Teacher Education in Ghana: A Contemporary Synopsis and Matters Arising

Kwame Bediako Asare¹ and Seth Kofi Nti¹

Abstract
In an era when quality education is a concern for education-focused international organizations and dominates national debates, teacher quality must equally be a priority. The central role of the teacher requires that teacher education must be of the highest quality toward achieving any educational agenda. This article provides a synopsis and adds to the currency of contemporary teacher education efforts in Ghana. It presents key teacher training institutions in Ghana and highlights the structure of teacher preparation, type of teacher training pursued, and pathways to teacher development in Ghana. It examines how the question of approaches teacher educators use in training student-teachers can or cannot lead to the development of critical thinking skills, which are vital to promoting teacher effectiveness. We advocate that universities, colleges, Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service, and all bodies involved in teacher education in Ghana join forces to chart new content and, emphatically, approaches to teaching teachers-in-training that can promote critical thinking skills in teachers. With the increased private sector participation, we initiate a debate as to the need to ensure uniformity in teacher quality standards in Ghana.

Keywords
critical thinking, education, effectiveness, quality education, reflection, teacher education, pathways to teacher education, teaching

The importance of education cannot be overemphasized. Education lays the foundation for the development of the human resource of every nation. It is worth remembering that “A sound education structure leads to an enlightened society and manpower development, which is able to lead a crusade for social transformation and economic progress” (Asare, 2011, p. 43). The developed human is able to champion societal advancement by applying skills learned to better the lot of humans. Central to the educational enterprise is the teacher. The role of the teacher is so crucial that no nation can afford to ignore it. This is because, “Education is a condition for development and the teacher is the ultimate definer of its reality” (Adegoke, 2003, p. 5).

Ghana has over the years put forth efforts to train and develop teachers to form the bedrock of training the manpower needs of the country. The Presidential Committee on Education (2002), the latest committee to work on education reforms in Ghana, recommended a critical review and approach to making teacher education relevant to the development of the country. Reiterating what teacher education must encapsulate, Adegoke (2003) and Benneh (2006) indicated that the mission of Ghana’s teacher education is to provide a comprehensive teacher education program through pre- and in-service training that would produce competent, committed, and dedicated teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning. How this mission can be achieved is explored in the following section.

Achieving Quality Education
K. Asare (2009) has indicated that a very important element in the process of education is the interactions that go on between the teacher and the learners. He added that through such interactive processes, education quality is achieved. McFarlane (2011) put it that “there should be a recognition that teachers and the methods they apply to impart knowledge in today’s [sic] . . . global economy is vital in defining and creating quality learners” (p. 15). On this premise, it behooves all involved in teacher education efforts to pay particular attention to how the teaching and learning process must go on to facilitate students’ learning.

¹Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

Corresponding Author:
Kwame Bediako Asare, University of Cape Coast, PMB, University Post Office, Cape Coast, Ghana.
Email: asbi2002@yahoo.co.uk
It is not uncommon to hear people assert that teachers teach the way they were taught to become teachers. To change such an attitude and perception would mean that there should be a reconsideration of what teacher education must entail. Interestingly, in a LinkedIn.com online discussion forum on teacher training and education in April 2013, Sriparna Tamhane of Azim Premji University, India, posed the question “If you could re-do teacher prep-program what would you like it to include to prepare you for real world teaching?” Dr. Vincent Andrew indicated that it must include dialogue about best practices that aim to improve students’ learning. Glynn Kirkham indicated that teacher training should use a competency-based approach that recognizes teaching as interplay of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to raise learning standards. To Josephine Molyneux, teachers must encourage and welcome colleagues to observe their lessons and discuss what their observations have been. This would promote reflective practice of teaching as teachers become continuous learners themselves. Kwame Asare added that “The real threat to learning is how teaching is done.” He indicated that teachers must be taught to engage learners in such a way that would make the learners own and make sense of activities to promote learning (http://www.linkedin.com/groupItem?view=&gid=2343792&item=231685847&type=member&commentID=137813502&trk=hb_ntf_LIKED_GROUP_DISCUSSION_COMMENT YOU_CREATED&commentID=137813502).

