

Caring relationships in the environment of changing teacher professional development

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Abstract

Despite the growing knowledge that the mentorship model of teacher education enhances the personal and socio-professional development of teacher-trainees, some mentors appear oblivious to this fact. This study examines the perceptions of undergraduates on internship about their mentors' roles in mentoring them. These are teacher-trainees admitted from senior high schools and who are undergoing the initial teacher education and hence need to be fostered by skilled mentors. An open-ended questionnaire and an interview were used to evaluate 120 post-internship students' impressions of their mentors. Three categories of mentors emerged: (1) absentee caregivers; (2) minimal caregivers and (3) committed caregivers. The trainees perceived dialogue sessions; reflective moments; and mentors' supervisory skills as beneficial. The results reveal that commitment of mentors is very important in selecting internship schools.

Keywords: skilled mentors; internship programmes; dialogue sessions; replacement teachers; internship schools

Introduction

Teacher production is being considered as a major keystone to improving the educational system worldwide. Thus, the setting up of University of Education, Winneba in Ghana with the sole mandate of producing teachers for all levels of education has been seen as a flagship policy that would enhance the educational fortunes of the youth. This study is, thus, being used to investigate the kinds of relationships that interns on teaching practice experience and the advantages of the mentoring system for teacher production.

Though there is no single definition for an effective teacher, it is known that some definitions focus on student achievement, rating of school inspectors, comments from students, heads of institutions and other stakeholders (Stronge, 2007). The growing research outputs are introducing other characteristics such as teacher preparation as one of the major factors affecting the production of an effective teacher (Stronge, 2007). Presently concerns have been raised about the extent to which traditional pre-service programmes prepare effective teachers. This has engendered new arguments about pedagogical preparation and content knowledge received by trainees during their training periods. However, some research outputs have indicated that teachers with high verbal ability did produce high-achieving students (Strauss & Sawyer, 1986; Wenglinsky, 2000) as cited in (Stronge, 2007). These research outputs tend to portray teacher

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quality in terms of teachers' verbal ability. Some thoughts about teacher training and even some teacher preparation programmes have preferred brief, more practical and focused preparation of teacher trainees (Stronge, 2007).

Each teacher training programme appears to be based on broad assumptions of a number of factors needed to produce effective teachers. For example, type of course-work and pedagogy offered to the trainees. Despite this, some studies have shown that teachers prepared with alternate teacher preparation programmes may face more initial coping problems in the classrooms than traditionally prepared teachers (Miller, McKenna, & McKenna, 1998) as cited in Stronge (2007).

Reflective practice has been cited as a major professional experience for an effective teacher development. This aspect underscores the trainees' ability to carefully review and to self-critique their own teaching. Leask and Moorhouse (2005) in a study noted that institutions of higher education that train teachers with the help of the schools are engaged in a three-way partnership or as termed by another author (Sullivan, 2010) a triad model of supervision. This relationship, they noted, linked the school, the trainees and the higher education institutions. In the study by Leask and Moorhouse (2005) the university teamed up with the schools to train teachers. The trainees received feedback that included technical and pupils' learning issues. Technical issues here concerned use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for teaching, audio-visual aids, quality and clarity of trainees' voice, positioning oneself in the classroom, transiting from one activity to another. The quality of pupils' learning requires regular reflection and attention of the teacher-trainee.

A study of Irish teachers (Divine, Fahie, & McGillicuddy, 2013) found that passion for children, reflection and planning of lessons were important in determining Irish teachers' construct of good teaching. Though the study found that the teachers' practices were at variance with their beliefs about teaching, it was noted that their practice was influenced by the socio-cultural context and the leadership style prevalent in their schools. Similarly, pre-service teachers' perceptions of mentoring were that their mentors should offer them emotional support (Hennissen, Crasborn, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2011).

