

CHAPTER I

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Teacher education has a critical role to play for socio-economic development of a diversified society like Ghana. It prepares humane teachers who can create an enabling environment in meeting the diverse learning needs of children from the different socio-economic background. The quest to improve teaching in schools is a concern of successive governments in many countries. For this reason, successive governments have made some changes in our initial teacher training curricular about what and how prospective teachers should be taught. These teachers who are the change agents in our societies are meant to produce morally upright, talented, skillful and self-sufficient youngsters to adjust in the society. To inculcate these values into the Ghanaian children who are in their critical stage of development (6-14 years), the basic school's teachers cannot be underrated. So, we must ensure that the Basic Teacher Education (BTE) curriculum in Ghana is appropriate and relevant to equip prospective teachers with the requisite skills to be effective rather than providing only subject knowledge. This is because the student-teachers would have studied the contents of the various school subjects in their previous schools (basic and secondary) and might have mastered the subject matter but lacking the skills to teach. And to become an effective school teacher, one needs to be curious, desirous in enquiring about contemporary educational issues to be abreast with matters related to educational theories, school curriculum, and pedagogy. These abilities of a school teacher are essential for the attainment of instructional objectives in the classroom. For prospective teachers to develop these abilities, a balanced teacher preparation curriculum is required. The curriculum must be balanced in terms of subject knowledge, teaching methodology, instructional strategies, extra-curricular and co- curricular activities. If there are imbalances between any of these components, of course, it will be difficult to produce effective school teachers. Before discussing the BTE curriculum into details, 'Teacher Education in Ghana' will be considered.

1.2 Teacher Education in Ghana

Europeans missionaries led by the Basel Mission introduced teacher education in Ghana (Asare-Danso, 2013). They established first teacher training college together with a Seminary in 1848 at Akropong-Akuapem to train teachers and catechists for evangelism purposes. The college was managed by the Basel Mission church and admitted only baptized students who had completed the Standard-Three education and were willing to serve in the church as Catechist (Owusu-Agyakwa et al, 1993). The duration of the curriculum was 4-5 years where the student-teachers were taught English Grammar, Twi, Calligraphy, Arithmetic, Geography and Hymn Singing and subsequently introduced other subjects like Greek, Hebrew, Dogmatic and Homiletics. The Basel mission progressively established another seminary and teacher training college in 1898 at Abetifi-Kwahu (Graham, 1976). These colleges in addition to Roman Catholic seminary at Bla in the Trans-Volta Region that laid a foundation for teacher education in Ghana.

The growth of colonial activities and interest of teacher education in Ghana under Governor Roger in 1909 saw the establishment of first public teacher training college in Accra (Graham, 1976). The college admitted students who had completed standard seven, the then middle school, and prepared them in methods of teaching, practice teaching, and woodwork, gardening and religious instruction for two years to teach in the elementary schools. Unfortunately, the teacher training college thrived only for a few years and eventually died off in 1928. Therefore, these student-teachers were relocated to Achimota College to form the Teacher Training Department (Asare-Danso, 2013). Owing to legislative provisions and partly measures to disseminate teacher training within the sub-region, the department was transferred to Kumasi to form College of Technology in 1951. Similarly, another teacher training college was established in Ashanti-Mampong in 1951. This college had emerged from St. Andrews College, a Presbyterian Training College at Akropong-Akuapem. The St. Andrews College was partially financed by the colonial government and with the view of ensuring efficiency as well as the equitable location of resources; it was shifted to Mampong-Ashanti and presently remains one of the few colleges that run technical programs in the country.

The teacher preparation continued to gain grounds after Ghana had regained its independence in 1957. The first government led by Kwame Nkrumah took delight in using teacher training colleges to create a literate population for socio-economic development. In this regard, plans were formulated and resources mobilized toward the establishment of teacher training colleges. The prominent teacher education plan was the “Accelerated Development Plan” for Education in 1951. In this plan, two major proposals relating to teacher education made. The proposal was about the increase in the number and size of teacher training facilities in the country (Graham, 1976). By this, ten extra teacher training colleges were built while six existing ones were expanded. The second proposal was about plans to introduce a Certificate “B” Course in the colleges to provide opportunities to holders of this certificate to be able to upgrade to Certificate “A” subsequently. By the end of Nkrumah’s government in 1966, there were about 30 teacher training colleges concurrently running a 2-year certificate ‘A’ and ‘B’ courses in the country. As times went on new education policies emerged with new curricular. To operate these curricular effectively, there was a need for affiliation with universities in the country for framing of the curricular framework and monitoring all of the curricular components.

The prominent teacher training Universities in Ghana are; the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and its affiliated BTE colleges, University of Education, Winneba (UEW), and University for Development Studies (UDS). These universities are autonomous bodies that prepare teachers for every level of education. The prospective teachers receive training in a 4-year Integrated Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) one year Master of Education, and 2-year Master of Philosophy in Education and Doctorate of Philosophy respectively in the universities. Also, the UCC and the UEW offer 2-3 years Diploma (Basic Education) to train basic school teachers and a one-year Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) for graduates who first obtained a degree in different fields of study other than education, and wish to study educational practices and teaching methodology for qualifying teacher certificate. The admissions of students in any of these programs are based on merit. This is intended to ensure equity, equality and quality of teacher training in the country. Key applicants to be admitted are Senior High School (SHS) candidates who have completed and have qualified the examination conducted by the West African Examination Council

(WAEC). The WAEC is a private examination body in charge of final assessment and certification of SHS graduates in countries of the West African sub-region.

