

Full Length Research Paper

An evaluation of the instructional performance between teachers trained by traditional and distance learning model: Implications for teacher education

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The goal of this study is to evaluate the instructional performance between teachers who completed their training in traditional and distance learning model in three districts of the Upper West Region of Ghana. A research into the issue is significant because it has relevance to the development of pre-teacher training in education. Ghanaians are used to the traditional school system but the new challenges facing schools has made it necessary for schools to embrace distance education. However, there are also concerns about the quality of distance learning programs. The research question set to guide the study asked the question, whether there are differences in the instructional performance of teachers who completed their training in traditional learning model and in distance learning model. A descriptive survey method was used for the analysis. A questionnaire drawn on a five Likert scale measurement was used to collect data for the study. The study reveals differences in the instructional performance of the two set of teachers. However, the difference in performance was marginal but significant. The study acknowledged that, individual returns depend on their attitudes towards the teaching profession. Thus a measurement of real performance of teachers can be challenging but achievable.

Key words: Instruction, distance education, traditional education, learning, objectives, performance, teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Many people are subscribing to distance education every year (Thirunarayanan, 2010). There are a number of good reasons why people are falling in for distance learning. According to Hannay and Newvine (2006), there are a number of reasons why students will choose distance learning over traditional education. Students will choose distance learning because it allows them to balance their studies with other social commitments. In addition, they also believe they achieve higher quality education in distance learning, than with traditional educational system (Hannay and Newvine, 2006). While some students think distance learning is right for them, the schools providing distance learning programs are also benefiting from the service because they can offer education at a lesser expense. The schools may not have to bother about large numbers of adult learners and part time students because they will study in the comfort of

their homes. The discussion is still ongoing about the excellence of distance learning courses, as compared to traditional education. Among the debates, comparative studies between distance and traditional methods of education dominate (Diaz, 2000). According to Diaz (2000), the fundamental research question that most researchers often asks when conducting comparative research in the two areas is whether distance education is as good as traditional education. The fundamental question is derived from the perception that, traditional schooling is better than the distance learning model (Diaz, 2000).

In the midst of the challenges facing educational institutions, the institutions think the alternate way to provide education to the people is by allowing students to study the same curriculum in the comfort of their home (Schaffhauser, 2012). This claim is supported by Kyalo



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and Hopkins (2013) who indicated how online learning has the potential to provide an effective and efficient continuous professional development for teachers. Thus, teachers and other professionals in the teaching field may not have to worry about getting admission into the already crowded educational institutions. According to Schaffhauser (2012), sixty percent of their respondents agreed to the fact that many educational institutions will adopt distance education in the near future. They will make use of the many tools and resources available for distance learning and transit to hybrid classes that will bring a new form of teaching and learning in educational institutions. This argument is supported by what Adedoja et al. (2013) stated: that, distance education students accept the use of mobile phones for learning tutorials because it enhances teaching and learning. This was evident from a study conducted to assess student's acceptance of mobile phones for the purpose of distance learning tutorials. It is assumed that, if interested people like instructional technology leaders, or the University Information Technology (IT) development centres were asked about the future of the internet in education; they will say a lot more is yet to take place. The implication is that we are yet to experience the impact of the internet on higher education. While we have talked about the advantages of distance learning, traditional education has its advantages as well, some of the advantages far outweigh that of distance learning. It is in the light of this fact that, Spannaus-Martin (2004) call for an assessment of the positives and negatives of both methods before you make a choice as a student. If we consider what Schaffhauser (2012) stated that, students like the personal contact with instructors more than the virtual experience. It suggests that, potential applicants will prefer traditional education to distance learning. Many students enjoy the face-to-face contact with the instructor and classmates. They feel motivated by the physical presence of the instructor and make meaningful implications from body language and facial expressions (Schaffhauser, 2012).

