

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out the perceptions of distance education teacher trainees of the University of Cape Coast Ghana regarding the significance and mode of delivery of teaching practice at the institution. The study had three fold objectives; i) to find out the perception of distance education teacher trainees on the concept of teaching practice, ii)ascertain the perception of teacher trainees on the importance of teaching practice, and iii)examine the challenges facing distance education trainees in their teaching practice sessions. The study was premised on the theory of Learning propounded by Edward Thorndike in 1920 which provides insight into what makes people learn more effectively. The study used a descriptive research design. The accessible population comprised of the entire 1,764 final year Diploma in Education and post Diploma in Basic Education teacher trainees who completed their centre teaching practice during the 2012/2013 academic year. Stratified random sampling was used to select 25.28 percent of the population based on the sector (Northern or Southern) , region, centre and type of programme. A structured 4 –point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect primary data from respondents. The quantitative data was analyzed using the computer package for social sciences (SPSS)-version 20.0 to generate both descriptive and inferential statistics. The major findings of the study were that majority of teacher trainees of the Centres for continuing education, University of Cape Coast perceive teaching practice to be an opportunity for them to practice what they ae taught and acquire practical experience on the job by equipping them with requisite skills, knowledge and abilities to teach effectively. However, majority also pointed out several challenges that impede the smooth conduct of the teaching practice exercise such as untimely visits by some supervisors, heavy workloads and failure of university authorities to inform heads of their schools about the exercise. It is recommended that teaching practice supervisors should be given adequate resources to do their work as expected since teaching practice is perceived as a worthwhile experience that develops prospective teachers professionally.