With all of the above issues about teacher preparation and development programs being expressed, not from only one country, the question that arises is what is the state of teacher education in Ghana? How can Ghana benefit from teacher education programs that promote student learning and raise education quality? This article outlines the contemporary state of teacher preparation drives in Ghana. In particular, it presents the current teacher training institutions in Ghana, the structure of teacher preparation in Ghana, and the types of teacher training being pursued. Also, it highlights the pathways to teacher education practiced in Ghana, the initial teacher education curricula, and the approaches to teaching used by teacher educators in the training programs.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher education efforts in Ghana date back to pre-independence (Antwi, 1992). European merchants helped in the training of people to become teachers so that they could help with interpretation to facilitate their businesses (Antwi, 1992; McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975) in the Gold Coast (now Ghana). According to these sources, with missionary activity, teacher preparation was to support the spread of the gospel. So missionaries trained teachers to be catechists. Teachers were therefore trained to do as their European traders or missionary masters wanted. The teachers became conformists and subsequently taught their students to conform to what they taught. The authors noted that Nationalist governments in Ghana have also pursued teacher education efforts in an attempt to improve education quality.

Things change and thus communities change to respond to the needs of the society. As society changes and therefore is dynamic, so teacher education must be dynamic to enable teachers to be trained to teach students to become useful individuals who can fit and function well in the society. For example, every education reform program requires a teacher education approach that would prepare the teachers to spearhead the implementation of the tenets of such a reform package. In the 21st century Ghana, what is Ghana doing to train teachers to teach students to become useful citizens who can fit and function well in the society and also help with the developmental efforts of the country? What are the current teacher training institutions in Ghana? What pathways to teacher preparation and development are adopted in Ghana? What approach do teacher educators use in teacher education programs? These issues require interrogation. They thus form the basis for this article.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article was to identify contemporary trends in teacher education in Ghana. In particular, the purpose was to present the current structure of teacher education as well as the various institutions involved in teacher education in Ghana. The authors also highlight the pathways to teacher education in Ghana, and based on contemporary global trends, offer some insights into how Ghana can promote analytical and critical thinking skills in teacher education drives.

Method

With reference to the importance of archival materials (Cozby & Bates, 2012; Creswell, 2014), we undertook literature search and document analysis of information on teacher education in Ghana. Documented sources were examined to present the current state of teacher education drives in Ghana in this article. In line with Creswell’s suggestion that observations are vital for acquiring firsthand information that enriches research works, we presented observations made from the documented sources under various themes. Where necessary, we offered a critique on how authorities and policy makers can reconsider and reorganize what is being done to improve on teacher preparation and development efforts in Ghana. The rest of the article is devoted to presenting views on the state of teacher education in Ghana.

Teacher Training Institutions in Ghana

According to the Institute of Education (2013), initial teacher education preparation (Diploma in Basic Education [DBE]) is offered in 38 public and 3 private colleges of education (CoE) in Ghana. Although the colleges run the DBE
programs, examinations are conducted by the University of Cape Coast’s Institute of Education. Apart from the CoE, the University of Cape Coast, through the various departments under the Faculty of Education, offers bachelor’s degree programs to teachers to teach at both basic schools (Grades K-9) and high schools (Grades 10-12). In addition, the University of Education, Winneba, trains teachers for pre-tertiary schools (Grades K-12) through its departments, schools, and faculties. Aside these teacher training institutions, it is worth mentioning that some graduates from other universities and tertiary institutions also enter the classroom as non-professional teachers (Anamuah-Mensah & Benneh, n.d.).