The noble step towards achieving the best from instruction is not an easy journey. The reason is that, studies have it that employers prefer applicants who completed their degree in the traditional education system (Adams, 2008). Some of the reasons they gave is that, the classroom experience of teachers who completed their training in traditional school model far outweighs that of teachers who completed their training by distance learning method. They cited other reasons as the little reputation of distance learning institutions, and poor mentored learning experiences for distance learners (Adams, 2008). These issues have become obstacles to the growth, and development of distance education in many schools that are interested in providing distance learning for prospective students (Adams, 2008). In a study conducted by Raj and Al-Alawneh (2010), they observed that many employers have concerns over

online degrees due to the lack of face-to-face interactions between students and their mentors. They had a reason to share with Adams (2008) that the reputation of distance education institutions leaves much to be desired (Raj and Al-Alawneh, 2010). We can also cite what Columbaro and Monaghan (2009) said about employers' perceptions of online degrees. They also found out that, employers would prefer traditional degrees to online degrees. Adams et al. (2012) also conducted research to unearth the perceived marketplace value attached to college degrees earned online. They were also interested in finding out what factors influence the acceptability of degrees in hiring conditions. Their result was not different from that of Columbaro and Monaghan (2009). It was still clear that applicants with traditional education training are found to be more acceptable (Adams et al., 2012).

Vitale (n.d) outlined the benefits of distance learning. According to him, students find it extremely flexible to learn by distance model because they learn and work at their chosen pace. Additionally, distance education has made it possible for people with disabilities who find it challenging to study at the conventional Universities, to study in the comfort of their homes (Vitale, n.d.). While tinkering about the benefits of distance education, Bailey and Flegle (2012) said that, researchers must identify the factors that work against distance education as well as those factors which add value to distance education; with specific reference to online MBA programs. The identification of these factors will help to enrich the experience of distance learners and the institutions in line with what Breneman et al. (2006) contended that, for profit educational institutions offering distance learning in the near future would experience rapid growth in the number of applicants applying to study by distance model. Thus, these institutions will benefit from the economics of scale. In another development, Vitale (n.d.) outlines a number of myths surrounding distance learning degree programs. It is believed that online degrees are impersonal because they lack the presence of mentors and instructors. They are also considered easier than the on-campus courses, and educational institutions will not accept credit transfer from distance learning programs. Vitale explained that, people who forget the online courses are carried out by the same instructors at the on-campus level, and they share the same curriculum. The degrees of distance learning are also the same as the on-campus degrees.

We cannot dispute the fact that, distance learning or traditional face-to-face formats of learning have their unique learning environment in terms of their challenges and successes (Spannaus-Martin, 2004). To access which type is suitable for you means you have to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the two modes of learning. You may also have to consider the field of study because it is not all programs that find the online learning environment conducive. For example, courses requiring serious practical work like medicine

and surgery are not common online. Spannaus-Martin (2004) contributed to the discussion on the advantages of distance learning. According to him, distance learning has tremendous availability of courses for students to choose. Bijeesh (2012) made similar comments on the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning. People are used to the regular programs and they think distance learning programs offer poor quality programs. Meanwhile, others think distance learning programs are a blessing because they allow students to further their education while they stay on their jobs (Bijeesh, 2012). Deciding on whether to go in for distance learning or regular learning is a matter of choice for most people. For example, Hansen (n.d.) also noted that some people feel comfortable with distance learning because of its convenience, cost, and flexibility. For others they cannot cope with the pattern of study because it requires new skills, new technologies, and there is no campus atmosphere or social interactions. Additionally, people think distance learning has no set times for classroom participation. Thus students can access the classroom as and when they deem it fit. It is this aspect of distance education that gives the working class to continue their education while they work full time. Again no matter the weather situation distance learning activities goes on. The implication is that, with distance learning programs there are no technical hitches or delay in the completion of programs. Any delays are from the students and not the institution (Spannaus-Martin, 2004).

The literature review, identified facts supporting why employers will often prefer traditional education system to distance learning model. The reasons most scholars presented are associated with the training process, they could not establish whether it is the lack of competence in instructional performance of teachers who completed their training in distance education model that gives the low reputation to distance learning programs. Distance education by all standards has come to stay. It has enabled schools to spread their programs to people, who will be denied education under ordinary circumstance. Currently, there are resources in the form of educational technology that has improved the delivery of online and distance learning programs to appreciable levels. Research can help to improve challenges that would have served as bottlenecks for the development of distance learning programs. The goal of this study is to evaluate the instructional performance between teachers who completed their training in traditional, and distance learning model and by so doing we will be able to bridge the gap in knowledge about the instructional performance of teachers who completed their training in traditional school model, and teachers who completed their training in distance learning method. The study is important because, it will add up to our understanding of distance education and traditional school systems of training teachers. In addition, it will enable hiring professionals to make informed decisions about the quality of teachers

who completed their training in distance learning model (Adams et al., 2012). To enable the researcher to make value judgment about the instructional performance of the teachers in both categories, the researcher used the University of Cape Coast teaching practice inventory form to construct the questionnaire. There are no serious ethical concerns pertaining to this study. The only issue is that perception is hard to change, and people will be psychologically affected if they need to change their perception about traditional education or distance education programs.

