding which could provide some insights into the formulation of policies that might have the potential to improve teacher preparation and examinations in the colleges in Ghana.

6.8.2 Evaluation of Teacher Education Curriculum in the Colleges in Ghana.

The evidence from the case study areas and interview results indicated that the content and structure of the curriculum in the teacher education colleges play an important role in mentor support and assessment of trainees. The two components of the teacher education curriculum which were, subject content and methodology reflected in the types of assessments mentors' used. The implications are that changes to initial teacher education regarding professional development has to be accompanied by changes in curriculum content and structure to reflect the philosophy of the mentorship scheme.

Torrance (1995) points out that:

New approaches to assessment are necessary, but not sufficient mechanism for change within educational systems (Torrance, 1995, p.56).

The mentorship scheme demands new approaches to providing support and assessment of trainees. As a start to improving the current system of practice at initial teacher education, it would be necessary to undertake an evaluation of the curriculum of the teacher education colleges in Ghana to determine the weighting for both content and methodology to help focus mentor support and assessment of trainees. The information

from this study can be used by policy planners to develop a teacher education curriculum that can help in equipping trainees with the needed content-matter and methodology knowledge which will improve the competence and efficiency of teachers in Ghana. Some of the issues that the evaluation of the curriculum could address include the following:

- How should the content of teacher education be structured to promote more adequately the professional learning and development of trainees?
- How much of the subject content is actually needed as part of the teaching knowledge a beginning teacher requires and how should this be incorporated into the methodology programme?
- What are the essential competence a beginning teacher in Ghana needs and how should the teacher education curriculum be designed to reflect such competencies?
- What kind of training in support and assessment techniques are provided at the Education Departments of the Universities of Cape Coast and Winneba and are these techniques congruent with the innovations and policies being introduced at initial teacher education in Ghana?

The research department established in the teacher education division of the Ministry of Education can help very much in this curriculum evaluation and researchers from the departments of education of the two Universities can serve as research advisors by developing a workable framework for the research.

6.8.3 Developing Professional Support Systems for Continuing Teacher Education in Ghana.

One important area for future research into is the kind of teacher support systems that should be provided to meet the needs of teachers and to enhance their professional development. The pace of educational reforms being undertaken makes the setting up of professional support systems more crucial. The key issues to be addressed under this can include: How can INSET courses be organised to meet the needs of teachers and the schools effectively?. What are the strengths and the weaknesses of the present teacher inspection division?. What professional skills do teachers already have within the professional teaching community that can be used as the basis for setting up school-based in-service training?. In what context do teachers want professional assistance to operate (eg. through professional associations like the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) or through subject associations like the Ghana Association of Science Teachers (GAST) etc. The support systems or services has teachers as its main target and therefore, teachers are in the best position to identify which kind of support services would be most useful or helpful to them.

The view of this thesis is that, further research is needed in the area of establishing professional support systems for teachers in Ghana to provide understanding into some of the problems existing in that area to help the professional development and efficiency of teachers. The findings from such a study could provide information for developing and implementing future policy on in-service education. Again, the case study method might be the most suitable approach for this kind of research. Action research could also be used as a means of encouraging innovations and change in settings where they can be monitored and evaluated.

6.8.4 Research into the Use of Mentor Support and Assessment to Promote Professional Learning in Teacher Education

It was quite clear from the research evidence that the use of mentor support and assessment information to promote trainees' professional development and learning in the mentorship scheme is a problematic one. Most case study mentors were clearly not skilled or knowledgeable in how to use assessment information to help trainees to develop towards the targets for development or to enhance their professional learning and development. As the literature discussion on the formative use of assessment in teacher education in Chapter 3 suggests, this is not a simple and straight forward task, as it is often implied.

The conception of formative assessment that is considered by this thesis to be most suitable for teacher development is one in which trainees progressively develop the ability to "monitor the quality of their own work during actual production" (Sadler, 1989, p.119) or "reflect on their practice" (Schon, 1983). By developing strategies which can help trainees to draw upon to modify or improve their practice, trainees would have taken the important step towards developing skills of reflective practice. The research evidence shows that mentors' application and interpretation of assessment is far from this ideal. It is the contention of this thesis that how structured information from mentors' assessment can in practice be made to reflect the process of professional development and learning of trainees to move them to the level of reflection is not clear. This calls for research to examine how mentors' assessment can be developed to promote in particular trainee teachers' professional learning. It is important for such research to consider issues like the following:

- What kinds of mentor assessment are particularly useful for promoting the professional development of trainees in a teacher education context?
- In what ways can mentors use information from assessment to create a framework which can promote desirable teaching and learning strategies in trainees?