Management of public teacher education in Ghana is centralized. The central government is responsible for funding public education at all levels (Adentwi and Baafi-Frimpong, 2010). The main sources of funds are grants from the government, tuition fees, and donor partners such as World Bank, USAID and UNICEF (Adentwi and Baafi-Frimpong, 2010). The Ministry of Education (MoE) assumes the topmost position of the management hierarchy. The MoE is a government agency that formulates education policies and ensures functionalities of all levels i.e., pre-tertiary education and tertiary education (MoE, 2018). Other major management bodies under the MoE are; the Ghana Education Service (GES) which is responsible for the implementation of policies at the pre-tertiary level, National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) which is responsible for policies implementation at the tertiary level, National Teaching Council (NTC) responsible for teacher professional development, and the National Accreditation Board (NAB) for accreditation and regulation of contents and programs at all levels of public and private institutions as per professional standard of the country. The details of the relationship between these management bodies are presented in the figure-1.

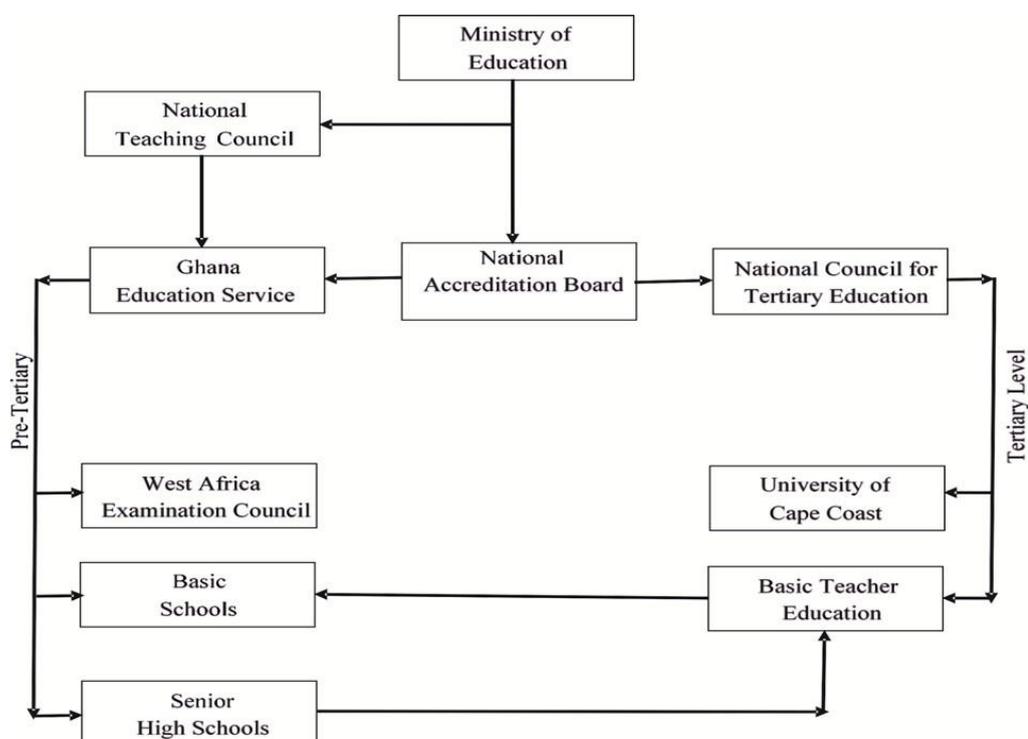


Figure-1: Management Structure of Basic Teacher Education in Ghana

To achieve equity and quality teacher preparation largely depends on a viable management system. Therefore, it can be seen from figure-1 that a corroboration has been established between the management structures of the BTE colleges for producing teachers. Also, successive governments through the MoE, are committed to implementing policies and education reports for strengthening frameworks within which prospective teachers are prepared. Some of the major policies are presented as follows;

1. Education Act of 1961 (Act 87): to decentralize the missionary education system and entrust the management of educational units in the hands of local authorities.
2. Education Act of 2008 (Act 778): this emanated from Anamuah-Mensah's committee report (2002), commending Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) curriculum in BTE colleges.
3. College of Education Act of 2012 (Act 847): to upgrade the curriculum of the BTE colleges to meet the tertiary standard.

It can be said that the present BTE curriculum framework has been designed to implement College of Education Act of 2012 (Act 847) in the BTE colleges which are affiliated with the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast (UCC). And by the time of conducting this study, there were 43 BTE colleges in Ghana (NCTE, 2016). As per the guidelines of the central government, many more colleges may be under construction in the quest of meeting the national standard. This curriculum was started in 2014 on regular mode leading to the award of Diploma in Basic Education (DBE). The UCC takes charge of designing the BTE curriculum, provide the admission criteria, assessment of student-teachers and controls many other aspects of the curriculum transactions in the colleges. The curriculum components can be classified under three broad categories namely; 1) Educational and Contemporary Studies: to help student-teachers to gain insight in contemporary Ghanaian society and needed education in mitigating societal needs, 2) Curriculum and Pedagogic Studies (including on-campus and out-program teaching practice): to prepare prospective teachers to master the subject matter and pedagogy and can continuously improve their professional practice for the attainment of goals and 3) Value Added Courses: to inculcate social values, development of life-skills and creativity in the prospective teachers.