Structure of Teacher Preparation in Ghana

Anamuah-Mensah and Benneh (n.d.) reported that at present, Ghana runs the following pre-service teacher education programs:

- Three-year DBE (for basic school—kindergarten, primary, and junior high schoolteachers). These teachers are prepared in the CoE.
- Two-year post-DBE (for basic schoolteachers). These teachers are trained either in the University of Cape Coast or the University of Education, Winneba, for teachers who already possess the DBE.
- Four-year bachelor’s degree (for first and second cycle schools—that is, Grades K-12). These are graduates from the University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba.
- Master’s degree (for second cycle schools and CoE). These also are graduates from the University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba.
- Two-year DBE (sandwich) program for teachers who already possess initial professional teacher’s Certificate “A” 3-Year post-secondary qualification. This is offered through the CoE by the University of Cape Coast.
- Four-year (distance education) Untrained Teacher’s Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) for practicing teachers who have not received initial professional teacher training (non-professional teachers). It is offered in the CoE in partnership with the TED of the Ghana Education Service as an ad hoc measure to increase teacher numbers to handle basic schools especially in rural communities.
- Three-year (distance education) Certificate “A” program for practicing (unprofessional) teachers who were on the UTDBE program but could not meet all the requirements for the award of the UTDBE certificate. These teachers too have not received initial professional teacher training. This program is also offered in the CoE in partnership with the TED of the Ghana Education Service as an interim measure to increase teacher numbers to handle basic schools in rural communities.

Through these programs, Anamuah-Mensah and Benneh (n.d.) pointed out that teachers are prepared for first cycle schools (nursery, kindergarten, primary and junior high schools), second cycle schools (senior high, vocational and technical schools), and CoE (initial teacher training institutions). In addition to the traditional, residential pre-service programs presented above, other modes to teacher development exist. These include the following: in-service programs meant to improve qualifications of serving teachers (as in the UTDBE for untrained teachers and sandwich DBE for teachers who have initial teacher’s Certificate “A”); in-service training at school, cluster, and district levels, to improve skills, knowledge, and competences of teachers to improve their teaching methodology and effectiveness in the performance of their duties in general; and distance education programs to ensure continuous, lifelong teacher education process. This is non-residential with pre-planned face-to-face sessions at designated centers. Students are also given distance learning materials consisting of printed self-study texts (Anamuah-Mensah & Benneh, n.d.).

Types of Teacher Training

Ghana has a uniform teacher training approach. Anamuah-Mensah and Benneh (n.d.) stated that teacher training has a national focus although colleges are located in all regions of Ghana. These authors added that typical to Ghana’s teacher education drives, teacher training utilizes the generalist and subject-training approaches; generalist teachers for KG and Primary 1–6; specialist teachers for Junior High Schools (JHS) and Senior High Schools (SHS); distance learning/sandwich modes and traditional residential training in CoE; as well as school attachment program or internship.

Pathways to Teacher Education in Ghana

From the preceding section on types of teacher training pursued in Ghana, it is clear that teacher education travels different paths in Ghana. Anamuah-Mensah and Benneh (n.d.) illustrated the pathways to teacher education preparation and development in Ghana as shown in Table 1 below. At the time of Anamuah-Mensah and Benneh’s presentation, there were 38 teacher training colleges in Ghana, two universities involved in teacher education programs, and various in-service training measures. Different modes were adopted for rolling out teacher training programs. These included the traditional residential mode, distance education, sandwich (similar to summer sessions where teachers receive training during vacation periods), and school attachment modes. Upon graduation, teachers received varying certificates and diplomas based on their program choice. Table 1 depicts the different pathways, where programs were held, who the implementing agencies were, how long it took to complete the program, the structure and mode adopted, and the specific certificate or qualification received upon successful completion.
In the light of current dispensations in teacher education in Ghana, the Anamuah-Mensah and Benneh’s chart needs to be modified. Below, we present a reconstructed matrix of teacher preparation and development drives in Ghana as of the year 2013. Table 2 gives the details.

In contrast to Table 1, Table 2 indicates that there are presently 41 (38 public and 3 private) CoEs (i.e., initial teacher training institutions) in Ghana. There are three universities engaged in teacher education efforts although some graduates from other universities teach in nursery, kindergarten, primary, junior high, and senior high schools. There are three private CoE offering regular DBE to senior high school graduates, one other private college (Jackson Educational Complex [JEC]), and one university college offering DBE to non-degree holders and Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) to bachelor’s degree holders. This implies that there is now increased, though gradual, private sector involvement in teacher education efforts in Ghana.