In a study carried out in the US, the researchers (Kim & Schallert, 2011) found that a caring relationship is a two-way affair that depended on roles played by both mentors and mentees. In the mentorship relation both mentors and mentees are expected to have dialogues that would lead to reasoning about challenging and multi-layered problems. It has been found in a study that biology students who were exposed to a series of argumentations, which are dialogues with the intent of extracting deep reasoning from students, improved their rational written arguments as well as their content knowledge (Venville & Dawson, 2010). The authors explored mentor teachers' role during discourses before and after supervision of mentees at lessons in order to determine whether their role had any influence on the trainees' reasoning abilities. Also, Ralph and Walker (2014) found that training of stakeholders in a mentorship programme was necessary to defuse unforeseen disagreement between mentees (interns) and mentors during mentoring dialogues. As mentoring dialogues are, in fact, feedback to mentees the strategies with which they are employed would affect the effectiveness of the feedback (Shute, 2008) on mentees' learning. In this vein one would consider mentoring dialogues as formative feedback that mentees would use to effectively improve their teaching practice.

In Ghana teaching is situated in a diverse socio-cultural milieu as there is mobility of students across the unitary country. Hence classes comprise a mixture of students with diverse backgrounds. Teacher trainees who find themselves practising under mentors would, therefore, construct different views about their mentors. In this regard the guidelines for student internship of University of Education, Winneba (UEW) requires of mentors to be receptive to new ideas and show genuine interest in the interns (CETDAR, 2009). Also mentors are expected to be team players who would consider the trainees assigned to them as members of the team. UEW has a reciprocal obligation to facilitate the training programmes for mentors and trainees by briefing them on the university's expectations.

Background

Teacher trainees in an initial teacher education are often naïve and quite confused about what their training is about. Some of the characteristics that have been known to have shaped mentoring are the duration and frequency of mentoring (Finkelstein, Allen, & Rhoton, 2003). Traditional models of teacher education have dwelt on short periods of teaching practice with university lecturers as assessors rather than mentors. Traditionally, the word teaching practice has been used to represent teacher-trainees' practicum. The word practice has multiple uses in relation to usage for learning teaching (Lampert, 2010). In a way, Lampert (2010) intimates that the use of practice to mean the opposite of theory is not very useful when discussing professional education. Current trends of teacher education is characterised by the mentorship models (Koc, 2012; Hobson, Maxwell, Stevens, Doyle, & Malderez, 2015; Liu, 2014). Koc (2012) combines two theoretical concepts, which are Kram's mentor role theory and, Wang and Odell's mentor approach theory. On their part, Hobson et al. (2015) dwelt on the reach, strengths and limitations of school-based mentoring. Liu (2014) used inductive content analysis approach to identify critical mentoring skills of mentors.

As teaching practice has been known in the literature (Caires & Almeida, 2005) to have great impact on the personal and socio-professional development of teacher-trainees, the current study focuses on: (i) the quality of learning experiences and, (ii) perceptions of mentors' roles held by teacher-trainees. In order to obtain a clear understanding of the trainees' experiences and perceptions of their mentors, this study served a self-devised questionnaire on the trainees to extract their experiences.

Methodology and Methods

Ghana was a British colony that inherited the British type of educational system and their teacher training concept. Teacher training programmes in Ghana hitherto has tended to focus on equipping the trainees with academic knowledge, with little emphasis on pedagogical training.

About 95 % of students entering the University of Education, Winneba, have come directly from the senior high schools at the ages of 18 or 19 years and have never worked. Thus, for the majority of the interns the desire to acquire teaching skills so as to be employable is key to their teacher education. The students at the end of their on-campus teaching practice look forward eagerly to working with mentors in the schools of practice as interns so as to have a feel of the art of teaching. This expectation greatly urges the interns on to visit their schools of practice well ahead of re-opening so as to acquaint themselves with their mentors.

This study, therefore, sought to add to the literature by determining types of mentors perceived by interns in their bid to acquire strategic directions for becoming well-trained teachers. The

study also examined the types of support that mentors gave the mentees and the relevance of the support to the mentees' professional teacher development.