To ensure that the above curricular areas are achieved, the BTE curriculum 2014 is operating on four objectives. The curriculum objectives as outlined by the Institute of Education, UCC (2014) are as follows;

- i. To produce generalist teachers capable of teaching all subjects at the Primary and J.H.S. levels.
- ii. To produce specialist teachers capable of teaching specific subjects such as Mathematics, Science and Technical at the JHS level, French at both Primary and JHS levels and Early Childhood Education.
- iii. To produce teachers who have a clear grasp of intended outcomes of their teaching activities, who are skilled in monitoring, diagnosing and appropriately providing equal opportunity to all the pupils.
- iv. To promote a close working relationship between Colleges of Education and local schools through the “Out” component of the program.

The duration of the BTE curriculum is three years with six semesters. Student- teachers are expected to spend the first two years (semester-1 to semester-4) in the colleges for face-to-face academic interaction with the tutors and on-campus teaching practice. In the third year (semester-5 to semester-6), the final year student-teachers have to embark on out-program teaching practice in corporate schools to experiment with the theories they probably learnt in the classroom. This implies that successive governments have made efforts in implementing policies and programs to produce effective basic school teachers. But how far has the BTE curriculum prepared effective teachers? It is essential to find answers to this question to help modify the BTE curriculum to produce effective teachers.

1.3. International Perspective of Teacher Education Curricular

In pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number four i.e., ‘quality education’, teacher education is essential. Therefore, it is important to study and understand how some teacher education curricular are being transacted in other countries. For this reason, teacher education curricular frameworks from six countries viz., Finland, Japan, Italy, England, Namibia and India were reviewed. These countries were selected based on OECD’s 2015 PISA assessments. So, Finland and Japan were selected for having performed above OECD mean score, England and Italy were selected for having performed average OECD mean score whereas

Namibia and India were selected for performing below OECD mean score. Whilst studying the curricular, emphasis was placed on major curricular components that are crucial for preparing student-teachers. The details discussion of the teacher education curricular in the various countries are presented as follows;

1.3.1 Finland

Prospective basic school teachers in Finland are trained in the universities and teacher training colleges. These institutions are autonomous in designing their curricular but financed by the central government. As per the requirement of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2014, the basic qualification to teach at the basic schools in Finland is a master degree in education with theses (except kindergarten teachers). For this reason, the duration of the master degree program is 5 years. To develop teacher competencies within a rigorous but flexible curricular framework, five major curricular components were incorporated. These include 1) major courses in educational studies (55 credit hours), 2) minor courses in school subjects with specialization (70 credit hours), 3) master thesis in education (20 credit hours), 4) teaching practice (20 credit hours), and 5) optional courses in language and communication (30 credit hours).

The major courses in educational studies focus on three levels of primary education viz., basic, intermediate and advanced (Ostinelli, 2009). Here, both formative and summative assessment are encouraged while knowledge and pedagogy have been organized to equip student-teachers with research skills and competencies to be responsive to educational issues. Also, the student-teachers embark on practice teaching thereby connecting didactic knowledge to pedagogy for practical reflection. The teaching practice component of the program is normally conducted in the universities' schools and other nominated schools in the vicinity. During the teaching practice, the student-teachers teach lessons and discuss everyday tasks and responsibilities with mentors for reflective feedbacks (Ostinelli, 2009).

Thesis writing is mandatory that the student-teachers need to select thesis topics on either pedagogy or psychology and write using qualitative method. There are also optional courses in language and communication for student-teachers to study their native languages and foreign languages which will particularly, help the native students to fortify their solidarity and attachment to their native culture and traditions. And at the end of the five years, student-teachers must complete a minimum of 160 credit hours. In the broader perspective, the Finnish teacher's education curricular

sought to equip prospective teachers with long-life learning by creating a pathway for future professional development. This is because student-teachers have been prepared to react to educational issues like researchers while in the classroom teaching. This might lead to an improvement in teachers' standard, competencies, and students' academic performance in schools.

1.3.2 Japan

Three categories of teacher education programs train teachers for primary schools in Japan (Tina Isaacs et al, 2015). The first category of teachers are holders of a 4-year bachelor degree (ISCED 5A first degree) which is the type I certificate. The second category is 2-3 years Junior College Associate's degree (ISCED 5B first degree) that is type II certificate and the third category is a 2-year Master degree (5A second degree) that is an advanced certificate. The programs are operated by teacher training universities and general colleges which are accredited by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). These three teacher preparation pathways are conscious efforts to produce teachers with a sense of mission and responsibility, and a passion for education capable of promoting critical and logical thinking amongst school children. Therefore, curricular areas incorporated include teaching subjects, pedagogical subjects, special need education subjects, and nursing (for only primary school teachers).