Of particular mention is JEC. This institution, affiliated to the University of Education, Winneba, uses the distance mode of delivery and students are given modules based on the curriculum of the CoEs. In addition, they organize special entrance examination (SEE) for candidates who do not meet the requirements stipulated by the TED of the Ghana Education Service for the DBE.

Furthermore, as of 2013, Ghana did not operate a teacher licensing scheme. This implies that once a teacher does not engage in any professional misconduct, he or she can be a teacher until retirement. The implication of lack of teacher licensure and renewal for teacher quality in Ghana must be a subject of research interest for educational practitioners and researchers. For example, what reasons make it necessary for Ghana not to pursue teacher licensing scheme now? What modalities need to be pursued? What reasons make it imperative and also urgent for Ghana to adopt teacher licensing? Answers to questions such as these must be sought.

Curricula

Writing on capacity building for lead teacher training institutions in Ghana, Adegoke (2003) indicated that the “Basic principles underlying the nature of the Basic Teacher education curriculum include demand, integration of theory and practice, school/classroom focus, competency and process assessment” (p. 8). Adegoke and the Institute of Education (2005) indicated that the curricula designed for the training of teachers for first cycle schools in Ghana have the following components:

i. Foundation academic studies consisting of the subjects taught at the first cycle level;
ii. Specialized personal development studies covering communication and study skills as well as socio-economic issues that underlie national development;
iii. Educational studies focusing on the learner in the context of the school situation and linked with the teaching–learning process and assessment;
iv. Curriculum studies and methodology dealing with the study of the content of basic school subjects;
v. Practical training made up of school visits, school attachments, on-campus practice teaching, design and production of teaching and learning materials, and external school-based practice teaching lasting one academic year.
Asare and Nti

Methods of Teaching Subject Content

Writing on Ghana, Akyeampong (2003) reflected on a number of approaches used in teaching the contents of the various subjects. He mentioned (a) transmission of knowledge—where “tutors lectured their students” (p. 51), (b) student-centered teaching— whereby “students engaged in discussions and debates on topical issues, with tutors acting as facilitators” (p. 51), and (c) question and answer approach—in which case, “tutors mainly asked questions and used students’ answers to further develop the lesson” (p. 52). Other methods tutors use in teaching trainee teachers are discovery learning process, brainstorming method, individualized method, project method, and problem solving method. In addition, tutors used role-play and demonstrations (simulation methods), educational visits and field experiences, and deductive and inductive methods in their teaching (Ghana Education Service, TED, 2004). The students are also taught by means of the following methods: expository teaching process, drills, teacher-led discussion, and case studies.

Despite the array of methods of teaching used by the tutors in a variety of ways, it has been found that “the dominant pedagogical stance remains one where trainees are largely regarded as ‘empty vessels,’ with little knowledge or experience of teaching” (Lewin & Stuart, 2003, p. 171).

Table 2. A Matrix Showing Current Pathways to Teacher Preparation and Development in Ghana.