Internship programme in the University of Education, Winneba

The current internship programme offered by the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) is of one semester duration. A study carried out by Stronge (2007) revealed that the 'teachers' formal education training appears strongly correlated to their supervisory ratings' (p. 6). This presupposes that University of Education, Winneba needs to compensate for the short internship period with a stronger supervisory role by the mentors. In an earlier article (Author, 2005) it was noted that mentoring was relatively new to UEW and the Ghanaian teacher education system.

Objectives of the SIP

The school internship programme (SIP) of the University of Education, Winneba has the objectives of providing opportunities for interns to apply and practice the principle of teaching and learning in the classroom setting (CETDAR, 2009). Hence, the students take up their internships in senior high schools in the country in order to familiarise themselves with the practices, regulations and routines of school procedures.

Evaluation of the Intern

Each intern is given formative as well as summative assessments by the mentor, the university supervisor and the head of the school of practice. The various assessment forms have been compiled into a booklet titled Intern Record Book. The formative assessment comments are made on forms IRB 5 (reflection log form used by the mentor to record the intern's non-teaching activities), IRB 6 (used by the mentor to record intern's academic performance), and IRB 7 (used by head of institution of practice to evaluate intern's general performance in school activities). The summative assessments are made with form IRB 3 (used by both university supervisor and mentor to evaluate intern's teaching). Elsewhere mentors are expected to submit a written report on each mentee (Liu, 2014) but this not the case for the SIP as organised by UEW.

The UEW Model for teaching practice

The University of Education, Winneba model of teaching practice is an apprenticeship or a mentorship model. The university's model may be classified into three stages of Inputs, Processes and Outputs (Figure 1).

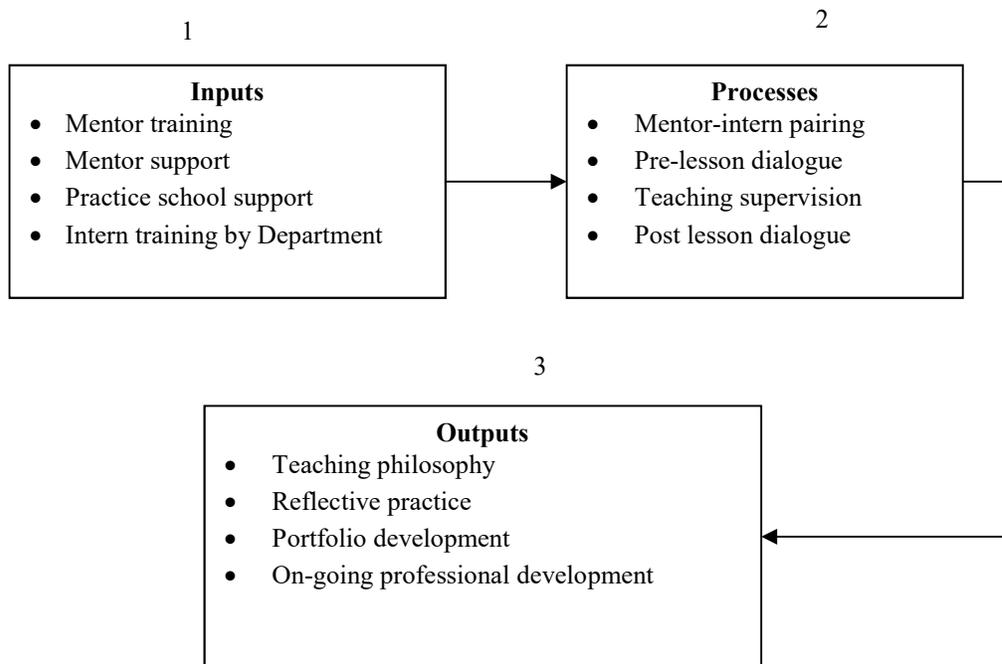


Figure 1: UEW three-dimensional model for students' internship

Inputs

Mentor training: Each year authorities at the Centre for Teacher Development and Acton Research (CETDAR) of the University write to schools to request their participation in the internship by hosting UEW interns. The schools are also to indicate whether they have subject specialists and experienced teachers who are willing to serve as mentors to the interns. A time is arranged for CETDAR officials to bring identified mentors together for training at a one-day workshop. The workshops are organised on regional basis throughout the country and financed by the university (CETDAR, 2009).

