

IMPLEMENTING THE NEW NATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA, GHANA: PROSPECTS, CHALLENGES, AND THE WAY FORWARD

Hans Kweku Anderson (PhD)
GHANA

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the views of learners and the implementers on the prospects, challenges and the way forward of the implementation of the New National Teachers Standard Curriculum at the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. It adopted the mixed methods approach underpinned by pragmatism epistemology. The study employed the sequential explanatory mixed method design where quantitative data were collected and analyzed at the first stage, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample 250 learners and 35 lecturers who have experienced the New National Teachers Standard Curriculum two years on since its implementation for the quantitative phase whereas 2 Heads of Department were purposively sampled for the qualitative phase respectively. Questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide were the main instruments used for the study. Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, standard deviation, and percentages as well as inferential statistics like the multiple regression were used to analyze the quantitative data while the qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The study revealed that the implementers (lecturers) were highly prepared in the implementation of the New National Teachers Standard Curriculum. Besides, having interest to teach the new curriculum, strict adherence to the assessment mode, availability of time to prepare and deliver the content, completion of prescribed content per semester, and availability of internal and external support systems were the facilities available in ensuring smooth implementation of the new curriculum. However, inadequate teaching space and large class size and lack of teaching and learning resources were challenges facing the successful implementation of the New National Teachers Standard Curriculum. It was further noted that learners' regularity and punctuality at lectures, active participation of learners in group work and having an understanding of the new curriculum were some of the contributions brought forward by learners towards the implementation of the new curriculum. The study showed that demographic variables of implementers (sex, age, academic qualification and rank) significantly predicted their level of preparedness. Regular in-service training for implementers, a very effective monitoring system, provision of adequate teaching and learning resources were some of the recommendations advanced.

Keywords: Learners, implementers, curriculum, prospects, implementation, challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Nations all over the world from time to time embark on a reform of their educational system with a view to making it relevant to the current trends in their country; and Ghana is no exception. A country's educational reform may be minor or major as the need may be and may also be dependent on the availability of funds and political will of the Government in power (Little, 2011). Adu-Gyamfi, Donkoh and Addo (2016) explained educational reform as changes and policies embarked upon to improve educational structure or system in a country.

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Ghana's formal educational system before independence was manned by her colonial masters, notably, the British (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). One of the major educational reforms of the period was carried out by Governor Gordon Guggisberg who introduced the sixteen principles of education. His aim was to make education more cultural based (Frimpong, 2006).

Despite Governor Guggisberg's reformatory initiative on education, after independence education in Ghana was still seen as being bookish and producing graduates who were fit for only white collar jobs that were non-existent in the country. As a result, some successive governments in Ghana have over the years initiated reforms in the educational system with the aim of providing quality education to the citizens (Adu - Gyamfi et al, 2016).

The Reforms were as follows: The Accelerated Development Plan of 1951 and the Educational Act of 1961 under the leadership of Dr Kwame Nkrumah. The aim was to rapidly expand the education system and also to recognize the importance of Teacher Training Colleges/schools to have good trained teachers for the schools. This reform was followed by the Reform of the National Liberation Council under Major A.A. Afrifa and General E.K. Kotoka which was aimed at reducing the cost of education. The next reform was The New Structure and Content of Education of 1974 introduced by The National Redemption Council (NRC) under the leadership of Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong as a result of the Dzobo Committee Report of 1973. This report gave birth to the publication of the New Structure and Content of Education (NSCE) in 1974 which introduced the concept of Junior Secondary School (JSS) and Senior Secondary School (SSS). The reform aimed at providing school leavers with skills that will enable them secure job opportunity or make them employable at whatever point they exit the system. The 1987 Educational Reform which was introduced by the Provincial National Defense Council (PNDC) Government led by Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings followed. The purpose of this reform was to expand and improve the level of education in the country, make basic education free and compulsory and to strategically reduce the length of pre-tertiary education from seventeen to eleven years.