Research question

Is there any difference between the performance of teachers who obtain their degree by the traditional system of education and distance learning model?

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study is the institutional change theory propounded by John Meyer et al. in the 1970s and (cited by Huerta and Zuckerman, 2009). One of the fundamental tenets of the Institutional Change Theory is that it has a relationship between institutions and their social environments (Huerta and Zuckerman, 2009). The theory proposes that the social environment has a high impact on the activities that goes within a school. The school's environment values, customs, and norms influence the school's rules and regulations as well as all other activities that go on in the school (Huerta and Zuckerman, 2009). Teachers play a direct role in the operations of the school. Their performance can be evaluated through the lenses of the values and customs of the society they practice. Thus, the influence that the social environment exerts on the school can either strengthen or weaken schools goals. The principles of institutional change theory can inform the study of how much the performance of teachers is the yardstick for evaluating teachers. Against which there is a general understanding among employment agencies that, teachers trained in distance education mode are not as good as those taught by the traditional education model (Henk, 2010). The basic principle of the theory is relevant to my study because the social environment has an influence on people's conventional beliefs. The integrity of teachers can be restored through a collaborative effort between the school and the school social environment. Thus the social environment needs a reorientation, and a change of mindset towards the educational systems (Dewey, 1938; Tyack and Cuban, 1995).

METHODOLOGY

Taking into consideration the objectives of the research,

Table 1. Mode of training.

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Distance education	30	50.0	50.0	50.0
Traditional education	30	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0	

a descriptive survey design is adopted for the study. It is a useful design because it gives a description of events in their natural setting (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Creswell, 2009). The design is also suitable for the study because the researcher will focus on using members' opinion to describe the teachers' performance. The population of a study refers to the set of individual units that the research question seeks to find out about (Frankfort and Nachmias, 2008). The target populations for the study are head teachers in three districts in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Purposive sampling is used to select participants for the research. We have to identify the head teachers who have both categories of teachers in their school and the best method to carry out the task is purposive sampling. Thirty head teachers were identified and are enough to give an overview of the head teachers view about traditional education and distance education programs in the three districts (Sarantakos, 1998). Moreover, the districts are wide apart. Thus, the thirty participants give the researcher the opportunity to conduct the research within a stipulated period that will not affect the history of the members.

Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008) defined measurement, as the assigning of numbers to observation to quantify phenomena. The nominal scale of measure is used to measure the gender identity status, number of years the teachers has served, and which category they belong to. The Likert scale is an example of an interval scale of measurement that is used by the research to identify the properties of teachers. Head teachers were asked to circle the appropriate score from a range of 1 to 5 on each of the 20 items depending on the level of performance by each teacher. One (1) represents the lowest demonstration of accomplishment of the task, and five (5) the highest. This process enables the researcher to utilize the responses based on the level of perception that is acceptable in social research (Frankfort and Nachmias, 2008). With the scale, it was possible to know not only whether different scores are higher or lower, but also how much higher or lower they are. The opened-ended question aimed at giving the participants an opportunity to contribute to the study. Ensuring validity in research is a crucial activity. Inter-rater approach is used to verify the content validity of the constructs (Stellmack et al., 2009). To be able to teach well means you have to demonstrate certain characteristics, good teachers show when they are teaching. For example, the instrument was evaluated on

whether it measured what teachers do in class during an instructional process (Cizek, 2009). Reliability is estimated using the split-half reliability index. The Split-half reliability scores obtained for each scale were 0.99 and 0.96. It is a useful tool for evaluating the reliability of the test tool. Moreover, the split-half reliability method of assessing reliability is compatible with the descriptive research design (Cizek, 2009).

