Teacher Education Reform and Quality Evaluation in Ghana: Opposing Forces?

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Abstract

Many countries around the world are implementing changes to their systems of teacher education in an effort to improve the way teachers teach and how much children learn in school. This dissertation uses the case of Ghana to examine how a suite of ambitious reforms—including the upgrading of teacher education to university education, a new Bachelor of Education curriculum, and changes to the regulation and oversight of teacher education—interact with enduring conventions and structures, which historically, have shaped the organizational character of institutions that train teachers (called colleges of education today). Adopting the sociological perspective of new institutional theory, this study examines the range of ways those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education, preserve or alter enduring conventions and structures, with a particular focus on processes of quality evaluation, such as accreditation, certification, external examination, and university affiliation, intended to maintain standards and ensure quality.

The investigation adopted the method of comparative case study formalized by comparative and international development scholars Lesley Bartlett and Frances Vavrus (2016). Case study data were compared along a horizontal axis—instances of reform unfolding within three colleges of education—a vertical axis—perspectives on reform processes from individuals and organizations positioned along a local to global scale—and a transversal axis—which compared present-day processes in relation to what came before. The horizontal and vertical axes of comparison drew on interviews, observations, and document analysis, and focused on examining reform processes and individual and collective meaning-making, particularly as they relate to systems of authority and status within the arena of teacher education in Ghana. The transversal axis of comparison drew on archival sources and studies of the history of education in

Ghana to build an understanding of the historical antecedents to conventions and structures that those implementing reforms today must contend.

Drawing on the empirical evidence and historical narrative, and theorizing through comparison, the study found: (1) Pedagogical change within institutions that train teachers is possible when reforms encompass multiple institutional change processes, address regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive institutional elements, and are implemented with technical and financial support; (2) Teaching methods yield to reform efforts more readily than conceptions of teacher education knowledge; (3) Processes of quality evaluation are institutional carriers that transport conceptions of knowledge and relational systems, and thus, act as forces that resist change in teacher education; and (4) Aspirations of modern teaching methods and ownership of improvement in teaching and learning are hindered when teacher educators do not have authority over the knowledge to train teachers and teacher training institutions are accorded low autonomy.

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List of Abbreviations

B.Ed. – Bachelor of Education Degree

CCS – Comparative Case Study

CIDE – Comparative International Development Education

COE – College of Education

DFID – UK Department of International Development

EFA – Education For All

GES – Ghana Education Service

GTEC – Ghana Tertiary Education Commission

JHS – Junior High School (grades 6-8)

MDGs – Millenium Development Goals

MUSTER – Multi-Site Teacher Education Research

NAB – National Accreditation Board (Now part of GTEC)

NIB – National Inspectorate Board (Now called National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA) under the Ministry of Education)

NTC – National Teaching Council

NTEAP – National Teacher Education Assessment Policy

NTECF – National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework

NTS – National Teaching Standards

PISA – Program for International Student Assessment

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

TIMMS – Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

TPA – Teacher Preparation and Continuing Professional Development

TTCs – Teacher Training Colleges

T-TEL – Transforming Teacher Education and Learning

UCC – University of Cape Coast

WAEC – West African Exams Council

Chapter 1: Introduction

"Low learning crisis," "learning poverty," and "schooling without learning" are catchphrases in international development today. They call attention to global concerns about education quality and persistent poor learning outcomes, especially in many low- and middle-income countries. By one recent estimate, only half of 10-year-old children in low- and middle-income countries globally can read and understand simple sentences (World Bank, 2019). In mathematics, the average student in low-income countries performs worse than 95% of students in high-income countries (World Bank, 2018). Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia have the highest rates of children completing primary school but are unable to meet minimum proficiency levels in literacy and numeracy (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2017).

In sub-Saharan Africa, low learning levels persist despite significant increases in government spending on education in many countries, repeated efforts at reforms, and financing by international donors to the tune of hundreds of billions of US dollars over the past three decades (Lewin, 2020). According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2017), nearly 90% of children ages six to 14 in sub-Saharan Africa are not meeting minimum proficiency levels in reading and nearly 85% are not meeting these levels for math, figures that are much higher than the world averages of 58% for reading and 56% for math. In a review of studies on the association between basic inputs to education and learning outcomes across many countries, Pritchett (2015) found that easily observable inputs, such as expenditure per student, "while at times 'statistically significant,' explained very little in observed variation in learning outcomes at any level" (p. 3).

The West African country of Ghana exemplifies the challenge of improving education quality and learning outcomes even for countries experiencing sustained economic growth and

prioritizing educational expenditure. In 2011, Ghana achieved low-middle-income status as categorized by the World Bank (World Bank, 2011). Total education expenditure as a proportion of GDP ranged between 6% and 8% between 2011 and 2015, while total education expenditure as a proportion of government expenditure ranged between 21% and 28%; both sets of figures are higher than international benchmarks (Ministry of Education Ghana, 2019). The country has maintained a net enrolment rate for primary education of over 90% since 2014 and achieved a gender parity index of 1 through the junior high school (JHS) level in 2011.[1] Yet, despite these achievements in access, rates of student progression (a common indicator used to measure the education quality of a nation) and academic achievement on government-administered assessments continue to be discouraging. The proportion of students who repeat a grade is as high as 16% in some primary grades and 19% in the first year of JHS (Ministry of Education, 2019, p. xvi). Government-administered early grade reading assessments (EGRA) in 2013 and 2015 showed that only 2% of class two pupils were able to read at grade level with half of those tested unable to recognize a single word. The early grade math assessments (EGMA) in 2013 and 2015 found that three-quarters of those tested were unable to answer a single conceptual question correctly (Ministry of Education, 2019, p. xvi).