It was during the implementation of this reform that the University of Education, Winneba, was established with its core mandate of training teachers for the educational system in the country to supplement what the Colleges of Education, under the University of Cape Coast, were producing. Then followed The 2007 Educational Reform introduced by the New Patriotic Party under the leadership of President John Agyekum Kuffour. The primal reason for this reform was the formation of human capital for industrial growth, preservation of cultural identity/traditional indigenous knowledge or creativity and also improvement in science and technology (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). Prempeh (2018) has intimated that with reference to teacher education reforms in Ghana, the following reforms have been made. The Education Act of 2008 (Act 78) passed by the National Teaching Council. The aim was to professionalize the teacher through licensing. This reform was followed by the Colleges of Education Act in 2012 (Act 847) which was passed to upgrade Colleges of Education into Tertiary Institution. There was also the Pre- Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management (PTPDM) Policy in 2020 which was aimed at designing a career progression path for teachers in Ghana. Notwithstanding the gains made from these reforms, the changing nature of the society and the idea of globalization necessitated the introduction of the Educational Reform under the leadership of President Nana Akufo Addo of the New Patriotic Party "for pre-tertiary curriculum and teacher education. This reform is about ensuring "teacher quality and students' learning outcomes" (Prempeh, 2017, p. 3). The current reform has The National Teachers Standards as one of its key components. It is aimed at guiding teacher preparation and practice in the country. It is a professional tool that guides teachers and other stakeholders

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in education to identify clearly and precisely what teachers are expected to know and be capable of doing, the qualities they are expected to possess as well as some behaviours they are to exhibit (Prempeh). Institutions implementing the new National Teachers Standards Curriculum include all the Colleges of Education in Ghana, the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba.

The issue of curriculum change or innovation borders on curriculum implementation. Like the concept curriculum, curriculum implementation has been defined in different ways by different scholars. Lewy, as quoted in Anderson (2002, p. 11) postulated that “implementation means the open use of a programme throughout an entire school system”. This simply means a nationwide use of an educational programme. Fullan, as cited in Anderson (2002) perceived implementation as being the process of putting into practice an idea, programme, or set of activities new to the people attempting or expected to change. Tamakloe (1992) explained Fullan’s assertion that, in the area of curriculum, implementation is mainly concerned with the instructional programmes.

Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, and Wallace (2005) defined curriculum implementation as “a specific set of activities designed to put into practice an activity or programme” (p. 5). This definition portrays curriculum implementation as being static as the emphasis is on designed activities earmarked for the implementation and not the process of implementation itself. In contrast to Fixson et al.’s (2005) definition of curriculum implementation, Chikumbi and Makamure (2005), Mkpa as cited in Onyeachu (2008), Ofaha et al. (2009), Olufu (2003), Rogan and Grayson (2003) and The University of Zimbabwe (1995), have considered curriculum implementation as on-going. For instance, Chikumbi and Makamure postulated that curriculum implementation entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects. Gaba, as cited in Ali and Ajibola (2015) viewed implementation of curriculum as putting the curriculum into action for attainment of the goals for which the curriculum is designed. Mkpa as cited in Onyeachu, explained curriculum implementation as the act of translating the curriculum document into the operational curriculum by the combined efforts of students, teachers and other educational workers. For Ofaha et al., curriculum implementation is putting the curriculum into operation for the attainment of the goals for which the curriculum is designed. Olufu described curriculum implementation as translating theory into practice with a view to yielding expected results.

The University of Zimbabwe, Onyeachu, and Rogan and Grayson summarised the meaning of curriculum implementation as the process of putting all that have been planned as a curriculum document into practice in the classroom through the combined effort of teachers, learners, school administrators, parents as well as interaction with physical facilities, instructional materials, psychological and the social environment. However, Ali and Ajibola have cautioned that, it is one thing to plan or design curriculum and it is another thing to implement it effectively. In this study, curriculum implementation refers to the open use of the planned material for the entire nation (Lewy, as cited in Anderson, 2002) as Ghana practices the centralized educational system where whatever is planned is for the entire country.