Measures of central tendency are very useful in data analysis. The primary measure of central tendency employed in the study is the mean (Frankfort and Nachmias, 2008). According to Sarantakos (1998), the mean is a very crucial measure of central tendency. We use the mean to indicate the primary trend of events. Since we are interviewing a number of teachers from both sides, the mean will be a useful tool here to aid in the description of their perception. We will be able to compare means of both sides to determine which group of teachers is performing better in the classroom. We used the SPSS software to compute the mean for each item for each group. Then after we compare and analyze the average scores to determine which group is performing better, descriptive analysis is used to analyze and interpret the mean scores from both categories. Data collected on the open-ended question is analyzed using descriptive analysis. The researcher reduced the volume of data gathered by using frequencies to represent shared views. All the questionnaires were recovered from the participants. Out of the sixty distributed to members, we were able to recover all representing a 100% recovery rate.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents statistics on the mode of training by the teachers. The data is to ensure that, both categories are represented equally in the exercise. Out of the total number of sixty, thirty are teachers who completed their training in distance education method while the other thirty are teachers who completed their training by traditional education mode. The equal representation is crucial because the objective of the study is to compare the performance of the two categories of teachers.

In recent times, gender activist are interested in the representative of both males and females in a single study. Table 2 shows that, both males and females participated in the research. Thus, the research is not

Table 2. Gender of teacher.

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Male	33	55.0	55.0	55.0
Female	27	45.0	45.0	100.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 3. Number of years they have served as teachers in the school.

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Less than 1 Year	12	20.0	20.0	20.0
Above 1 Year	48	80.0	80.0	100.0
Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for distance education and traditional education teachers.

Descriptive variable	N	Distance mean score	N	Traditional mean score
Measurable and Specific Objectives	30	3.9667	30	4.3000
Core Points are Related to the Lesson Objectives	30	3.8667	30	4.4333
Teacher Provides Varied Teaching and Learning Activities	30	3.7000	30	3.7333
Teaching and Learning Activities are Timely and Logical	30	3.6667	30	3.7000
Teacher uses TLMs	30	3.5333	30	3.5000
Teacher Demonstrates Relevant Subject Knowledge	30	4.0667	30	4.2333
Teacher Ensures Learner Participation	30	4.1000	30	4.2000
Teacher Monitors Pupils' Learning	30	4.1000	30	4.0333
Teacher Exhibits Appropriate Professional Conduct	30	4.0000	30	4.3333
Teacher Shares Lesson Objectives with Pupils	30	3.8000	30	3.8000
Teacher Links Pupil's PK to Content	30	4.0000	30	4.1000
Teacher Presents Learning Activities in a Logical Manner	30	3.9667	30	4.3000
Pacing is Appropriate for the Entire Lesson	30	3.7333	30	3.7333
Teacher Speaks Clear and Loud for pupil to hear	30	4.4333	30	4.5000
Teacher Values Different Contributions	30	4.0667	30	4.3333
Teacher uses Chalkboard Systematically	30	4.2000	30	4.3333
Teacher has Full Command of Subject Matter	30	4.2333	30	4.2333
Teacher Assigns Activities for Next Lesson	30	3.7667	30	3.9667
Teacher Accepts Constructive Feedback to Improve	30	4.0333	30	4.1000
Valid N (list wise)	30		30	

gender bias.

It is also important to know the number of years the teachers have taught in their present schools. Less than a year is not long enough to enable the head teachers to assess their instructional performance. For example, a teacher who has been posted to a school for one month is not old enough to enable the head teachers to assess their instructional performance. The statistics in Table 3 shows that most teachers (48 i.e. 80%) have taught in their present schools for more than a year, while only 12 (20%) taught in their present schools for less than a year. The results show that, we can go along to use the data

for analysis since most of them have taught for more than a year.

Tables 4 present the scores on the items for teachers who completed their training in distance learning model, and traditional education model. The mean scores of teachers who completed their training in distance education model will be compared with the scores of teachers who completed their training in the traditional learning model. A comparison of the mean scores for both categories of teachers shows the following results: For the item 'teacher states measurable and specific objectives' distance learning has a mean score of 3.9667

as against traditional learning model has a mean score of 4.3000. The second item seeks to find out how well teachers of the two sides state objectives that are achievable within the duration of the lesson. Teachers of distance learning model had a mean score of 3.9000 while teachers of traditional learning model scored 4.0333. A question was asked to find out how well teachers' state their core points to relate to lesson objectives, teachers by distance learning model had a mean scored of 3.8667 while teachers of traditional model had a mean score of 4.0333.