Mentor support: The mentors are supported by the university through payments of stipends that serve as an extra income for them. Also mentors may request teaching materials from the university through the mentees for use, though the non-perishables are returned to the university after use.

Practice School support: Each intern is supported by their school of practice (mentors and teachers in the schools) to learn classroom activities such as observation of teaching, control of large classes, handling of mixed ability classes and independent teaching. The interns are also engaged in co-curricular activities such as staff meeting, supervision of students.

Intern training by Department: The role of each academic department is to organise a one-semester On-Campus teaching practice for their students as a prelude to the School Internship Programme (CETDAR, 2009). Some of the activities carried out during the On-Campus teaching practice include developing lesson plans from subject area syllabuses, portfolio development and practice of peer teaching. The intending interns also learn how to develop personal philosophies for effective teaching. This is to allow for the development of the intern's pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Kind (2009) in a study noted that when PCK becomes explicit in teacher education process then it is bound to help trainees in teaching.

Processes

Mentor-intern pairing: In the schools of practice the heads of academic departments have been briefed by CETDAR that interns should be allocated to mentors who are trained and also in the subject area of the intern. Trained mentors from nearby schools may be used. The intern may teach under the class teacher who is not a mentor but a mentor will have to observe and assess the intern. The mentors ensure that the intern prepares lesson notes ahead of lessons and gather appropriate lesson materials. The mentors also hold both pre-lesson and post-lesson observation conferences with intern to advise on appropriate teaching methodology.

Pre-lesson dialogues: A mentor who is scheduled to evaluate an intern's teaching will have to arrive about 20 minutes to teaching in order to inspect the intern's lesson notes and teaching and learning materials and make comments on them. The intern is then given the opportunity to ask questions for clarification of the comments and also to give reasons why a particular approach to teaching has been adopted. When a consensus is reached they move into the classroom for the intern's teaching to be observed. At this stage form IRB 5 is completed with issues concerning the reflection, and suggestions that had been made and the consensus reached.

Teaching supervision: Each time an intern's teaching is supervised the form IRB 3 is used to evaluate the teaching. At this stage summative assessment is done and marks awarded to the intern.

Post lesson dialogue: A mentor should have a post-lesson dialogue with the intern who is informed about how their teaching went and shown some of the good performances exhibited while teaching. The mentor also advises the intern about how to improve aspects of teaching that need improvement. The intern is allowed to ask questions for clarification or allowed to justify some of the actions taken during teaching.

Outputs

Teaching philosophy: Each intern, at the beginning of the SIP, is to develop and write down a teaching philosophy statement, which would indicate their conceptualisation of teaching and learning. The intern is expected to put the philosophy into practice during teaching. The mentor enquires about the teaching philosophy of the intern and observes its actual practice. The mentor then gives positive comment to enable the intern improve upon the teaching philosophy for further execution throughout the internship period.

Reflective practice: The interns are being trained to become reflective teachers who would develop skills of reflective thinking. Dewey has, as far back as the year 1933 defined reflective thinking as quoted in Afshar and Farahani (2015) as 'an active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that supports it and the conclusion to which it tends' (p. 616). In another instance, Schon (1983) considers reflection as made up of two parts: thinking about an activity and performing the activity (reflection-in-action) and then secondly when one has finished an action and analyses the action for improvement (reflection-on-action). The interns of UEW are required to develop both reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action in the teaching-learning process. In so doing they would explore different strategies to improve their teaching as well as the learning of their students.

Portfolio development: Development of teaching portfolio is a key aspect of the internship. The interns are to record their accomplishments during their teaching practice. It thus goes beyond mere accumulation of teaching and learning materials used to aid teaching and learning. According to Seldin (1997) teaching portfolios comprise a collection of selected information obtained from the teaching activities and a proven evidence of their effectiveness in the teaching-learning process. Thus, interns are taught to write on each teaching and learning strategies they adopt as well as document occurrences during teaching.