The student-teachers of type I certificate curriculum need to complete 8 credit hours of Teaching Subjects, 41 credit hours of pedagogical subjects and 10 credit hours of either teaching subjects or pedagogy (only one to be chosen). Also, the candidate of type II certificate curriculum has to complete 4 credit hours of teaching subjects, 31 credit hours of pedagogical subjects and 2 credit hours of either teaching subjects or pedagogy. Similarly, student-teachers on advanced certificate curriculum need to complete 8 credit hours of teaching subjects, 41 credit hours of pedagogical subjects and 34 credit hours of either teaching subjects or pedagogy. There are also mandatory coursework (2 credits) in the Japanese Constitution, a Foreign Language, Physical Education, and ICT for all the categories of student-teachers.

Practice teaching is mandatory in Japanese teacher education curricular. All the student-teachers are required to teach under experience mentors in schools for 4 weeks. In most of the cases, they practice at the schools that are attached to their universities but some practice in communities' schools where facilities are available.

In this session, the student-teachers need to prepare lessons in collaboration with their mentors and teach while they observe and subsequently give feedback for improvement. The practice teaching develops teaching skills of the student-teachers and motivates them to undertake the teaching tasks in schools.

In terms of professional development, student-teachers in Japan have to pay observation visit to schools, attend conferences, and participate in seminars. Here, there have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding in educational issues, confidence and presentation skills. This suggests that student- teachers participate in extra-curricular activities for reflective practice. This agrees with the findings arrived by a study (OECD 2014a) conducted in Japan, that Japanese teachers spend long hours (8 hours) working on extra-curricular activities. This study further suggests more corroboration activities like team-teaching enhance the abilities and confidence of the Japanese's student-teachers.

1.3.3 England

Following the introduction of Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in 1994, a 4-year initial teacher training curriculum leading to Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) was started in the universities, polytechnics and college of education in England. It is a common curriculum designed for basic schools which aim is to develop self- fulfillment, personal growth, diversity and freedom for teachers and pupils (Halstead, 2003). The duration of the study can be shortened for candidates who are already having credit from another recognized teacher training institution before enrolling on the B.ED curriculum. This candidate could be holders of Diploma in Education or a degree from a different discipline and wish to be elevated to qualified teacher status.

All the student-teachers in England irrespective of their curriculum pathways are required to meet a particular standard as outlined by The National Committee of Enquiry into Higher Education (1996). To meet the standard, the initial teacher training curricular in England was designed 1) to produce professional teachers, who have the theoretical knowledge and understanding, combined with practical skills, competences and commitment to teaching to high national standards, 2) to educate and train teachers against a background of relevant and systematic research and to develop the critical capacities to use research findings as a basis for improving

practice, and 3) to develop teachers who are reflective practitioners and can engage with educational research.

To fulfil above curricular requirement, efforts were made to incorporate curricular areas such as behaviour management, pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, professional behaviours and education and disciplinary courses such as courses on pedagogy, psychology, and sociology (ITT, 2016). To further stimulate the cognitive and intellectual development of student-teachers, instructional strategies such as discussions, games, problem-solving, projects, practical work, peer tutoring, computer-assisted learning and simulations were encouraged. These teaching strategies appear to be appropriate for equipping student-teachers with problem-solving skills and a general understanding of educational matters.

1.3.4 Italy

Following curricular reform in the 1990s, two different curricular emerged for preparing teachers in Italy. These are the curriculum for primary and kindergarten (four years) and master degree curriculum for secondary school teachers (3-year bachelor followed by 2 years master). As an attempt to produce quality teachers for these levels, both curricular are operating in teacher training colleges and universities based on the four curricular components as follows;

- i. Teaching fundamentals: to introduce student-teachers to pedagogical theories
- ii. Disciplinary didactics: to expose student-teacher to skills development to be effective in the teaching specific disciplines.
- iii. Workshops for practice teaching in an interdisciplinary context.
- iv. Apprenticeship: to introduce student-teachers to practical training, innovation and skills development.

To address the above curricular areas, courses were incorporated which can be classified under broad categories such as education studies, workshops, and general teaching methods and optional courses. These courses (240 credit hours) were spread across four academic years as per the suggestion of Law 477 of 1973. Looking at the Italian curriculum framework, it can be learnt that conscious efforts have been made to produce multi-task teachers with innovative skills capable of designing integrated instructional strategies for achieving instructional goals. Ostinelli (2009) suggested that there has been improvement teacher education in Italy but there is a need for

modification in the curriculum particularly in the areas of workshop and apprenticeship to ensure that teachers, after completing the program can easily be employed in the job market.