| Pathways                           | Location/Implementing | Duration | Structure                | Mode                        | Qualification earned/certificate awarded |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Pre-service or initial teacher     | 41 CoE (38 public and 3 private) | 3 years  | IN–IN–OUT                | Traditional/DE/school        | DBE                                      |
| education                          | JEC                   |          | DE attachment             |                             |                                           |
|                                    | University           | 4 years  | IN–IN–IN–OUT              | Traditional/DE/sandwich      | BEd                                      |
|                                    | authorities          |          | DE                        |                             | PGDE/certificate in education            |
|                                    | CUCG                 | 1 year   | Sandwich                  | Traditional/face-to-face     | Diploma in education                    |
|                                    | VVU                  | 3 years  | Sandwich                  | Traditional/Sandwich        | BEd                                      |
| In-service Upgrading               | Schools? DEOs        | NA       | NA                       | NA                          | Teaching license?                        |
| In-service                        | UEW University       | 4 years  | IN–IN–IN–OUT              | Traditional/DE              | DBE/BEd                                  |
| upgrading                          | authorities          |          | (one semester practicum)  |                             |                                           |
|                                    | UCC University       | 2 years  | IN–IN–IN–OUT              | Traditional/DE/sandwich      | BEd                                      |
|                                    | authorities          | 3 years  | IN–IN–Post-Diploma        | Traditional/face-to-face     | BEd                                      |
|                                    |                      | 2 years  | OUT–OUT–OUT Sandwich      | Traditional/face-to-face     | DBE                                      |
|                                    |                      | 4 years  | for DBE holders           |                             | UTDBE                                    |
|                                    |                      |          | Sandwich for non-professional serving teachers |   |                                           |
|                                    |                      |          | (centers at selected CoE across Ghana) | |                                           |
| In-service cluster                 | School or cluster    | Variable | Variable                  | Variable                    | Teaching license?                        |
|                                   | based GES            |          |                          |                             |                                           |
| In-service                         | Individual           | Lifelong | Variable                  | Variable                    | No certificate or certificate of attendance |
| Lifelong learning, thinking, and   | Individual           | Lifelong | Variable                  | Variable                    | NA                                       |
| rethinking practice                |                      |          |                          |                             |                                           |

Note. CoE = Colleges of Education; JEC = Jackson Educational Complex; NCTE = National Council for Tertiary Education; GES = Ghana Education Service; TED = Teacher Education Division; IN–IN–OUT = 2 years on campus and 1-year practicum; DE = Distance Education; DBE = Diploma in Basic Education; UCC = University of Cape Coast; UEW = University of Education, Winneba; CUCG = Catholic University College of Ghana; VVU = Valley View University; IN–IN–IN–OUT = 3 years on campus and 1-year practicum; BEd = Bachelor of Education; PGDE = Post-Graduate Diploma in Education; DEOs = District Education Offices; NA = not applicable; UTDBE = Untrained Teacher’s Diploma in Basic Education.
These authors added that the trainees are seen as people who “need prescriptive advice and guidance from lecturers about how to teach, whether or not the prescriptions appear to suit the learning contexts in the schools where trainees work or the demands of new curricula” (p. 171). We have not come across any literature that suggest(s) that what Lewin and Stuart (2003) pointed out has changed. We have used the following session to discuss some observations that in our estimation have serious implications for quality teacher education in Ghana. We accentuate here that if the observations are not critically looked at, they can derail any efforts put forth and erode any gains made at achieving and or enhancing teacher quality and the overall education quality in Ghana.

**Discussion**

In the light of the above observations, we advocate that teacher preparation and development in Ghana are reconsidered and possibly modified. Such a reconsideration and modification, it is hoped, would increase the relevance of teachers and teacher education in Ghana’s developmental efforts. We anticipate that the Committee set up by the Professional Board of the Institute of Education to synchronize all basic education programs in Ghana would partner with other institutions, the TED of the Ghana Education Service, and all departments and agencies involved in teacher activities and teacher education to work on and propose content and, germane to this article, approaches to teaching that can promote critical thinking skills and reflective practice in teachers. Teachers trained to be critical in their thinking and practice can be competitive and promote education quality in 21st century Ghana.

Or is it the case in Ghana that, as Ahmed and Aziz (2012) argued, the blend of scientific and technological advancements has opened maiden avenues on the one hand and the traditional variables operating persistently on the educational system in general and teacher education system in particular have resulted on the other hand the whole slot into a chaotic stage [so that teachers cannot be trained to be reflective critical thinkers and practitioners]? (p. 172)

Hardly, Ghana must take advantage of the information and technological era to introduce desired innovation in teacher education efforts to increase its relevance to national developmental agenda and global competiveness.