Anderson, as cited in Anderson (2017) has argued that the success of any educational programme depends on the implementation. Onyeachu (2008) intimated that irrespective of how well a curriculum of any subject is planned, designed and documented, its implementation is important because problems of most programmes arise at the implementation stage. Thus, the success or failure of a planned curriculum is dependent on how the implementation problems are tackled and how the process succeeds. Problems of curriculum implementation

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are global in nature. Cheung and Weng (2012) have written that curriculum reform in Hong Kong was facing key obstacles and challenges that are common in many other countries at the implementation stage. They cited teachers' heavy workload, learning diversity in class and teachers' inadequate understanding of the curriculum as factors serving as challenges to effective curriculum implementation in Hong Kong. Studies conducted by Anderson (2017) and Etsey (2007) among others on the implementation of the 2007 curriculum in Ghana revealed un conducive school environment, management and administrative issues, teacher qualification, non-availability of teaching/learning materials, supervision, lateness and absenteeism on the part of learners, power conflict, value conflict, psychological conflict and practical conflict as some of the factors militating against the effective implementation of the curriculum. Fehintola (2011) and Ghanney (2007) have argued that implementation problems affect learners' academic performance. The implementation of the new curriculum to achieve the New Teachers Standards commenced in 2019 at the University of Education, Winneba, when all the needed preparations for effective implementation (Anderson, 2017; Adentwi, 2000; Fullan, 1982) have not been put in place. How the implementation of the new Teacher Education Curriculum is being done, therefore, needs to be studied to investigate the state of the implementation so that appropriate recommendations are made for the achievement of the intended goal; hence this study.

The findings of this study would significantly contribute to knowledge in the area of curriculum implementation and the factors that affect the process of curriculum change. It would also inform stakeholders of teacher education in Ghana on how the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum is being done in the University of Education, Winneba, so as to be at the position to address challenges faced by the implementers and students for effective implementation of the new curriculum. The outcome of this study would again inform the implementers (lecturers) about what benefits their efforts in terms of the implementation is yielding in the academic lives of their students to enable them work harder for more good results. The students would also be informed about the importance their active participation in the teaching and learning process (Yanik, 2007) brings to the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study adopted Rogan and Grayson's (2003) theory of curriculum implementation for developing countries as its theoretical framework given the fact that its constructs include factors that enhance or impede curriculum implementation; and also takes into consideration the condition of Ghana as a developing country. The theory discusses issues about the learner, the teacher, the school environment, the nature of the classroom interaction – what teachers and learners do, professional development issues, physical resources such as buildings, books or apparatus, assessment issues and availability or non-availability of physical resources to support the implementation and support from outside agencies and how they affect curriculum implementation. The unit of analysis for the theory is the learning environment. Rogan and Grayson have argued that, when implementation strategies do not consider the local context including diversity that may exist within that context, and psychological factors that influence learning and change, the implementation suffers. This study considered the local context in which the new National Teachers Standards Curriculum is being implemented in the University of Education, Winneba.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

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1. How prepared are the implementers of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba?
2. What facilities are available for the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba?
3. What are the learners' contributions to the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: Demographic characteristics of implementers (sex, age, academic qualification, rank) will not statistically significantly predict their level of preparedness.

Methodology

The study adopted the Descriptive research design and Sequential mixed methods approach (Caruth, 2013). The data collection instruments were structured questionnaire and semi – structured interview guide for methodological triangulation ((Denzin, 2006). The components of the questionnaire included the demographics of the participants for Section A and a five-point Likert Scale: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Undecided, Agree and Strongly Agree items for Section B.

The sample comprised all senior members teaching the courses on the new programme and the Heads of Department of Early Childhood and Basic Education Departments of the University of Education, Winneba. All the Level 200 students of the two departments running that programme formed the learner sample. Thus, in all, 32 senior members and 250 students formed the sample, making a total of 282 participants

Purposive sampling technique was used to select the subjects for the study. The Level 200 students were used because this is their second year into the implementation and they having gone through half of the duration for the programme would be at a better position to offer more reliable responses than their Level 100 counterparts. Senior members teaching the courses and the students responded to their respective questionnaire while the two heads of department took the role of interviewees of the study.