The government of Ghana has instituted education reforms every five years on average since independence in 1957 and all of these have sought to address education quality issues (Akyeampong, 2007). In the past 30 years, major reforms have included: programmatic changes, such as the number of years of schooling; curricular changes that emphasize active learning and learner-centered approaches; administrative decentralization and community involvement;

[1] This masks some gender differences in specific regions, which tend to favor boys in rural areas and girls in urban areas (Ministry of Education Ghana, 2019).

upgrading of teacher education from post-middle school to secondary level certification, and further upgrading to post-secondary diploma; increases in teacher pay; investments in physical infrastructure; implementation of education management systems; and greater use of national assessment to inform decision making (Akyeampong, 2007). Why then, is it so difficult to improve education quality and learning outcomes in Ghana, and sub-Saharan Africa more broadly? What makes increases in expenditure and common-sense reforms insufficient for the task?

Teacher Education Reform as a Response to "The Low Learning Crisis"

Ghana is among several sub-Saharan African countries presently instituting changes to systems of teacher education as a response to the "low-learning crisis." My doctoral research uses Ghana as a case study to investigate the extent to which new regulations upgrading teacher education to the undergraduate level and concomitant changes to oversight and accreditation of teacher education programs may be opportunities to improve the way teachers teach and how much students learn. In support of these efforts, Ghana's Ministry of Education launched the Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) program in 2014 with 34 million dollars in funding from UK Aid. Historically, like many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, regulation and oversight of teacher education took place under the umbrella of Ghana's system of K-12 education. The aim of T-TEL, funded between 2016 and 2022, was to provide technical and material support for the transition of teacher education to Ghana's system of higher education, specifically from regulation and oversight provided by Ghana Education Service (GES) to regulation and oversight provided by Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC). The T-TEL project also supported collaboration between five public universities in the development of the new Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program and curriculum and the implementation of the

B.Ed. degree within newly upgraded colleges of education. Additionally, the suite of reforms included the creation of a new professional body called the National Teaching Council (NTC) mandated to develop professional teaching standards and new criteria for the licensure and promotion of teachers. The B.Ed. degree became the new minimum qualification for primary and junior secondary level teaching (grades K-9) in Ghana in 2022.

The purpose of this study is to understand how this latest round of reforms to teacher education, which aim to improve teacher quality and student learning in schools, interact with enduring structures and conventions associated with the training and certification of teachers, historically modeled on secondary education. For example, administrative traditions in the way inspections of teacher education programs are carried out, the role of tutors—those who teach teachers—in "delivering" an academically oriented curriculum, and in the certification of teachers through qualifying examinations. These and other enduring structures and conventions are deeply rooted in the historical and sociocultural context of Ghana. They are recognizable in their "taken-for-granted-ness;" in the common perception that they are "legitimated means to pursue valued ends" (Scott, 2014); and they form an essential part of localized understandings of "quality teacher education" and "quality teachers," and beliefs about standards that underlie them (Lawrence et. al., 2009; Meyer J., 2010; Scott, 2014).

Many conventions and structures associated with Ghana's system of teacher education were crafted during the period of colonial administration in the early 20th century and were largely reproduced within new regulatory bodies established soon after Ghana's independence in 1957. I contend that these have become institutionalized understandings and processes and have broadly informed conceptions of quality and how quality ought to be evaluated within the field of teacher education, and therefore, have acted in opposition to policies and programs aimed at

pedagogical change. These vestigial beliefs about the nature of quality teacher education and quality teacher education graduates, and how each ought to be evaluated, are one reason why decades of reforms have failed to significantly change the core teaching and learning activities within schools. However, recent changes, which have upgraded colleges of education to higher education institutions and accorded them greater autonomy, offer new possibilities for conceptualizing quality and evaluating standards. This study examines practices that constitute the range of ways those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education respond to new reforms by creating, maintaining, or altering institutionalized structures of quality evaluation within their colleges. *Institutionalized structures of quality evaluation* refer to processes, such as accreditation, external examination, and teacher certification, intended to maintain standards and ensure quality. The study will focus on three colleges of education in the Eastern Region of Ghana and will be guided by the following research questions:

1. How are recent reforms upgrading Ghana's system of teacher education to higher education transforming enduring structures and conventions, which historically, have shaped the organizational character of colleges of education? (RQ 1)
2. In navigating new regulatory arrangements in teacher education, what practices constitute the range of ways those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education work to create, maintain, or alter conceptions of quality and institutionalized structures of quality evaluation? (RQ 2)
3. How do those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education perceive the opportunity for greater autonomy for colleges of education under Ghana's system of higher education? (RQ 3)

In posing questions that are exploratory in nature, I sought to draw out particular understandings about the meaning of individual and collective actions by those contending with ambitious teacher education reforms on the one hand and enduring structures and conventions on the other. Specifically, I interviewed college of education tutors, college of education principals, and university faculty in supervisory roles; conducted classroom observations; and analyzed curriculum and policy documents in order to piece together a detailed account of the implementation of teacher education change in Ghana.