Next, the issue of teacher licensure must be vigorously pursued. We cannot be doing the same old things and expect to have different results. Through our modest yet useful experiences, we argue that in Ghana, individual teacher’s efforts at adding quality to their professional practice is very limited. Aside from furthering their education to receive higher qualifications, the impact of teacher innovation, efficiency, versatility, and competitiveness to add value to themselves and to improve their classroom practices, their teaching, and student learning can be described as negligible. Teacher education authorities in Ghana need to pursue teacher licensure as a measure to encourage teachers to perpetually seek ways to improve their practice and holding them to account lest they risk losing their job or promotion. Authorities must establish benchmarks for renewing such a license including value addition through research, honors received, conference attendance and participation, workshops, and other continuous professional development activities. These must be clearly and continuously communicated to teachers and all prior to the coming into force of the licensure. In this case, the teacher licensing authority in partnership with all bodies and institutions engaged in teacher development activities must ensure that continuous professional development schemes and activities become all-year round affair, with clear time tables for accessing each of them. This would enable teachers to make personal arrangements to attend sessions that meet their circumstances without loss of contact hours.

All of this must be pursued against the backdrop that change is not always welcomed. Referring to Cozijnsen, Vrakking, and Ijzerloo (2000), Bediako and Asare (2010) reported that innovations did not succeed because of disregard of the wills of key players. Again, Bediako and Asare indicated that a number of innovations in education were met with opposition because teachers, the implementers, were not consulted. They added that teacher opposition to innovation results not because the innovations are bad but because they (the teachers) are not receptive to the innovations. Therefore, it is recommended that attempts at introducing teacher licensing, and indeed any other educational innovation, must necessarily involve teachers.

Furthermore, the seemingly endless global changes, innovations, and advancements make it very necessary for teacher education drives to be constantly reviewed and reorganized. Failure to do so would likely render teachers ineffective. We recommend that the Institute of Education, in collaboration with the TED of the Ghana Education Service, the Ministry of Education, National Council for Tertiary Education, National Accreditation Board, universities, and CoEs in Ghana, spearhead the organization of teacher education conferences and workshops every year to debate and generate novel and functional ideas as to how to revitalize and strengthen teacher education to increase its relevance in the socio-politico-cultural development of Ghana.

Again, any attempt at promoting critical thinking skills in teachers must take cognizance of the following that critical thinking is not simply thinking, but it is also thinking of which things are effective for self-development. Also, the self-development must relate to the ability of the individual that he or she will use set standards during the thinking process. In other words, it must involve the development of the individual’s own way of thinking via set standards (Paul,
1995, cited by Emir, 2013). This must translate into critical thinking disposition, which Kokdemir (2003) cited by Emir (2013) explained as involving characteristics such as “truth seeking, open-mindedness, analyticity, systematicity, self-confidence, inquisitiveness, and maturity” (p. 339).

It is decipherable from the ingredients mentioned above that to promote critical thinking in teachers-in-training, it behooves teacher educators to up-to-the-task. Teacher education efforts must consider ways of equipping teachers with knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills crucial to facilitating the learning, acquisition, development, and use of such qualities by the students they would be teaching upon completion of their professional training or retraining. This is more important based on the premise that the approach to teacher preparation described by Lewin and Stuart (2003) can at best promote teaching as a process of filling empty vessels. Teachers cannot be critical in their teaching neither can they teach to promote critical thinking in the students if teachers-in-training are seen as people who “need prescriptive advice and guidance from lecturers about how to teach, whether or not the prescriptions appear to suit the learning contexts in the schools where trainees work or the demands of new curricula” (p. 171).