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, standard deviation and means as well as multiple regressions were used to analyze the quantitative data by the assistance of the Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) version 22. Onwuegbuzie and Combs' (2011) mixed methods data analysis guideline and pattern matching-descriptive/explanatory (Yin, 1994) were used to analyze the qualitative data. Content analysis based on the emerging themes from the responses from the interviews was used to buttress the findings from the questionnaire data. Thus, the concurrent triangulation method of data analysis was used through quantification of the qualitative data (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). Ethical issues observed were assessed, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity.

Data Presentation

Demographic Features of Respondents

The demographic compositions of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Sex of Students	Male	93	37.2
	Female	157	62.8
	Total	250	100.0
Sex of Lecturers	Male	24	75.0
	Female	8	25.0
	Total	32	100.0
Age of Lecturers	30-40	4	12.5
	41-50	24	75.0
	51-60	4	12.5
	Total	32	100.0
Academic Qualification of Lecturers	MPhil	20	62.5
	Ph.D	12	37.5
	Total	32	100.0
Rank of Lecturers	Lecturer	12	37.5
	Senior Lecturer	20	62.5
	Total	32	100.0
Do you have academic training in the course (s) you are teaching in the University?	Yes	32	100.0
	No	0	00.0

Source: Survey Data, 2020

As presented in Table 1, on the side of the students, more females (n=157, 62.8%) than males (n=93, 37.2%) were involved in the study. The information further revealed that for the lecturers, more males (n=24, 75.0%) than females (n=8, 25.0%) were involved in the study. Concerning the lecturers' age, the data show that most of the lecturers who participated in the study were 41-50 years (n=24, 75.0%). The others fell between 30-40 years (n=4, 12.5%), and 51-60 years (n=4, 12.5%). The distribution of the lecturers based on their academic qualification reveal that MPhil holders (n=20, 62.5%) were more than PhD holders (n=12, 37.5%). In terms of their rank, the data show that more than half of the lecturers were at the Senior Lectureship rank (n=20, 62.5%), while the rest (12), representing 37.5%, were lecturers.

Analysis of the Research Questions

Research Question 1: How prepared are the implementers of the New National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba?

This research question sought to uncover the preparedness of the implementers of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. In analyzing this research question, the implementers' views were sought on whether they have received academic training with respect to the New National Teachers Standard Curriculum. Again, their understanding of the New Teachers Standards (NTS) curriculum and the STS (Supported Teaching in Schools) component of the New Teachers Standards (NTS) curriculum were also sought. In view of the 5-point Likert scale used which makes the average/fair score to be 3.0 (1+2+3+4+5÷5), in this study, the determination of the implementers' level of preparedness was done using mean and standard deviation such as mean < 2.50 indicated not prepared, 2.50 ≤ mean < 3.50 indicated fairly prepared, and mean ≥ 3.50 indicated highly prepared. The general level of preparedness of the implementers on the New Standard Based Curriculum is shown in Table 2.

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Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Curriculum Implementers Level of Preparedness

Statements	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Level of Preparedness
I have had Academic Training	1	5	4.88	0.34	Highly Prepared
Clear understanding of STS component	1	5	4.25	0.67	Highly Prepared
Understanding of the New Teachers Standards Curriculum	1	5	4.25	0.84	Highly Prepared
Teaching the New Teachers Standards Curriculum, I follow Exactly the prescribed content	1	5	4.25	0.44	Highly Prepared
I have had In-service Training about the New Teachers Standards Curriculum	1	5	4.00	1.24	Highly Prepared
Overall Level of Preparedness			4.33	0.71	Highly Prepared

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The data in Table 2 show that the implementers of the new curriculum appeared highly prepared in different facets. The results indicate that the implementers appeared highly prepared most in terms of academic training they have had ($M=4.88$, $SD=0.34$), followed by their understanding of the STS component ($M=4.25$, $SD=0.67$), following exactly by their understanding of the prescribed content ($M=4.25$, $SD=0.44$) as well as having had in-service training on the programme ($M=4.00$, $SD=1.24$). Overall, the implementers of the new curriculum appeared highly prepared ($M=4.33$, $SD=0.71$) in implementing the new standard based curriculum.