These issues may be tackled through Action Research where mentor assessment procedures can be developed, applied and evaluated as a process of providing support and assessment for trainees to enhance trainees' professional development. The value in the process of this research, for the issues outlined above will be to consider the circumstances and the conditions under which mentors have to apply assessment information about trainees.

6.9 Concluding Remarks/Summary of the Main Issues from the Research

The summary of the main findings of this exploratory research have been presented in this chapter. Some of the factors which have affected the effective implementation of the mentorship scheme within the teacher education context in Ghana have been highlighted. The findings raise the need for the teacher education division in Ghana to address these limiting factors especially the following:

- (i) The development of INSET Courses with the active involvement of mentors in the planning and delivery to help them acquire the knowledge, competence and the skills to provide the needed professional support to trainees.
- (ii) The high teacher-pupil ratio and teacher work load in the schools if mentor support and assessment are to be practised effectively.

(iii) The adoption of a model of mentoring that takes into account the various developmental needs of trainees and the context within which they practice to help them engage in self-assessment as a means of reflecting over their practice.

(iv) The provision of adequate Distance Learning Materials (DLM) to trainees to save trainees the problem of moving from their schools or areas of practice to the colleges for information at the college libraries.

The study has also extended the discussion of the findings to the process of educational change and what the key factors to the change process were in respect of the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana. The findings suggest that the problems that face the effective implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana was not due to the fact that mentors were not in favour of the mentorship scheme as an approach to initial teacher education or were opposed to it, but rather there were complex issues such as:

- Lack of internal support system which can promote co-operate learning to promote and facilitate effective support for trainees.
- Lack of external support to mentors in the schools to enhance their competence and efficiency in providing support to trainees.
- Inadequacies in the present mentorship scheme in promoting the professional development and learning of trainees as a formative and developmental process.
- Lack of teaching and learning resources in the schools which put limitations on mentors' efforts and trainees' learning.
- Values and beliefs of mentors about supporting and assessing teacher trainees which influence their assessment culture and agenda.

Suggestions about how these problems or limitations could be improved have been made especially in the restructuring of INSET to improve the professional development and competence of mentors. The research also suggested that in future, educational innovations being introduced at initial teacher education in Ghana should extend or begin at the two teacher education Universities which train tutors who teach trainees and teachers who are the implementers of innovations. The research emphasised that there is little chance of innovations at initial teacher education succeeding in Ghana if tutors who train at the universities do not have long and sustained exposures to the changes or innovations.

During the fieldwork, one principal asked me a question which I believe is at the root of the concerns about the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana. The question was: “Is this mentoring really going to work or how can it be seriously organised to benefit trainees?” At the time this question was asked I could not give a fair or reasonable answer because I was still grappling with the issues emerging from the fieldwork. Having come to the end of the study and evaluating all the relevant issues, it appears to me that the issue is not whether as an approach to initial teacher education the mentorship scheme can work. Rather, it is whether the mentorship scheme has been properly conceptualised in the context of teacher education in Ghana and the problems it might face in its implementation properly envisaged. It is also whether what is meant by organised is simply tinkering with the guidelines or the handbook for administering it or it implies giving proper planning to it with the active involvement of mentors who are the implementers and viewing it as a change process.

It is the contention of this thesis that the mentorship scheme stands a good chance of making a positive impact on the quality of initial teacher education in Ghana by

producing good and reflective teachers if the recommendations made in this thesis are adopted and steps are taken to minimize the critical factors which have affected the implementation process.

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APPENDIX (1)

MENTORSHIP AT THE POST-SECONDARY TEACHER TRAINING LEVEL IN GHANA

SPECIMEN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MENTORS

These questions are meant to initiate conversation on the issues under investigation. Other questions will be asked during the interview to further discussion and clarification. Some of the questions will be rephrased and used in the interview of headteachers, Link tutors, personnel from the Teacher Education Division and some Lecturers from the Faculty of Education University of Cape Coast and University College of Education, Winneba who were involved in designing the programme.