We argue here that critical thinking cannot be taught effectively when school moves away from preparing students to make meaning of what is taught to rather producing students who can pour what they have memorized on paper in examinations. Thus, teacher educators must engage teachers-in-training to challenge how they think and to reflect critically on learning as an everyday, lived, and ongoing activity with an eye on the past, on what is happening now, and on the future. This should involve three critical reflective practices, namely, reflection-on-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-the-future (Schön, 1983, 1991, cited by Wilson, 2008). These authors showed that reflection-on-action concerns a thinking process that considers past events. Reflection-in-action occurs when one thinks about what is going on now whereas reflection-on-the-future involves a deep thinking about how things would be in the future. These actions must encourage teachers to investigate and articulate what their work is and how they do it, thereby increasing the potential for learning as teachers look at the implications of events and apply them to their teaching efforts to help promote learning in students. This can translate into improved students’ performance and overall education quality. Thus, the following recommendation is offered:

Education needs to redefine their [sic] ultimate goal so that critical thinking becomes a component of this newly defined success. This represents a move away from purely content-based instruction and more importantly, represents a philosophical shift. Critical thinking needs to move from being a “program” to being part of the culture. Formalizing training for teachers and creating specific classroom expectations will help to develop this culture where critical thinking becomes embedded within the fabric of the teaching community. Curricula would need to be revised to include critical thinking. Schools should adequately equip and prepare instructors to teach critical thinking (Tsui, 2002), and make sure they understand the concepts and foundational basis of critical thinking (Browne & Meuti, 1999). This will require initial and ongoing developmental opportunities. Schools will need to develop infrastructure to support the new paradigm. This may require new people in new roles and new roles altogether. Support must come from the top and permeate the entire organization. This necessitates more than a paper statement of support: it requires the allocation of resources to meet the new challenge. (Flores, Matkin, Burbach, Quinn, & Harding, 2012, pp. 225-226)

Teachers must comfortably accept that teaching necessarily must involve listening to students and responding to their needs. Therefore, there should be collaboration between teachers and learners to promote an environment that supports learning, pursue a learning dialogue approach to teaching, and ultimately involve a focus on learning (MacBeath & Dempster, 2008).

Teacher education authorities in Ghana can learn from what Tonya Singer proposed. With particular reference to inservice teacher development programs, T. Singer (personal communication, April, 2013) recommended that teacher education authorities adopt a collaborative teacher inquiry around students’ learning challenge. She added that this requires teachers to plan lessons together, observe it together, and repeat the cycle with multiple lessons so that every teacher in the team gets the opportunity to apply learned concepts to different lessons.

Another issue worthy of consideration is gathering and making use of data to improve teacher performance. From our interactions with teachers, we have observed that teachers assume that teaching ends when a lesson is over. However, a reflective approach to teaching must focus on gathering data during teaching. This must include listening to students and watching what they do. This will position teachers to learn more about what students know, how they think, and what they need to succeed. Such an approach to reconsidering teaching could engage teachers to think critically and reflectively about their instructional delivery. They would experience valuable critical thinking processes while at the same time deepening expertise in how to promote students’ learning.

Thus far, we have iterated that not until teachers reflect on their own practice and make use of their experiences to influence their teaching, achieving improved student performance can be elusive. It can however be argued that in the instance where teachers teach large classes, do not have access to basic teaching and learning resources, and have little or no support, teachers’ readiness to become critical thinkers and reflective practitioners may remain a mirage. Policy makers, politicians, and international development partners must put forth much effort at equipping educational institutions with needed human and material resources to allow for teachers to
engage in the kind of reflective practice that would result in quality education delivery.

To conclude, attempts must be made to bridge the gap between pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher development. It is not uncommon to hear novice teachers, including us—reminiscing the times we began teaching, commenting that attitudes of long-serving teachers make it difficult for them to practice what they have learned in college. Over time, these novice teachers, who initially were bursting with enthusiasm to apply the new approaches and strategies to promoting effective teaching and learning, rather copy the ineffective practices of the long-serving teachers, becoming ineffective themselves over time. It is pertinent that future research considers these questions: How can teacher education authorities create appropriate condition(s) for teachers to be reflective practitioners? Also, how can authorities ensure that innovative teachers are not punished by the system but encouraged to think outside the box as they scrutinize and critique their own teaching and that of other teachers? With the increased private sector participation in teacher education delivery in Ghana, how do or can authorities ensure the standardization of teacher quality to promote uniformity?