Research Question 2: What facilities are available for the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba?

The second research question dwelt on the facilities available for the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. Descriptive statistics such as the mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data, and the results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Facilities Available for the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba

Facilities	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
There is inadequate teaching space for the implementation	1	5	4.13	1.29
Class size is a problem in the implementation of the NTS curriculum	1	5	4.13	1.39
I have available time to prepare and to deliver the content	3	5	4.00	0.51
I am able to complete the prescribed content by the end of the semester	3	5	4.00	0.51
Available internal support for teaching the new curriculum	2	4	3.25	0.67
The required resources for teaching the curriculum are available	2	5	3.25	0.98
There is available external support for teaching the new curriculum	3	4	3.25	0.44
There is an effective monitoring system in place for the implementation of the new curriculum	2	4	3.00	0.72

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The data in Table 3 show that there are varied forms of facilities available for the implementation of the New National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba. The results show that the implementers do not have adequate teaching space ($M=4.13$, $SD=1.29$), class size is a problem ($M=4.13$, $SD=1.39$), have available time to prepare and deliver the content ($M=4.00$, $SD=0.51$), being able to complete the prescribed content by the end of the semester ($M=4.00$, $SD=0.51$), there is available internal support ($M=3.25$, $SD=0.67$),

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have the required resources for teaching the new curriculum ($M=3.25$, $SD=0.67$), availability of external supportsystems ($M=3.25$, $SD=0.44$) while availability of effective monitoring system was the least form of facilities identified by the implementers ($M=3.00$, $SD=0.72$). The findings suggest that the mean scores for each form of facilities available was either higher than or equal to the 3.0 mean score of the questionnaire($1+2+3+4+5/5$). This implies that all the forms of facilities outlined in the study were either predominant for the successful implementation of the New National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba or otherwise.

Research Question 3: What are the learners' contributions to the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba?

The third research question sought to investigate the learners' contributions to the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba. The data on this research question are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on learners' contributions to the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum

Contributions of Learners	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Regularity at lectures	2	5	4.96	0.29
Active participation in group work	3	5	4.82	0.42
Punctuality at lectures	1	5	4.75	0.54
Our lecturers are always regular for lectures	1	5	4.24	0.88
Our lecturers are always punctual for lectures	1	5	4.21	0.93
Our lecturers use relevant teaching learning materials to teach	1	5	4.12	0.89
I understand what I learn under the new curriculum	1	5	3.75	0.89
I clearly understand the STS programme	1	5	3.66	1.14
I have the required ICT gadgets, thus android phones laptops	1	5	3.45	1.27
The STS programme possess problem to my studies	1	5	2.85	1.19
I sometimes rely on my colleagues to doassignment on my behalf	1	5	1.98	1.14

Source: Survey Data, 2020

Data in Table 4 reveal that all the learner contributions investigated in the study in one way or the other affected the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum. The results point out that learners' regularity at lectures recorded highest among their contributions ($M=4.96$, $SD=0.29$), as compared to their active participation in group work ($M=4.82$, $SD=0.42$), punctuality at lectures($M=4.75$, $SD=0.54$), their lecturers being always regular for lecturers ($M=4.24$, $SD=0.88$), their lecturers being punctual at lectures ($M=4.21$, $SD=0.93$), their lecturers using relevant teaching learning materials ($M=4.12$, $SD=0.89$), having clear understanding of what they learn under the new curriculum ($M=3.75$, $SD=0.89$), having clear understanding of the STS Programme ($M=3.66$, $SD=1.14$), having the required ICT gadgets ($M=3.45$, $SD=1.27$), seeing the STS Programme posing problem to their studies ($M=2.85$, $SD=1.19$), while sometimes relying on their colleagues to do assignment on their behalf ($M=1.98$, $SD=1.14$) recorded the least contribution from learners towards the implementation of the new curriculum. Consistent with these findings, the researcher concludes that the learners' contributions towards the implementation of the new curriculum are varied.

Test of Hypothesis

H_{01} : Demographic characteristics of implementers (sex, age, academic qualification, rank) will not statistically significantly predict their level of preparedness.