(A) General views about the introduction of Mentoring into initial Teacher

Training in Ghana

- (a) Why do you think Mentoring has been introduced into Post-secondary teacher training in Ghana?
- (b) Are there any difficulties you have encountered with its introduction?
- (c) How have you dealt with these difficulties?
- (d) What are some of the opportunities the introduction of mentoring has brought into initial teacher training?
- (e) What have been teachers (mentors) attitude to mentoring in initial teacher training?
- (f) Do you own a copy or have access to the general competency matrix for training teacher trainees? What are your impressions about the matrix?
- (g) Do you use it to guide your assessment of trainees? How?

(B) Actual Assessment Task

- (a) What are some of the areas that you have been assessing trainees?
- (b) What has been the purpose of this assessment?
- © Do you design the assessment yourself? If not what is the source? (Guideline book, files, etc)
- (d) At what stage of trainees' teaching do you conduct assessment?
- (e) Do you discuss with trainees the criteria for assessing them?
- (f) Do trainees have the opportunity to observe and reflect on their own teaching?
- (g) Do trainees have the chance to observe and reflect on their colleagues teaching? If yes why do you allow this?
- (h) Are you able to provide feedback to trainees after assessing them? (How often is this feedback and how long after assessing them?)
- (i) What is the nature of the feedback (written comments, counselling, Individualised/group discussion?)
- (j) Are you able to use the information from trainees' profile to develop and plan teaching strategies to help trainees improve upon their performance? Why/how do you do it?

© In-service Training in Mentoring

- (a) Have you attended any in-service training in mentoring teacher trainees? If yes what was the subject of the INSET?
- (b) Did you find this in-service helpful in preparing you to support trainees? Could

you explain why?

- © Did the in-service address issues connected with mentoring teacher trainees?
- (d) How was it organised? (e.g. Topics that were discussed, activities, workshops etc).
- (e) How would you evaluate this in-service? (Did it address issues of concern to you as far as supporting trainees is concerned?
- (f) What suggestions if any would you give regarding the training of mentors in supporting trainees at initial teacher training?

(D) Changes and Improvements

- (a) What is your evaluation of the preparation made by the Ministry of Education and the Teacher Education Division before the take off of the new teacher training programme?
- (b) What do you want to see or improved as an approach to initial teacher training?
- © What suggestions if any can you make regarding improving teacher training in Ghana?
- (d) What role in your opinion should mentors play in this regard?
- (e) Are there any inadequacies in the present teacher training system?

THANK YOU

APPENDIX (2)

MENTORSHIP AT THE POST-SECONDARY TEACHER TRAINING LEVEL IN GHANA

SPECIMEN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TRAINEES

General Views about the Introduction of Mentoring

- (a) In your opinion why do you think mentoring was introduced as an approach to initial teacher training in Ghana?
- (b) Could you describe some of the roles expected of you as a trainee in the new programme?
- (c) What have you liked about this approach to teacher training? or
What have you disliked about it? (Could you please explain why?)
- (d) What influence has mentoring had on your training as a teacher trainee?
- (e) Has mentoring contributed to promoting your ability at learning to teach and enhanced your professional development?
- (g) If yes how has it contributed in this regard? (If no) why?

B Assessment by Mentors and Link Tutors

- (a) Do mentors provide trainees feedback about their performance?
(How regular is this feedback?)
- (b) What is the nature of this feedback (Is this helpful feedback? How helpful)
- (c) What do you think mentors and link tutors use the assessment information or marks for?
- (d) What importance do you attach to assessment by your mentor? Does the assessment help you to improve upon your teaching performance? In what way does it help you?

- (e) Do your peers have the chance to assess your teaching? If yes in what way does peer assessment help to improve your teaching performance?
- (f) How would you evaluate the general meeting between mentors, Link Tutors and trainees that are held at least monthly? (What are some of the issues discussed at such meetings?)

C Changes and Improvements

- (a) What is your evaluation of the preparations made for trainees and the entire “Out Programme” before the take off?
- (b) What do you want to see changed or improved about the new approach to initial teacher training?
- (c) What suggestions can you make regarding improving the new approach to teacher training in Ghana?
- (d) What are some of the main inadequacies in the present teacher training system?
- (e) What suggestion will you give regarding the training of mentors in supporting trainees in the new programme?

THANK YOU

APPENDIX (3)

MENTORSHIP AT THE POST-SECONDARY TEACHER TRAINING LEVEL IN GHANA

SPECIMEN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR OFFICIALS

As part of my research into the implementation of the mentorship scheme at the Post-Secondary Teacher Training Level in Ghana, I conducted in-depth interviews with mentors, trainees and link tutors in schools at Cape Coast and Foso. This occurred in the months of November-February 2002 and 2003 and July -September 2003. The evidence gathered formed part of my Ph.D. work. I am extending this research to take account of the views and perceptions about the implementation of the mentorship scheme from officials who were involved in the planning and implementation of the mentorship scheme. I, shall therefore, be grateful if you could share some of your views about the implementation of the mentorship scheme in the teacher training colleges in Ghana.