On-going professional development: The guidelines for the SIP require that the mentors are committed to interns and their learning to become professional teachers. Thus, mentors are given performance indicators, for example listening and responding to the intern's needs and anxieties; indicating the intern's strengths and weaknesses and use them to ensure professional growth of the intern (CETDAR, 2009).

Data Collection Procedure

The specific research aims of this study were to:

- (1) map out the key aspects of mentors' supervisory behaviours as seen by mentees during mentoring dialogues in an internship programme.
- (2) explore empirically a three-dimensional model for describing a mentorship model of teacher production as organised by the University of Education, Winneba.

Research Design

A three-stage design, depicting inputs, processes and outputs, (as shown in Figure 1), was used to collect data, through a questionnaire and a focus group interview, on interns' perspectives of their mentors.

Research Questions

The two research questions explored to determine the impressions of interns about their relationship with their mentors were:

- What are the key aspects of mentor teachers' supervisory behaviour as seen by mentees during mentoring dialogues?
- What type of mentors did interns perceive their mentors to be while on the school internship programme?

Population of the Study

The research involved all 120 students in the Faculty of Science Education who went on school internship and returned for the post-internship programme in the university. The interns were allocated to 100 mentors in schools across the country.

Research Instruments

Two research instruments, comprising a questionnaire and a focus group interview were used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was partly open-ended and partly close ended and was completed by all 120 interns who taught science in the schools during the first semester of the 2016 /2017 academic year.

A focus group interview with five consenting interns was conducted. The aim was to engage mentees (interns) on how the mentorship model proposed by CETDAR worked for them.

Results

The interns expressed diverse views about their life in the schools of practice and made some suggestions as to how to improve upon the internship programme. The responses of the interns (mentees) to the questionnaire items and the focus group interviews have been analysed in terms of number of interns at each response and summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Responses of interns to items on questionnaire (n = 120)

Aspect of Item	Mentees' Responses					
Mentor's status	Trained	82	Not trained	18		
Mentor and Mentee pairing	Self	0	CETDAR	0	Internship School	120
Mentor absent	Always	73	Sometimes	17	Not at all	30
Pre-lesson dialogues	Once	112	Twice	6	More than twice	2
Pre-lesson dialogue duration	10 min	90	15 min	2		
Post-lesson dialogue	Once	113	Twice	3	More than twice	4
Post lesson dialogue duration	10 min	86	15 min	10	None	14
Support from Mentor	Always	18	Sometimes	20	Not at all	82

Data Source: Fieldwork 2016

From Table 1, it is observed that majority of the interns 82 indicated that their mentors were trained by CETDAR to undertake their mentoring role. Then all 120 interns indicated that they were given mentors by the authorities of their schools of practice. Majority of the interns (112) indicated they had only one pre-lesson dialogue while pre-lesson dialogues were lasting between 10 and 15 minutes. The situation was similar for post-lesson dialogues. Only 18 interns indicated that they had support from their mentors always. The description of the support activities indicated by the interns has been classified into three themes and presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Types of support received by Interns

Themes	Description
Pre-lesson delivery Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of lesson with curriculum • Following lesson plan format of GES • Adapting lesson to level of students • Supplying relevant teaching and learning materials • Using appropriate teaching and learning materials • Directed choice of topic for each lesson
Lesson delivery Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested appropriate set induction • Motivated use of knowledge of students' characteristics • Ensured involvement of students in lessons • Encouraged giving appropriate feedback to students' answers
Post-lesson delivery Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioned and suggested ways for lessons closure and post-lesson reflections • Suggested ways for management of class • Explained distinction between task oriented and ego-oriented feedback

Data Source: Fieldwork 2016

The three types of support were Pre-Lesson delivery support, Lesson delivery support and Post-lesson delivery support. From Table 2 it is observed that the pre-lesson support centred on activities that the interns needed to do before the pre-lesson dialogues. The mentors gave suggestions to interns on how to prepare their lesson notes in order to align them with the curriculum of the Ghana Education Service (GES). The interns were also advised to consider the level of the students they were going to teach while preparing their lesson notes. This is due to the fact that students in typical Ghanaian senior high schools come from diverse academic backgrounds. Often rural schools lack the full complement of teachers and children from such schools lag academically behind their counterparts from urban schools. Mentors advised interns on the suitability of teaching and learning materials and their appropriate use.