1.3.5 Namibia

Namibia saw a swift transformation in teacher training during the post-apartheid regime. Reforms took place to replace the colonial policy of education for the elite (white) with education for all (Kandjulu, 1997). One of the reforms is the Basic Teacher Education Diploma (BTED) which was designed in 1993. It is a 3-year curriculum receiving eligible candidates from ten passes and preparing them in teaching skills. Craig et al (1997) posit that BTED curriculum seeks to “create a community of critical practitioners”. For this reason, courses incorporated include subject area courses viz., integrated science, social studies, Namibian languages, agriculture, English, and educational theory and practice (foundation). The foundation courses are mainly taught in the first year to consolidate student-teachers’ conceptual understand of the theories and practical aspect of the teaching fraternity while the subject areas courses are studied across the three years. Student-teachers need to select subject areas of interest (major and minor) in the subsequent two years. The subject area courses are connected to the school subjects to equip student-teachers with needed teaching methods capable of teaching such subjects at the basic level. Therefore, the desired teaching method includes child-centred which is subject to classroom discussion, case study, and investigation.

Another component of the BTED is cross-curricular integration (Craig et al, 1997). A conscious effort has been made to equip student-teachers with knowledge across disciplines to teach multiple subjects at the basic schools. Through this curricular component, for instance, integration of ICT, environmental education, science methods and action research was highly emphasized. The action research was meant to develop academic and professional competencies of the student-teachers to be effective in the classroom. Also, the practice teaching was incorporated to allow student-teachers to learn an art of teaching under qualified mentors in the basic schools that are attached to the training intuitions. The practice teaching session lasts for 22 weeks i.e.; 3-weeks first-year, 6-weeks in the second year and 13-weeks in the entire final year. As revealed by Kandjulu (1997), other skills learnt from the practice teaching include; preparation of teaching aids, the study of children behaviour,

conduction of Parent-Teacher Meetings, observation of rules and regulation of the teaching profession, and administration duties. Before the departure of student-teachers to schools, management would conduct an orientation program to prepare them about supervision and general philosophy of the practice teaching.

1.3.6 India

The composition of education at the elementary education in India is consisting early childhood (pupils at lower primary), middle childhood (pupils at middle primary) and late childhood (pupils at the upper primary stage). The children at this level are between the ages of 6 and 14 and are having different learning characteristics. To prepared effective teachers to teach at this level, it was essential to design Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) curriculum. The D.El.Ed. is a 2-year curriculum designed in fulfilment of the constitutional right these children studying in class I-VIII to acquire Free and Compulsory Education (NCTE, 2015).

The framework of D.El.Ed. is structured in four broad curricular areas viz., 1) Child Studies, 2) Education and Contemporary Studies, 3) Curriculum and Pedagogy Studies (including practice teaching), and 4) Value Added Courses for Holistic Development. These curricular components are expected to equip student-teachers with subject knowledge, ability to understand children, and appropriate pedagogical competencies in different elementary school subject areas. The curriculum is content-based and addresses some selected school subjects like environmental science, science, social studies, mathematics and languages. The curriculum envisages the need to empower student-teachers in technology integration. So, an ICT course was incorporated to enable student-teacher to have access to open resources for learning purposes. Another crucial component of the D.El.Ed. the curriculum is empowering student-teachers in developing Teaching and Learning Material (TLM) to facilitate teaching. For this reason, a course on art and craft was incorporated to develop creative skills to enhance teaching and learning.

Many different approaches have been adopted for transacting the D.El.Ed. curriculum. The approaches include lecture session, discussion session, focused reading and reflection, observation session, document analysis, seminar, case study, school-based practical teaching and workshop (NCTE, 2015). These approaches are intended to broaden students' imagination skills and perspectives of educational practices so that

they can explore theories to update and their teaching methods and skills. Also, assessment of student-teachers in this curriculum involves written tests, assignments, lesson planning, teaching observation, journals, project work, seminar presentations, and laboratory journals (NCTE, 2015). Another curricular component is to expose student-teachers real-life teaching in the classroom. Therefore, 20 weeks intensive was incorporate to post them to schools where qualified mentors are available to enable them to observe lessons and apply theories into practice for the first time. It is expected that by the end of the two years, the student-teacher might have completed a minimum of 66 credit hours to be qualified for an award of a certificate (NCTE, 2015).

It can be learnt from the country-wise curricular presented above that governments play a key role in the framing and organization of BTE curricular. The curricular are largely framed to mitigate the socio-economic needs of the countries. Duration of teacher education curricular differs from country to country due to differences in educational philosophy. Nevertheless, many appropriate curricular components were incorporated to prepare competent prospective teachers. It can be learnt that specific curricular components such as subject knowledge, pedagogy, technology integration, and art and craft are crucial for preparing prospective teachers. At this juncture, the question that arises is to what extent are these curricular components incorporated in the Ghanaian BTE curricular? To find an answer to this question, it is essential to evaluate the BTE curriculum to understand how it is appropriate for preparing student-teacher. In the next sub-section, attention shall focus on what curriculum evaluation entails and models that can be followed to arrive at worthwhile findings.