(These questions were meant to initiate conversation on issues relevant to the focus of the study. During the interview other questions were asked to illuminate further the issues under discussion).

1. Why was the mentorship scheme introduced into post-secondary teacher training in Ghana?
2. What in your opinion are the main problems facing the implementation of the mentorship scheme in Ghana?
3. Are you happy with the introduction of the mentorship policy at initial teacher training level in Ghana? Why?

APPENDIX 4

DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF CASE STUDY AREAS

CAPE COAST

Cape Coast or Oguaa as known by the Fanti derived from the Portuguese name of Cabo Corso started as a Fetu fishing village established along the western coast of the Gold Coast before the intrusion of the Portuguese in the fifteenth century. Historical account indicates that it consisted of twenty villages owned by a Fetu magnate known as Don Juan and this settlement was the biggest among a number of fishing villages strung along the coastline to the western part of the Gold Coast and also an important frontier village. It was a frontier village in the sense of acting as a mediator between the villages and their both immediate and remote hinterlands and the Europeans in their castles and forts. The history of Cape Coast town is closely connected with its position as a trading centre, linking the European trading establishments with traders from the interior territories, the forest and the savannah regions and beyond them to the middle Niger and the Sahel. The arrival of the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Swedes and the English in the Gold Coast and precisely in the Cape Coast and Elmina area in the fifteenth and Seventeenth century and the establishment of the castles and forts in this area saw a turning point in the growth of the Fetu village of Cape Coast into a prosperous town. Beginning in 1672, the various chartered companies of England improved on the original buildings of Cape Coast to boost trade and made the castle the headquarters of English trading activities on the Gold Coast. In the middle of the eighteenth century the English settlement in Cape Coast attracted the attention of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, who sent the missionary, the Reverend Thomas Thompson to Cape Coast for evangelization. His efforts in that direction did not succeed. He however, took to England Philip Quaque a boy from

Cape Coast who after his education there, returned to lay the foundations of formal education for Cape Coast and the Gold Coast which is present day Ghana in general. Quaake's efforts constituted the grounds on which the missionaries and the Christian Churches like the Methodist, the Basel and the Anglican built so that Cape Coast earned the fanciful name of the "the Athens of the Gold Coast", if not the whole of West Africa. By the middle of the nineteenth century Cape Coast had become so important that the British government took over the administrative control of the British castles and forts on the coast of the Gold Coast and placed them in charge of the crown. By 1874 Cape Coast had become the capital of the Gold Coast and the seat of government for the British colonial administration in the Gold Coast. In 1877 however, the seat of government was removed to Accra the present Capital of Ghana on grounds of access to the expanding territories of the British Colony of the Gold Coast.

Although Cape Coast ceased to be the seat of British colonial government in the Gold Coast and the capital after 1877 the town continued to play and still plays an important role in the educational, political and historical development of Ghana. Being the melting pot of education in the Gold Coast which is present day Ghana, Cape Coast had to her credit all the early major secondary schools of Ghana: Wesley Girls' High School, Mfantispim School, St. Augustine's College and Adisadel College which were all established in Cape Coast before the colonial government established Achimota School and College in the late 1920's. Again, as a result of Cape Coast's early contact with western education and the establishment of all the major secondary schools in the area it became the focal point for the development of early intelligentsia in Ghana who began to agitate for self government from British colonial domination. It is interesting to note that almost all the early nationalist fighters like Paa Grant, Kuntu Blankson and Aggrey were from Cape Coast. No wonder by 1949 the first political party in Ghana, the

Convention Peoples Party had been formed in the Cape Coast area at a place called Salt pond as a form of pressure group or nationalist group led by DR Kwame Nkrumah to champion and hasten the fight for independence from British colonial administration. It is also interesting to note that it was this nationalist group or political party that eventually wrestled political power from the British government by conscientizing Ghanaians to rise up for their rights and liberties which eventually fetched Ghana her independence in 1957 becoming the first country south of the Sahara to gain her independence and earned Ghana the accolade the “the Black Star of Africa”.

Cape Coast is now the Central regional capital of Ghana. It is about 205 kilometres from Accra. It has a population of about 150,511, and one leading university, which is the University of Cape Coast, ten secondary schools and seven commercial schools.