The support that the interns received during lesson delivery centred on set induction, which is how they introduced the lesson; class management and involvement of their students in the lesson. They were also mentored on how to use students' characteristics such as their background knowledge and use of appropriate feedback to encourage more responses from students. After lessons support centred on discussions about class management and the written feedback on students' marked exercises. The interns who had pre- and post-lesson dialogues with their mentors indicated that they enjoyed the reflective moments. Their mentors asked them to think back on the lessons they presented and tell what went wrong and/or right and why. These sessions, as gathered from the focus group interviews were exciting moments as interns recalled their frustrations with aspects of their teaching. The interns narrated how they used some of their initial errors and experiences in a reflective way to improve subsequent lessons. For example, one intern narrated how a question posed by a student took him off his guard and he could not answer in a meaningful manner. Subsequently, he revised the topic and the following day informed the class he had discovered something new about the topic. Now, his answer appeared acceptable to his students.

During the post-lesson dialogue the interns indicated they discussed lesson closure and communication of the next lesson activities to students. The mentor also questioned students on why they deemed fit some of the class management strategies they used.

The interns gave their impressions about their mentors and three categories of mentors were identified from their responses. There are absentee mentors, minimal caregiver mentors and committed caregiver mentors. The characteristics of mentors have been presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Types of mentors and their characteristics as given by interns

Type of mentor	Mentor characteristics
Absentee mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appear overwhelmed with teaching workload • Considers Intern as replacement teacher • Leaves class entirely to Intern • Gives little or no mentoring to Intern • Does no pre and post lesson dialogues • Occasionally sits in class of Intern to assess and award marks for teaching
Minimal caregiver mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissatisfied with University remunerations for mentoring • Leaves class entirely to Intern • Occasionally finds out how Intern is faring with the class • Does no pre and post lesson dialogues • Occasionally sits in class of Intern to assess and award marks
Committed caregiver mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sees Intern as an apprentice • Goes to every class with Intern • Draws Intern’s attention to salient points in teaching and class management • Holds pre and post lesson dialogue with Intern • Provides opportunity for Intern to teach under supervision • Supervises Intern to design assessment tasks • Supervises Intern to prepare marking scheme and mark class exercises

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Absentee caregiver mentors

From the characteristics given by the interns this category of mentors handed over their classes completely to the interns. This category of mentors appeared to be overloaded with work and sought relief in off-loading some to the interns. It is the experience of this author that some schools apply to the university each year for an allocation of interns as a stop-gap for teacher shortage. The absentee caregiver mentor does not have pre- and post-lesson dialogues with their mentees but occasionally comes in to observe their teaching and award marks.

Minimal caregiver mentors

This was the category of mentors that was partly absent while occasionally came to see the mentees. They gave minimum care by assisting with getting teaching and learning materials for the lessons. These are mentors who have issues with the university authorities about payment of their remunerations. They would not have pre- and post-lesson dialogues with interns but supervise their teaching to award marks.

Committed caregiver mentors

These are mentors who are committed to helping the interns to acquire professional skills. They maintain their classes but accept the interns as apprentices to understudy them. Thus, the interns accompany them to all classes, observe and write down notes for discussion with the mentors. The interns learn from their teaching styles and class management strategies. They allocate times

to interns to teach under their supervision. The mentor observes pre- and post-lesson dialogues with the interns regularly.

Challenges with Students' Internship Programme (SIP)

The interns indicated the following challenges with the SIP during the focus group:

- Most mentors handed over their classes to the interns and were absent most of the time from classes.
- Few mentors were present with interns in class but supervised their teaching and advised only on one or two occasions.
- Some mentors adopted lukewarm attitude to mentoring students because the university did not remunerate them sufficiently and early enough.
- All the interns who took part in the focus group interview registered their displeasure at the arrangement that the University supervisor supervised them only once.