1.4 Purpose of Curricular Evaluation

According to Wolf, Hill, and Evers (2006), curricular evaluation “a process of gathering and analyzing information from multiple sources to improve student learning in sustainable ways” (p. 3). The process must be continuous and systematic focusing on specific curricular areas of concern. Malin (2014) identifies two main focus-areas of curricular evaluation viz., ‘outcomes’, and ‘processes’. Whilst ‘process’ examines how a given curriculum operates at the implementation stage, the ‘outcomes’ focus on students’ achievement and experiences for studying a curriculum. The choice of the curricular area of focus depends on the phase of the curricular. Some evaluators may focus on one area whilst others would prefer both

depending on the situation at hand. Whatever purpose a curriculum evaluation seeks to serve, it is advisable to focus on a specific area in addressing curricular issues in a given time. Some purposes of curricular evaluation as identified by (Shaw, Greene & Mark, 2006) are as presented as follows;

1.4.1 Decision Making

Decision making is crucial in human endeavours. In this study, the findings (positive or negative) that will be arrived at will help the government of Ghana, Institute of Education, UCC, directors of education, principals and all stakeholders to know the status of the BTE curriculum and be able to make an informed decision.

1.4.2 Improvement

Improvement is another reason why curriculum evaluation is essential in an educational establishment. Improvement is required from the learners, teachers, the school and the instructional material and resources. In most of cases, management finds it difficult to identify curricular areas that need improvement. Of course, the policymaker will take a cue from the findings and suggestions that will emanate from this study to channel appropriate resources for the improvement of the BTE curriculum to achieve goals.

1.4.3 Professional Development

Maintaining a professional standard in education is crucial for enhancing performance. As we know that workers need to upgrade their knowledge and skills to be effective, there are still workers in our institutions who are unable to figure out their weaknesses. It is obvious that others are aware of their weaknesses but do not have a solution. Through curriculum evaluation, all these professional hitches will be unravelled and the given suggestions will help in building their professional skills to be effective.

1.4.4 Certification and Recognition

Accreditation is very essential in the education system. Educational institutions need to be recognized, graded and certificated by the board after having met a certain requirement. Such recognition serves as an approval for the institutions to operate courses and programs as deemed fit. In Ghana, the NAB is in charge of accreditation

(NCTE, 2017). The NAB occasionally evaluates certificates of the workers and facilities of BTE colleges to ensure that qualified personnel and facilities are hired. During this process, some curricular areas are checked and eventually give certificates to show the level that a program has reached. But the certificates are subject to renewal periodically and can be revoked if performance falls below the tertiary standard as indicated in the NCTE guidelines.

Based on the discussion above, it can be said that rigorous curricular evaluations play a crucial role in achieving the desired goals of education. Curricular issues are the core of teacher education. Curricular components are closely related in defining learning experience of student-teachers. What we want the student-teachers to learn, and how to present concepts that are relevant and interesting are the issues that are to be evaluated. To consider the evaluation, we can think of approaches to follow. In the next subsection, the discussion will focus on some approaches to curriculum evaluation that can be followed in this study.

1.5. Approaches to Curriculum Evaluation

To evaluate a given curriculum in an educational setting, certain approaches viz., scientific approach and humanistic approaches as proposed by Cronbach (1963), are critical. These approaches are discussed below to help us decide which of the approaches is suitable for the present study.

1.5.1 Scientific Approach

The scientific approach to curriculum evaluation advocates for experiments leading to objective interpretations and conclusions. According to Cronbach (1963), believers of this approach are researchers who love true experiment. Such researchers collect numerical data in the test-scores form from the learners in different situations to compare their academic achievement. These data are largely in quantitative form which are usually analyzed statistically. For the past many decays, the scientific approach to curriculum evaluation has dominated in the educational setting for decision making. Over the past three decades, educators have shifted their attentions to an alternative curriculum evaluation approach i.e., the humanistic approach, to get in-depth information about any given curricula (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1993;

Adebayo and Obaje, 2014). The details of this approach to the curriculum are presented in the next sub-section.

1.5.2 Humanistic Approach

A humanistic approach to curriculum evaluation allows subjective views and interaction between the researchers and expects to identify and address emerging challenges in a given curriculum to ensure a successful implementation. This approach employs a collection of qualitative data about teaching and learning experiences of the individuals that are involved in the implementation of the curriculum by using tools viz., interviews, observation and focus groups discussions (Bharvad, 2010). The present study reflects this approach and its procedures are crucial for the evaluation of the BTE curriculum in Ghana. To adopt this approach, it is essential to discuss some of the suitable curriculum evaluation models in the next sub-section.

1.6 Models for Curricular Evaluation

Models for curricular evaluation are not far-reaching. Many different models are available for different purposes i.e. 'outcomes evaluation' and 'process evaluation'. In this study, we will consider models that focus on process evaluation. In considering the process evaluation model what come to mind include the CIPP model and Congruence-Contingency Model. These models are critical in this study as commended by many studies (Kamalakkannan, 2017; Bharvad, 2010). The details of the models are presented as follows;

1.6.1 CIPP Model

The CIPP (Context, Input, Process, and Product) was developed by Daniel Stufflebeam in 1960 at Ohio State University. It follows a continuous process for providing needed information to facilitate decision making concerning a given curriculum. With the four dimensions of this model viz., Context, Input, Process, and Product, we can establish a rigorous evaluation of the BTE curriculum. As we focus on the evaluation, we need to address the following curricular components of the model;

- i. **Context:** the extent to which the BTE curriculum objectives are meeting the needs of society. This will also include the opportunities available for student-

teachers, and possible problems that might be hindering the realization of the curriculum objectives in the BTE colleges.