It also has four big government hospitals and five government clinics. In addition to the government hospitals and the clinics Cape Coast also has about ten private hospitals or clinics which are : Baiden-Ghartey Memorial hospital, Dadoo Memorial hospital, Mbroh Memorial hospital, Bentsil-Enchill hospital, Bonzie Simpson Memorial hospital, Anaisiwa Memorial clinic, Dr. Kofi Jones Clinic, Dr. Crentsil clinic, Dr. Tetteh clinic, Dr. Holdbrooke clinic, Dr. Osafo Lartey clinic, and Dr. Brookman Amissah clinic. These hospitals and the clinics serve patients from Cape Coast and the surrounding villages. The Central hospital, Inter-Baeta and the University hospitals take the greatest number of patients.

The population is largely Fanti speaking with two small groups of Ewe and Muslims settled at Kuakor (a fishing community) and Kotokuraba Zongo respectively.

Cape Coast thus, has a thriving educational and political history in Ghana and one cannot talk of formal education or the development of political activities in Ghana without making reference to Cape Coast. Its importance in the area of formal education was explained by one of the mentors during the field work:

“ We are doing our best for the students....the new programme is good for both teachers and the students. We have problems for there is no support from any where including the ministry of education and the university. If we have problems here in Cape Coast then I imagine the situation in places like Tamale, Bimbila, Atebubu and other areas” (Mentor, Philip Quaake Boys’ School).

It needs emphasizing that in the area of education conditions in Cape Coast schools compare favourably with those in Accra the national capital.

FOSO

Foso or Assin Foso as known by the Assin also started as a hunters hut or hamlet on the banks of the Pra river in the forest region about hundred and eighty kilometres from Cape Coast. The rise of Foso from a village and eventually into a town like that of Cape Coast is also linked to trade between the coastal town and those from the hinterland between the fifteenth and the seventeenth century. Cruickshank writing about the rise of Foso traces its history and development to the early European trading activities between the coastal people and the hinterland during the trans Atlantic slave trade and the legitimate trade which all took place in the Gold Coast before and after the nineteenth century with the emergence of the merchant-princes in the era of the

legitimate trade based on oil palm kernels, monkey skins and local gold winning. From historical accounts, Foso acted as a resting place or the last stop centre leading to the coast during the Trans Atlantic slave trade. Historical accounts indicate that it was at this small hamlet or village located very close to the Pra river that the Mende traders from the north and the slave looters made their final selection of the healthy slaves to be sold to the Europeans on the coast at Edina and Oguaa. According to tradition the weak slaves who had travelled long distances from the hinterland and were weak were left in the Foso area to die out of tiredness and starvation. Majority of the slaves died and a few survived and started to make a living or settle in the Foso area along the banks of the Pra river. According to Cruickshank and Bosman the fortunes of Foso changed with the abolition of the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade in 1807 and its replacement by the Legitimate trade in palm oil, kola, cowries and extensive local gold winning in the second-half of the nineteenth century. Cruickshank (Vol. 1.p.232), summarized the impact of the trade in the Foso area as follows:

“the variety of interactions and occupations and the differential wealth acquired there from formed the basis of classes, consisting of brokers, trade-boys, and cultivators” (p.232).

McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh (1975) claim that Foso started to attain prominence after World War II as a result of the colonial government’s effort to construct roads and build schools in the various parts of Ghana to hasten the development of the country. Antwi (1991) also links the phenomenal rise and development of Foso and its surrounding villages to the boost in the cocoa industry between the 1950s, 1960s and the 70s. Antwi (1991) stated that the passage of the Accelerated Development Plan in 1951 was a turning point in Ghana’s rural development programme. He indicated that

the introduction and the implementation of the Accelerated Development Plan saw the construction of roads, schools and the expansion of the cocoa industry in the forest regions of Ghana. The result was that in the 60s and the 70s most people from the Volta region, the northern region and the eastern region of Ghana flocked to the Foso area to secure land for the cultivation of cocoa on “abunu” (dividing the proceeds into two) or “abusa” (dividing the proceeds into three) basis and this opened up the area and increased the population in the area. Antwi states that Foso had grown into a small and promising town by 1972 with a teacher training college and few primary schools. In 1982 Foso became the district capital of the Assin area and has remained the district capital up to this time. Foso now has a population of 18, 401, one teacher training college, seven primary schools, five junior secondary schools, one main hospital which is Foso catholic hospital, three private clinics and a commercial bank. The population is mainly Assin with few Fanti, Ewe, Asante and Akwapim. In terms of Education it is one of the deprived rural areas in Ghana.