Varying teaching and learning activities help to bridge the gap between slow learners and fast learners. A question was asked to find out if the teachers provide varied teaching and learning activities during instruction; teachers trained in distance model had a mean score of 3.7000 while teachers trained in the traditional system model scored 4.4333. Classroom teaching is time bound, and for that matter teachers are expected to achieve their objectives within a particular period. A question was asked to find out whether teachers can complete their teaching and learning activities in a logical and timely manner. Teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 3.6667 while teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 3.7333. The use of teaching learning materials in classroom facilitates teaching and learning. Teachers are always encouraged to improvise these materials when the original ones are not available. Therefore, a question was asked to find out if the teachers use teaching-learning materials (TLMs) in teaching. Teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 3.5333 while teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 3.7000.

Common understanding tells as that; a teacher who is knowledgeable in his/her subject area would deliver better lessons than one who does not know his/her subject matter. It is for this reason we asked a question concerning how well teachers demonstrate relevant subject knowledge during instruction. Teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 4.0667 whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 3.5000. Ensuring active learner participation during instruction revealed the following scores: teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 4.1000 whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.2333. It is good to teach well in class but better to monitor the progress of the learner. A question was asked to find out if the teachers monitor pupils' learning during instruction; teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 4.1000 whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.2000. A teacher may have full command of his/her subject matter, but that can be complemented with appropriate professional conduct. A question was asked to find out if the teachers exhibit appropriate professional behaviour in their line of duties. Teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 4.0000,

whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.0333. It is good for a teacher to share his/her lesson objectives with pupils at the beginning of instruction. An evaluation of this yielded the following responses; teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 3.8000, whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.3333.

Teachers are expected to create an enabling environment for learning to take place. One of the means of doing that is by linking pupil's previous knowledge to the content of the new lesson. An evaluation on the issue saw a 4.0000 mean score for teachers who completed their training by distance education model and 3.8000 for teachers who completed their training by traditional education model. Teachers are expected to present learning activities in a logical manner, mostly from the known to the unknown. A question was asked to find out if the teachers present learning activities in a logical way. Teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 3.9667 whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.1000. Time management is crucial for accomplishing lesson objectives. Thus, a question was asked to find out if teachers utilize their time well in the class by engaging in good pacing practices. It was found out that, teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 3.7333 and teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.3000. If a teacher has all the qualities of a good teacher but lacks the ability to speak out loud and clearly for pupils to understand; they may not achieve their objectives. It is against this background that, a question was asked to find out how loud and clear the teachers speak during instruction. Teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 4.4333 whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 3.7333. Teachers are taught during pre-training that, pupils are different from one another and must be treated as such. We asked a question to find out how the teachers value different contributions from pupils. Teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 4.0667 whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.5000.

The use of the chalkboard is crucial when it come to teachers organizing their core points. To this point, a question was asked to find out how the teachers use chalkboard systematically to organize their thoughts for pupils to learn. Teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 4.2000, and teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.3333. Teachers need to know their subject matter before they can teach effectively in class. Thus, a question was asked to find out if they had full command of their subject matter. Teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 4.2333, whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.2333. Sometimes it is good to assign pupils activities in preparation for the next lesson. The results show that, teachers trained in distance

learning model had a mean score of 3.7667 whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 3.9667. There is a common saying that, no one is perfect. The teacher may also make some mistakes in their line of duty. However, the best teacher is the one who is prepared to correct their mistakes. Thus, we asked a question to find out if the teachers accept constructive feedback to improve their performance. The results were as follows; teachers trained in distance learning model had a mean score of 4.0333 whereas teachers trained in traditional learning model scored 4.1000.

DISCUSSION

Significant differences were found between the mean test scores for teachers. This study reveals a level of an acceptance for teachers who completed their training by traditional education model as against teachers who completed their training by distance learning model. It is not surprising that, teachers who completed their training by distance education model face challenges getting jobs after completing their studies (Adams, 2008). Training teachers by distance learning was to provide solutions to the teeming number of applicants who could not get access to teacher training colleges. Even though the level of an acceptance is minimal because of the marginal difference between the two scores per item, it is still crucial to point out that teachers with traditional education background are preferred to teachers with distance education background.