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This hypothesis sought to test the extent to which the demographic characteristics of the implementers predict the level of their preparedness. In testing this hypothesis, multiple regression was used and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Model Summary for Implementers' Characteristics and Level of Preparedness

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change	
					R ² Change	F Change	df1		
1	0.723	0.523	0.452	0.412	0.523	7.393	2	27	0.000

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The multiple regression results in Table 4 reveal that demographic characteristics of the implementers such as sex, age, academic qualification and rank collectively contributed 52.3% of the variance in their level of preparedness which was found to be statistically significant [F (2, 27) =7.393, p<0.05]. This result implies that other factors not included in this study were responsible for 47.3% influence on the implementers' level of preparedness. It is inferred from this result that generally, the implementers' demographic variables were good indicators of their level of preparedness in the implementation of the new curriculum, hence, the null hypothesis that "demographic characteristics of implementers (sex, age, academic qualification) will not statistically significantly predict their level of preparedness" is not supported while the alternate is supported.

The study further examined the prediction of each predictor on their level of preparedness, and the results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Standardized and Unstandardized Coefficients for Implementers' Demographic Characteristics Contributing to their Level of Preparedness

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
	1 (Constant)	7.069	0.624		11.332	0.000	
Sex	-1.123	0.214	-0.889	-5.260	0.000	0.619	1.615
Age	0.762	0.232	0.696	3.285	0.003	0.394	2.538
Academic Qualification	-0.908	0.228	-0.803	-3.976	0.000	0.433	2.308
Rank	-0.615	0.198	-0.544	-3.113	0.004	0.578	1.731

Source: Survey Data, 2020

The results in Table 6 show that all the demographic characteristics contributed to the implementers' level of preparedness. It was discovered that sex ($\beta=-0.889$, $t=-5.260$, $p<0.05$), age ($\beta=0.696$, $t=3.285$, $p<0.05$), academic qualification ($\beta=-0.803$, $t=-3.976$, $p<0.05$), and rank ($\beta=-0.544$, $t=-3.113$, $p<0.05$) individually contributed significantly to their level of preparedness. In order of magnitude, it was revealed that sex, academic qualification, age and rank contributed uniquely to the implementers' level of preparedness.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The demographic data on the students reveal that there are more females studying in the Departments implementing the New Teachers' Curriculum. This finding refutes the finding of Ghana Web (2020), that the female to male enrolment at the tertiary level in Ghana is still a mirage. The finding augurs well for the implementation of the curriculum understudied as

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these students after graduation will be posted to the basic level of education in the country to teach and females have been found to stay longer in the teaching profession than males (Addi – Raccah, 2005). The finding that more male lecturers participated in the study than female lecturers is also in consonance with the African Higher Education Summit's (2015) position that there is gender inequality in favour of males teaching in the tertiary institutions. The revelation that majority of the lecturer respondents are within the age range of 41 – 50 augurs well for effective implementation as they still have some youthful exuberance in them and might have gained more experience in teaching at the tertiary level which could be brought to bear on their teaching. Rambiasz (2017) found that there is relationship between age and job performance. The study also found that more than half of the lecturer respondents are senior lecturers. The implication is that these lecturers have risen through the ranks and, therefore, have the competency in executing their duties as lecturers. This is a factor for effective implementation as a result of the knowledge and experience associated with that rank.

Research Question 1 was designed to investigate the preparedness of the implementers of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba. The findings on the variables measured were that the implementers appeared highly prepared in terms of academic training, clarity about the Supported Teaching in Schools (STS) component of the Programme and the New Teachers Standards Curriculum in general, the methodological strategies suggested for teaching the curriculum, and have had in-service training on the New Teachers Standards Curriculum. These are all factors for effective curriculum implementation (Cheung & Weng, 2012, Onyeachu, 2008, Tamakloe, 1992, Fullan, 1982).