Declaration of Conflicting Interests
The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding
The author(s) received no financial support for the research and/or authorship of this article.

References
Adegoke, K. A. (2003). Capacity building of lead teacher training institutions in sub-Saharan Africa: Ghana. Accra, Ghana: UNESCO. Available from www.unesco.org
Ahmed, S. N., & Aziz, S. A. (2012). Quality in teacher education: A situational analysis of quality assurance strategies of teacher education institutions in Pakistan. Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business, 4(7), 173-182.
Akyeampong, K. (2003). Teacher Training in Ghana—Does it count? (MUSTER Country Report One). Sussex, UK: DFID.
Anamuah-Mensah, J., & Benneh, M. (n.d.). Particular issues of teacher education in Ghana (High level expert meeting on UNESCO). Available from www.unesco.org
Antwi, M. K. (1992). Education, society, and development in Ghana. Accra, Ghana: Unimax Publishers.
Asare, K. (2009). Education: Training, retraining, and retaining teachers in Ghana (Part 1). Retrieved from http://www.modernghana.com/news/211101/1/education-training-retraining-and-retaining-teachers.html
Asare, K. B. (2011). Community participation in Basic Education in the Kwaabre District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. International Journal of Basic Education, 2(1), 43-52.
Bediako, E. A., & Asare, K. B. (2010). Teachers’ receptivity to curriculum innovations. Ontario Journal of African Educational Research, 1, 81-94.
Benneh, M. (2006). Particular issues on teacher education and training in Ghana. Dakar, Senegal: UNESCO (TTISSA). Available from www.unesco.org
Cozby, P. C., & Bates, S. C. (2012). Methods in behavioral research (11th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
Creswell, J. W. (2014). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
Emir, S. (2013). Contributions of teachers’ thinking styles to critical thinking dispositions (Istanbul-Fatih Sample). Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice, 13, 337-347.
Flores, K. L., Matkin, G. S., Burbach, M. E., Quinn, C. Q., & Harding, H. (2012). Deficient critical thinking skills among college graduates: Implications for leadership. Educational Philosophy and Theory, 44, 213-230. doi:10.1111/j.1469-5812.2010.00672.x
Ghana Education Service, Teacher Education Division. (2004). Trends in education and school management in Ghana. Accra, Ghana: Author.
Institute of Education. (2005). Three-year Diploma in Basic Education—Course structure (Revised syllabus). Unpublished manuscript, Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, Ghana.
Institute of Education. (2013). Statistics on colleges of education. Unpublished manuscript, Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, Ghana.
Lewin, K. M., & Stuart, J. S. (2003). Researching teacher education: New perspectives on practice, performance, and policy (MUSTER Synthesis Report). Sussex, UK: DFID.
MacBeath, J., & Dempster, N. (Eds.). (2008). Connecting leadership and learning: Principles for practice. London, England: Routledge.
McFarlane, D. A. (2011). A comparison of organizational structure and pedagogical approach: Online versus face-to-face. The Journal of Educators Online, 8(1), 1-43. Retrieved from http://www.ERICSerfet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ917871
McWilliam, H. O. A., & Kwamena-Poh, M. A. (1975). The development of education in Ghana: An outline. London, England: Longman Group.
Presidential Committee on Education. (2002). Meeting the challenges of education in the twenty-first century: Report of the President’s committee on education reforms in Ghana. Accra, Ghana: Adwinsa Publications.
Wilson, J. P. (2008). Reflecting-on-the-future: A chronological consideration of reflective practice. Reflective Practice, 9, 177-184. doi:10.1080/14623940802005525

Author Biographies
Kwame Bediako Asare is a Lecturer in school effectiveness. His research interests include educational leadership/administration, basic education, and teacher education and development. As a professional development leader, Kwame has been involved in leadership for learning training sessions for improving headteacher effectiveness in leading schools to promote student learning.
Seth Kofi Nti is a Lecturer in English Language Education with specialty in Linguistics. He is a teacher educator and Chief Examiner for English for Colleges of Education in Ghana.