These results are not surprising because previous studies have proved that, hiring professionals prefer traditional education systems to the new innovative distance education programs which comes as either online, or face to face models (Raj and Al-Alawneh, 2010; Diaz, 2000; Columbaro and Monaghan, 2009). Items such as teacher states measurable and specific objectives, core points are related to lesson objectives, teacher provides varied teaching and learning activities, and that the teaching and learning activities are logical and timely saw significant difference in their scores. The mean scores are in favour of teachers who completed their training by traditional education model. However, there are no significant differences in mean test scores for the following items; teacher monitors pupils' learning, and teacher exhibits appropriate professional conduct. Both groups had the same mean score for the items. Teachers who completed their training in traditional education model received the highest scores, for most of the items. Meanwhile, it is hard to reconcile the current findings with what Hannay and Newvine (2006) reported: students chose distance learning over traditional education because they achieve higher quality education with distance learning than traditional learning. The high-quality education they receive should reflect on their performance, by giving them a higher mean score.

Rather teachers who completed their training in traditional learning model received higher mean scores. The items with the highest scores for teachers who completed their training in distance learning model are: teacher demonstrates relevant subject knowledge during teaching. The mean score for the item is 4.0667 for distance learning teachers and 3.5000 for traditional education teachers. The other item that received a higher mean score in favour of distance education teachers is the ability of teachers to link pupils' previous knowledge (PK) to content. While distance learning teachers had a mean score of 4.0000, traditional learning teachers had an average score of 3.8000. The other question is teacher ability to speak loud and clear for pupils to hear where distance learning teachers received the highest score for the question. They received a mean score of 4.4333 as against 3.7333 for traditional learning teachers.

The open question gathered information that revealed that head teachers commended traditionally trained teachers, but a few also acknowledged the instructional performance of distance learning teachers. It might be true that, many educational institutions will adopt distance education in the near future (Schaffhauser, 2012). With the many tools and resources available to support distance learning, schools will transit to hybrid classes, which will bring a new form of teaching and learning in schools' establishment. It was also made clear by participants on the opened question that, distance learning teachers should be given the chance to do an internship with the traditional school settings during training. They added that, teachers who are trained in traditional learning model perform a little above their distance learning counterparts because the former has more concentration during training than the latter. The statements made by the participants on the open question go to confirm their scores for the two categories of teachers. The comments focused more on instructional training for teachers in distance learning programs. Thus, a number of suggestions were made to enhance distance learning programs for teachers. Firstly, that Study centres should be established in every district to stop distance learning students from travelling long distances for studies. Secondly, distance learning students should be given study leave with pay to enable them meet their training responsibilities. Thirdly, the entry requirement is still high preventing a lot of potential applicants from joining the distance learning programs. It was mentioned that, despite the challenges, distance education is good because it has helped teachers to upgrade their skills; it has also contributed to train more teachers in the Ghana Education Service at a lesser cost to government.

Implications of the results for teacher education

Classroom settings are changing significantly, and pre-teacher training colleges must adjust their curriculum to

meet the new challenges. This is particularly with distance learning institution, where people are still sceptical about their ability to train teachers to acquire the necessary skills for teaching and learning in the classroom. There are a number of lessons we can draw from the research for the benefit of teacher education.

Firstly, distance educational institutions should notice that, training teachers by the distance education model requires a pedagogical paradigm shift from what pertains now. It is still very clear that, people prefer teachers who completed their training in traditional education model to teachers who completed their training by distance learning model. One of the reasons many employers think traditional education is better than distance education is that, training teacher by distance learning is inappropriate and lacks rigor.

Secondly, students enrolled to pursue teacher education programs should be prepared adequately to merit the support they need in the job market. It is true that, there is a common thread of content that runs through each of the two approaches. However, teachers by traditional education have the opportunity to do an internship that go a long way to support them in internalizing the knowledge, and skills they acquire during training. This facility can be extended to distance learning students.

Additionally, distance education is giving a new direction for our educational system. Teacher training institutions while benefiting from the new system have a responsibility to streamline their programs to meet the needs of Ghana Education Service policy guideline for teacher education. It is good to note that, distance learning has many advantages. Some of the advantages are that a wide range of subjects can be delivered by distance learning or online. There are programs ranging from complete university degrees to certificate programs and unlike the traditional education model they can be offered at convenience time and location.