Research Question 2 was formulated to find out the availability or otherwise of facilities for the implementation of the New Teachers Standard Curriculum. The characteristics measured were: adequacy of space for teaching and learning purposes, time to prepare and deliver the content of the New Curriculum, ability to complete the prescribed content, availability of internal support and external supports, availability of the required resources for teaching the New Curriculum, and availability of effective monitoring system. The lecturer respondents indicated that these facilities are available for the implementation of the new programme. Carles, as cited in Wang (2006) has argued that for effective curriculum implementation, there should be resources available in terms of human, material and financial. Therefore, the availability of these resources for the implementation of the New Teachers Standard Curriculum at UEW, Winneba, is a strong factor.

However, when the Heads of the Departments implementing the New Curriculum were interviewed, the data somehow painted a different picture in some of the cases the lecturers found no problem with. For instance, concerning the availability of resources, one of the two Heads said, *Not everything is available. For instance, when teaching Science, I have to take the students to the Science Department for practicals.* In connection with the human resources, the qualitative data showed that the two Departments do not have full complement of lecturers on their own and so one of the interviewees remarked, *To be able to get lecturers for all the courses, I borrow lecturers from other Departments.* Also, on the issue of support, the lecturers indicated that there is availability of both internal and external support for the implementation of the New Teachers Standard Curriculum; but one of the Heads stated that, *there is no external support in any way to the Department for the implementation of the New Curriculum.* On the issue of monitoring, the Heads confirmed that there is some sort of monitoring with regards to the implementation of the said programme. One of the Heads of Department remarked, *ITECPD (Institute for Teacher Education and Continuous Professional Development) comes round once to monitor.*

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Research Question 3 investigated the learners' contributions to the implementation of the new National Teachers Standard Curriculum in the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. The findings on the variables measured by this research question were that: the students are both regular and punctual at lectures. Anderson (2017) found that these characteristics fall under readiness of the learner to learn and is a factor for implementation. One of the main strategies suggested for teaching the said curriculum is the use of group work. In connection with this variable, the findings from the learner contribution to the implementation of the curriculum is that they actively participate in group work. Chirac (2014) found that group work facilitates students' learning. Another finding is that the students understand the content of the New Teachers Standard Curriculum and the STS component of the programme but that the STS disrupts their studies. Understanding of curricular content by learners is key to effective implementation (Bediako, 2019). Furthermore, the study has revealed that the students have the required ICT gadget (Android phones and laptop) to access information from the internet to facilitate their studies and that they also do individual work. Both of these findings are factors for effective implementation of curriculum (Rogan & Grayson, 2003). Finally, the students revealed that their lecturers are punctual and regular at lectures. Sahinto, Khawajia, Panhwar, Siddiqui, and Saeed (2016) have found that teacher punctuality and regularity foster students' learning.

However, the study has revealed that the STS poses problem to the students as they have to spend six days in each Semester in the basic schools they are assigned to for some academic exercise. Sometimes, the students have to miss either lectures or going on the STS as a result of time-tabling issues in the University or misunderstanding on the part of the Heads of the partnership schools for the STS.

The challenges raised as facing the lecturers were inadequate teaching space and large class size. From the qualitative data, the Heads also complained about student - lecturer ratio and large class size. One of the two Heads of Department lamented, *Use of technology is a challenge because of a large class having lecture in a relatively small lecture hall. Sometimes even where to position a projector becomes a problem because of lack of space.* Ayeni and Olowe (2016) found that large class size impacts negatively on students' learning.

CONCLUSION

Following the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of the New Teachers Standard Curriculum at the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana is going on effectively even though there are challenges militating against it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that enough lecture halls that are spacious to accommodate the large number of students be provided. Also, materials such as STS manuals should be made available to the students to enable them carry out the STS component of the curriculum successfully. Again, the issue of time tabling in connection with the STS should be given more attention to prevent students from missing out some lecture time at the expense of the STS. The ITECPD of the University should liaise well with the Municipal Education Directorate for essay access to all the partnership schools for the STS component of the New Teachers Standard Curriculum. Findings from the study's hypothesis disclosed that demographic characteristics of the implementers were critical in determining their level of preparedness which suggests that these

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characteristics of implementers must be given the needed attention when assessing readiness in the implementation of a new curriculum.

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