- ii. **Input:** here, attention will be focused on the availability and accessibility of the resources that can be used to accomplish the BTE curriculum objectives. The resources that come to mind include human and material resources such as competent tutors, laboratories, course material, workshops, internet facilities, and equipped libraries.
- iii. **Process:** this concerns about conscious efforts made in the BTE curriculum in linking theory to practice. Here, attention will be focused on the academic activities in the classroom (instructional strategies), practice teaching, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. How these components are appropriate for preparing student-teachers is essential in this study.
- iv. **Product:** this will help in examining the extent to which the BTE curriculum has produced effective teachers capable of teaching in the classroom. For this reason, lessons taught by basic school teachers who are alumni of the BTE curriculum will be observed to find out the extent to which this curriculum has made an impact in their academic and professional lives as per the needs of the society.

Based on the CIPP model discussed above, it can be said that systematic curricular evaluation is crucial for achieving the result. Figure 2 shows the CIPP model and how its components are interrelated.

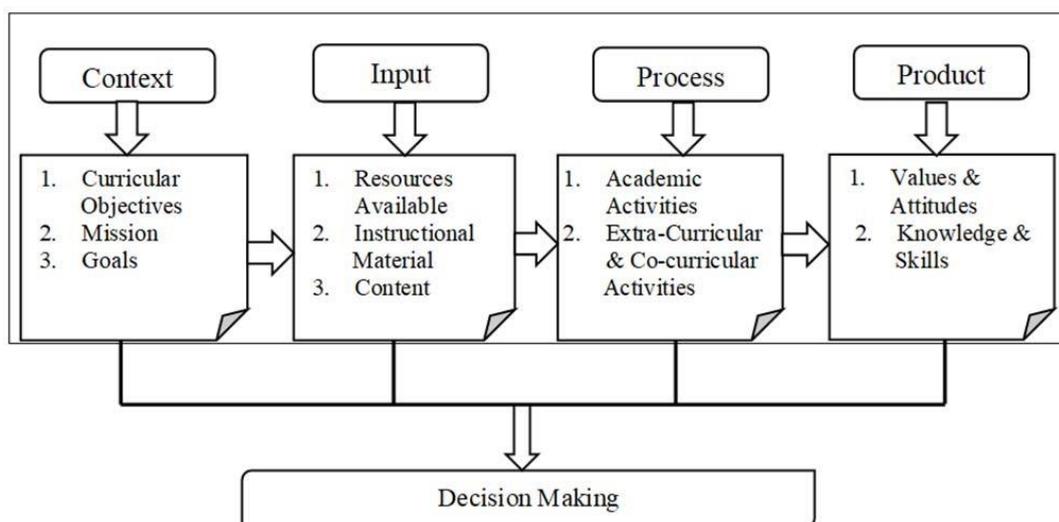


Figure-2: CIPP Model

1.6.2 Congruence-Contingency Model

Another model for curricular evaluation is Congruence-Contingency Model developed by Robbert Stake (1969). This model provides three categories of data as follows;

- i. **Antecedents:** antecedents are prevailing conditions before executing teaching and learning. Such conditions are about student-teachers, tutors characteristics, curricular in operation, available resources and material, and the environment.
- ii. **Transactions:** these are experiences that are encountered in a situation where teaching and learning are taking place. Here, attention will be focused on instructional strategies, contact hours, and assessment procedure.
- iii. **Outcomes:** outcomes are the anticipated results that a given curriculum seeks to provide. Here, attention will be focused on knowledge by student-teachers, teaching skills and values and attitudes as per the needs and inspirations of the society.

In the Congruence-Contingency Model, the researcher has a chance to compare desirable outcomes with the actual outcomes. This is because the researcher is free to set criteria to determine whether the outcomes of the curriculum is achieving the purpose it intends to serve.

1.7 Rationale of the Study

In the recommendation of Anamuah-Mensah Committee Report, 2002, a new Basic Teacher Education (BTE) curriculum evolved leading to the award of Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) in Ghanaian BTE colleges. The BTE colleges were affiliated with the University of Cape Coast (UCC), where its programmes were prescribed, admission, and assessment criteria were determined. The present BTE curriculum was started in 2014 and has operated for more than four years and might gradually becoming obsolete (Mereku, 2016; Owusu, Adu-Opare et al, 2016). But we are unable to find any study that has looked into how far this curriculum has served its intended purpose. To maintain its quality to prepare effective teachers as per the current needs of the society, it should be evaluated.

The BTE curriculum was designed to prepare generalist teachers capable of teaching all the basic school subjects. This curriculum has prepared many teachers and almost

all the basic schools in Ghana are filled up with the alumni. But no study was found in Ghana to this regard. Some studies such as Sirek and Sefton (2018), Hyndman (2017) and Collins (2016) were conducted in foreign countries about generalist teachers and have found that most of the teachers were unequipped with knowledge and skills to deliver lessons effectively in all the school subjects. So, if generalist teachers are not effective in foreign countries, what about Ghana? Meanwhile, the government expenditure on BTE colleges has been doubling since 2007 in the name of quality basic teacher training but the value of teacher effectiveness remains the same. To find answers to this question, this study is critical.