Conclusion

The results revealed that, there are differences in the instructional performance between the two sets of teachers. The differences in performance go in favour of teachers who completed their training by traditional education model as against teachers who completed their training by distance education model. However, the extent of differences as revealed per the scores is minimal but significant. Some of the reasons given for the low acceptance of teachers who completed their training by distance education model were that, teachers in traditional education programs have enough training during practice, and they are also provided with opportunities to do their research that helps them to perform well, unlike the face-to-face distance education programs, where students are presented with already made materials called modules to study. A number of

suggestions were made to enhance distance learning programs which include; only teachers from training colleges should be admitted to pursue a teacher education course in distance learning programs; distance learning teachers during pre-training should be given the chance to do an internship with the traditional schools. Additionally, they also need a full course in lesson planning. The one full course in lesson planning should equip the trained teacher with knowledge and skills in teaching that, will maintain pupils' interest during instruction.

Other suggestions were that the government should extend some of the facilities that make traditional education a success to distance learning. The students should learn to transfer what they learnt during training to the classroom. There should be more supervision in the teaching practice. The Ghana Education Service should motivate distance learners well enough to enhance self-confidence and performance in their work. The reason is that, the government fails to absorb some distance education teachers once they complete the course, making the teachers lose hope in their chosen profession.

Despite the fact that most participants wrote in favour of traditional education teachers, a few participants think that, distance education teachers are better in the classroom than traditional education teachers. According to them, distance education teachers do better in the classroom than traditional education teachers. They are professionally satisfactory in their conduct because most of them had their teaching certificates first from teacher training colleges. Thus pursuing the distance education program was an added advantage. In addition, the participants cited that, distance education is proving to be preferable because the system makes sure teachers teach what they learn while studying at school. Teachers who undertake distance education normally have a lot of time to study and do research in the library where possible. They also work to fund their education; thus they do not need to rely on their family to sponsor their education. All said and done it still remains clear from the results of the research that, teachers who completed their training in traditional learning model perform better than those trained in distance learning model.

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Appendix A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS OF BASIC SCHOOLS

General Instructions

Dear Sir/Madam, you are among other head teachers of basic schools chosen for a study on the assessment of the instructional performance of **teachers who have completed their training by distance education mode and that of teachers who completed their training by traditional education mode and are currently teaching in your school.** YOU ARE TO COMPLETE ONE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EACH CATEGORY OF TEACHERS. Kindly co-operate by reading through carefully and respond to each item in the questionnaire as objectively and independently as possible. The information that you provide is strictly confidential. Your participation in this study to ensure its success is highly appreciated. Thank you for your support.

PART I

Background Information

1. Gender of Teacher [1] Male [2] female
2. Number of Years served as teachers in your school [1] Less than 1 year [2] Above 1 year
3. Mode of Training [1] Distance Education [2] Traditional Education

PART II

Instructions: Part 2 is made up of two sections A and B. Section A is made up of close-ended questions seeking your views on the instructional performance of teachers both by distance education mode, and by traditional education mode and are currently teaching in your school. Each statement contains instructional activities teachers undergo in your school. Use the following rating scale [5] for excellent, [4] for good, [3] for fair, [2] for poor and [1] for Nil to assess your teacher(s) instructional performance. Section B is an opened-ended question. Kindly share your opinion as objectively as possible to enhance the usefulness of this study.

Section A: Statement of Objectives

- | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 4. Teacher states measurable and specific objectives | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 5. Objectives are achievable within the duration of the lesson | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 6. Core points are related to lesson objectives | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 7. Teacher provides varied teaching/learning activities | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 8. The teaching/learning activities are logical and timely | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 9. Teacher uses TLMs | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 10. Teacher demonstrates relevant subject knowledge | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 11. Teacher ensures active learner participation | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 12. Teacher monitors pupils' learning | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 13. Teacher exhibits appropriate professional conduct | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 14. Teacher usually shares lesson objectives with pupils | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 15. Teacher links pupils PK to content | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 16. Teacher presents learning activities in a logical manner | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 17. Pacing is appropriate for the entire lesson | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 18. Teacher speaks loud and clear for pupils to hear | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 19. Teacher values different contributions | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 20. Teacher uses chalkboard systematically | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 21. Teacher has full command of subject matter | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 22. Teacher assigns activities for next lesson | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |
| 23. Teacher accepts constructive feedback to improve | [5] | [4] | [3] | [2] | [1] |

Section C:

Instructions: section C is an opened-ended question aimed at giving you an opportunity to contribute to the study.

24. Kindly make your own suggestions, comments, or contributions on the issue at stake.