Some suggested Solutions to Challenges

The following suggestions made by the interns may help to minimise the difficulties expressed by them:

- The University outfit in charge of SIP, which is CETDAR, should solicit for partner schools which should be educated on the mentoring model of teacher education. This is because the interns felt their career trajectories depended on experiential learning.
- CETDAR should find out the required number of mentors in each partner school and ensure they are trained ahead of the SIP to avoid pairing some interns with untrained mentors.
- Partner schools should be educated by CETDAR on the rationale of the SIP as a career path that provides opportunities for interns to understudy experienced teachers but not as stop gaps to satisfy the manpower requirements.
- UEW, after placing interns in the schools of practice should initiate a payment processes that would ensure prompt payment of s.
- The internet pervasiveness in Ghana should enable the university supervisors to use smart technologies communicate with interns.

Discussions

The results of this study corroborate those results obtained elsewhere that post-interns always identify both positive and negative features of mentorship (Ralph & Walker, 2014). In this study, at one extreme end was absentee mentors who were absent all the time and offered no mentoring advice to interns and at the other extreme end were committed caregiver mentors who were welcoming and stayed with interns all the time. In-between the two extremes were the less committed minimal caregiver mentors who gave minimal care to interns. It would be noted that absence of mentors during the SIP implies absence of mentoring dialogues and hence absence of feedback to mentees. This finding is in contrast to results emerging from Leask and Moor (2005) who found that mentors were always ready to give feedback on mentees' activities. The feedback received by mentees enabled them to identify the quality of their pupils' learning. Another study (Sempowicz & Hudson, 2011) that analysed mentoring dialogues found that management of students' classroom behaviours was the most important input made by mentees. Thus, if mentoring dialogues are not held conscientiously then mentees are bound to miss out on the opportunity of acquiring the professional skills of managing their students' behaviours when they start their professional career of teaching. The findings of the current study also corroborate

those from studies carried out in Taiwan where it was observed that person-oriented support was hardly given by some mentors (Liu, 2014). The lack of emotional support for mentees is likely to place them in a position as to shy away from empathising with students they will teach. The quality and usefulness of emotional support has emerged in other studies where mentees have cherished emotional support (Hennissen, Crasborn, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2011). Similarly, Divine et al. (2013) found that Irish construct of good teaching embraces passion for those who are taught. For mentees in the current study who received mentoring from *committed caregiver mentors* they indicated three categories of support: pre-lesson delivery support, lesson delivery support and post-lesson delivery support. The three categories of support are the goals of the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) in the SIP through university-school partnership. UEW has a vision of producing competent professional teachers who would apply professionalism to their practice (CETDAR, 2009). Impliedly, the absentee caregiver mentors are not helping UEW to achieve the goals of SIP. Another aspect of this study which is of concern is the short duration of the mentoring dialogues. The interns stand to benefit from mentoring dialogues, which are in effect formative feedback only if they are properly structured to cater for the interns' professional development. The dialogues sessions should last long enough for interns to internalise the concepts of professionalism in teaching. This is in line with the thinking of Shute (2008) who noted that feedback strategies greatly affect the effectiveness of the development of the learner.

Conclusion

There was a small number of interns who were full of praise for their mentors, stating that their mentors had a number of pre-lesson and post-lesson observation dialogues with them. This latter group of mentors has been described in this study as *committed caregivers*. The two other types of mentors identified in this study were *minimal caregiver mentors* who were dissatisfied with remunerations associated with supervision of interns and *absentee caregiver mentors* who considered the interns as substitute teachers to whom they handed some of their classes to reduce their teaching loads. In order to improve upon the organisation of the School Internship Programme (SIP) and to enhance interns' professional development, institutions training teachers have to forge partnerships with the schools. This should be done in such a way as to allow the schools to embrace the mentorship model of teacher production.

Conflict of Interest

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