Proposals to relook into the BTE curriculum have become popular. Studies indicate that the contents of the curriculum and the approaches to curriculum transactions have fallen short of appropriate pedagogy and subject matter which has subsequently generated a huge debate amongst the policymakers and teacher educators in the country (Akyeampong, 2017; Amua-Sekyi, 2016; Owusu et al, 2016). The Chief Examiners' reports of various practical and language subjects have urged teacher training institutions to redirect programmes to prepare school teachers to acquire practical skills and subject knowledge to be effective in the classroom (WAEC, 2017). The Chief Examiners emphasized that most of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) candidates who wrote exams in 2017 grappled with grammatical errors in the English language and also lacked basic practical skills in skills related subjects like technical/vocational and Integrated Science. Also, the Ministry of Education (2016) conducted the National Education Assessment in Ghana and found that the pupils in class four and six were having a low level of proficiency in Mathematics and the English language. Here, a question that comes to mind is how are the contents of the BTE curriculum relevant for preparing prospective teachers? The answer to this question will be crucial for addressing the issues raised here.

The basic school children fall within the age group (6-14 years). This stage is critical for children's development. Their mental, emotional, intelligence and social development partly depend on the psychological make-up of the class teacher. The teacher must understand how children learn at this stage to prepare lessons as per their learning needs. But no study was found in Ghana about the ability of basic school teachers in dealing with pupils. To study and deal with children within this age group, child psychology cannot be underrated. But it can be seen from the BTE curriculum

framework that psychology is not a substantive course. It is either infused in Religious and Moral Education in most of the cases or treated as an aspect of another subject in only one semester for one credit hour. Therefore, it is essential to conduct this study to understand how prospective teachers are prepared to make an impact on the development of basic school children.

In international perspectives, many children leave primary schools unable to read, write and perform simple arithmetic in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, 2017; UNICEF, 2016). This phenomenon may be attributed to teachers' characteristics. Studies have found that most of the primary school's teachers in Africa were unequipped with the subject's knowledge and pedagogy (World Bank Group, 2018; UNICEF, 2016). As Ghana is one of such countries in this geographical area, it is essential to find out how the BTE curriculum is responding to this phenomena. Hence it is crucial to evaluate the BTE curriculum to determine how curriculum objectives and contents are relevant and appropriate for preparing prospective teachers. Maybe, suggestions will be sought to improve some deficiencies in the curriculum to produce teachers that society desires.

1.8 Research Questions

Based on rational presented above, the following research questions are formulated;

- i. How relevant are the objectives of the BTE curriculum for training prospective-teachers?
- i. How far are the courses of the BTE curriculum appropriate for preparing prospective-teachers?
- ii. How far are the modes of BTE curriculum transactions appropriate for preparing prospective-teachers?
- iii. How the BTE curriculum can be made more relevant and appropriate?

1.9 Title of the Study

- iv. The present study has been entitled as:
- v. 'Evaluation of Basic Teacher Education Curriculum in Ghana'.

1.10 Objectives of the Study

The study has been carried out with the following objectives;

- i. To study the relevance of the BTE curriculum objectives.

- ii. To study the appropriateness of the BTE curriculum contents.
- iii. To study the modes of transactions of the BTE curriculum.
- iv. To study the relevance of Co-Curricular activities and Extra-Curricular activities in the BTE colleges.

1.11 Delimitation of the Study

The present study has been delimited to general 3-year BTE curriculum (regular) that was implemented in 2014 by the Institute of Education UCC, Ghana. The curriculum has been operating at the BTE colleges leading to the award of Diploma in Basic Education.

1.12 Explanation of Terms that were used in the Study

In this section, an effort has been made to explain some major terms that have been used in the context of the study.

- i. **BTE Curriculum:** All the course contents, learning experiences provided, and activities that the student-teachers have been made to engage in by the institution of teacher education. In the present study, we are referring to the BTE curriculum of Ghana and all the associated components.
- ii. **Context Input Process Product (CIPP) Model:** Here the context is finding out the problems that might be hindering the success of the BTE curriculum objectives. The inputs are the available resources and strategies that are deemed appropriate for facilitating the success of the BTE curriculum. The process is about plans and guidelines that guide the implementation of the curriculum and further assist the implementers and the beneficiaries to in turn judge the outcome. The product is a measure of actual outcomes of the BTE curriculum. The outcome was judged by observing the lesson taught by the basic school teachers who were the alumni of the curriculum.
- iii. **Curriculum transaction:** Here in the study the methods and approaches followed by the teacher educators to train the student-teachers. It includes a transaction of education and professional courses, electives courses, curriculum and pedagogical courses, value-added courses, practice teaching (out program & on-campus), research projects, extra-curricular and co- curricular activities.

- iv. **Curriculum evaluation:** Curriculum evaluation concerns the relevance of curriculum objectives, appropriateness of the contents of the courses, classroom transactions in the teacher education colleges, the process of out- program and the project work from the perceptions and opinions of concerned people and educators.
- v. **Relevance.** In this study, relevance referred to the extent to which the BTE curriculum objectives have been achieved, and availability of Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular activities in BTE colleges for all-round development of student-teachers.