APPENDIX (5)

(CONFIRMATORY INTERVIEWS)

Mentorship at Post-Secondary Teacher Training Level in Ghana

My Ph.D research focused on the implementation of the mentorship programme at the Post-Secondary Teacher Training level in Ghana. As part of the research, I conducted in-depth interviews with mentors, trainees, link tutors, lecturers and officials from the Teacher Education Division. This occurred during the months of November 2002 to January 2003 and July to September 2003. The evidence collected formed part of my Ph.D work. From the evidence I came out with statements/hypothesis reflecting the views and opinions expressed by the interviewees. These statements are a matter of opinion.

I will very much appreciate it if you could take some time to look at these statements/hypothesis and express any views or opinions about whichever closely reflect or does not reflect your experiences and explain why.

Information from the interview will be treated with the utmost confidence.

Statements/hypothesis

- 1 Mentorship and Professional Teacher Development
 - 1.1 The introduction of the mentorship programme has helped in enhancing the school experience of trainees
 - 1.2 The introduction of the mentorship scheme has forced trainees to attach importance to school experience and has proved a good tool for controlling teacher trainees during school experience
 - 1.3 The mentorship scheme has helped trainees to question some of the things they learnt about teaching in the colleges.

- 1.4 The mentorship scheme has helped trainees to reflect over their teaching.
- 1.5 The introduction of the mentorship scheme has not significantly helped to improve trainees professional development.
- 2 Assessment of Trainees**
- 2.1 Assessment of trainees' professional competence has not received sufficient attention in the mentorship scheme.
- 2.2 Mentors' assessment focuses on providing marks to help trainees pass
- 2.3 To provide trainees' with knowledge of assessment criteria before beginning to teach motivate them to teach better.
- 2.4 Large class size does not help mentors to have time to engage in post-lesson observation discussions with trainees.
- 2.5 Mentors' assessment information does not help trainees to reflect over their teaching.
- 3 INSET Training in Mentorship**
- 3.1 In-service training to improve the competence of mentors' in providing support for trainees has not been effective.
- 3.2 In-service training did not focus on issues that are relevant to the practice of mentorship.
- 3.3 Principals and vice principals could not organise INSET courses in the colleges for their staff because they lacked the skills.
- 3.4 Link tutors in the colleges and mentors in the schools could not share ideas amongst themselves to help co-operate learning because they lacked the skills.

- 3.5 New staff coming into the teacher training colleges did not have knowledge or understanding of the policy of mentorship and they do not receive any orientation on arrival at the colleges.

4 Recommendations/Changes

- 4.1 Is there anything significant which you think has been achieved with the introduction of the mentorship scheme at the post-secondary teacher training level in Ghana?
- 4.3 What are the things you consider most lacking in the mentorship scheme?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH

APPENDIX 6

TRAINEES' LESSON OBSERVATION FORMAT

Name of student..... College.....

School of Practice..... Form/Class.....

Date:.....

Subject.....

Topic.....

Competency	Comments	Grades	Strategies for improvement
Lesson Plan: Objectives clearly stated in measurable and achievable terms			
Lesson presentation: Effective and relevant introduction linked with R.P.K.			
Use of Appropriate TLM: Use of appropriate teaching methods and teaching learning materials in delivering the lesson			
Class Control and organisation: Good relationship with pupils and effective use of			

time			
Questioning Skills: Good questioning skills and involvement of pupils in the lesson			
Assessment of pupils' learning: Provides regular and clear exercises which are marked			
Conclusion: Carefully summarised lesson using feedback techniques			

Source: GES/TED (2002:72).

APPENDIX 7

TEACHER PUPIL RATIO AT THE BASIC EDUCATION LEVEL IN GHANA

REGION	RURAL TEACHER/PUPIL	URBAN TEACHER/PUPIL
GREATER ACCRA	1:27	1:45
CENTRAL	1:27	1:45
WESTERN	1:27	1:45
BRONG AHAFO	1:27	1:45
ASHANTI	1:30	1:46
VOLTA	1:27	1:45
NORTHERN	1:27	1:45
EASTERN	1:27	1:45
UPPER WEST	1:27	1:45
UPPER EAST	1:27	1:45

SOURCE: Djangmah, J. S (2002:19)