Enduring Structures and Conventions in Teacher Education

Education in sub-Saharan Africa embodies long-standing institutionalized structures of colonial domination and regulation, missionary and African teaching traditions, and conceptions of education quality from the past. While many scholars point to national policies and system-level dynamics—such as inputs, processes, and actors—to account for differences in learning outcomes between countries (Blömeke et al. 2016; Glewwe et al., 2011; Magrath et al., 2019), other scholars emphasize the need to account for particular historical and cultural contexts of schooling when examining educational change today (Barrett and Tikly, 2010; Samoff, 2012; Tabulawa, 2013; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2012). The theoretical perspective of *New institutional theory*, which explores the stability and persistence of ideas, practices, and interactions within arenas of social and organizational activity (H.D. Meyer & Rowan, 2006; Scott, 2008; J. Meyer, 2010; Scott, 2014), provides an avenue to hold both perspectives in productive tension. According to institutional scholar Richard Scott, "The battle between the particular and the general, between the temporal and the timeless is one that contemporary institutional theorists continue to confront" (Scott, 2008, p. 6). Through the lens of new institutional theory, the case of teacher education reform in Ghana offers an opportunity to examine national, system-level

change in a post-colonial sub-Saharan African country where structures and conventions of the past are integral to the landscape of reform.

The rest of this chapter is organized as follows: the next section will delve into the empirical research and differing perspectives on the issue of education quality and poor learning outcomes globally. This is followed by Ghana's response to the "low learning crisis" in the form of teacher education reform and the particular area of concern for this study: the upgrading of colleges of education to universities and attendant regulatory and oversight changes, opportunities for greater autonomy for college of education leaders and tutors, and possibilities for new institutional forms of quality evaluation. This will be followed by the conceptual framework and key definitions from new institutional theory that will underpin the analytical framework for the study (a review of institutional theory in education policy research will be given in Chapter 2). I conclude the chapter with a summary of my interest in this topic and the significance of this research to the field of Comparative and International Development Education (CIDE).

The Global Narrative on Education Quality and Poor Learning Outcomes

System-Level Differences

The issue of education quality and poor learning outcomes is a multifaceted one. One important finding from recent research into the “low-learning crisis” is that system-level differences, which could be related to the way teachers are trained, national curricula, and or systems of governance and accountability, explain to a much greater extent differences in learning outcomes than do equity factors, such as socioeconomic, urban/rural, regional, or gender differences of pupils (Crouch et al., 2021a; Crouch et al., 2021b; for details see International Journal of Educational Development October 2021 Special Issue). Akmal and Pritchett (2021)

show that closing the learning achievement gap between rich and poor children in basic reading and mathematics in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, India, and Pakistan would still leave the majority of pupils in those countries far from universal mastery: "The global equity goal will require more than just closing the rich-poor learning gap, it will take progress in learning for all" (p. 1). Similarly, gaps in learning between girls and boys are small in most countries, and achieving gender parity would leave both boys and girls far from improved learning outcome goals (Crouch et al., 2021).

A second important finding from empirical research into learning outcomes in developing countries is that the determinants of learning vary widely across contexts and are difficult to generalize (Pritchett 2015). Glewwe et al. (2011) found that within high-quality econometric studies, very few variables were statistically significant across education systems (Glewwe et al., 2011). The authors concluded: “The few variables that do have significant effects – e.g., availability of desks, teacher knowledge of the subjects they teach, and teacher absence – are not particularly surprising and thus provide little guidance for future policies and programs” (p. 1). Importantly, this conclusion does not mean variables such as smaller class sizes, higher teacher salaries, improved pre- and in-service teacher education and training, updated curriculum and learning materials, better school leadership, etc. are not important; it simply means that in some contexts (different countries or regions, urban versus rural districts, etc.) they appear to lead to better learning outcomes and in other contexts they do not (Pritchett, 2015).

Teacher pay is the largest component of education budgets and therefore, many researchers and policymakers have looked to improvements in teacher quality and teaching processes to address the “low-learning crisis” and simultaneously make better use of resources (Lewin, 2020; World Bank, 2018). However, studies that aim to generalize relationships between

teacher quality, teaching processes, and learning outcomes show contradictory results, emphasizing again that the education system context matters. Aslam and Kingdon (2011) found that in Pakistan, standard "resume characteristics" (teacher certification, training, and years of experience) don't matter much with regard to the academic achievement of students but teaching process variables (teaching methods and techniques) generally do. Blömeke et al. (2016) found that for countries that participated in TIMSS 2011, teacher quality (i.e., resume characteristics) and instructional quality were statistically significant, but there were distinct regional and cultural patterns in the degree to which these variables were related to mathematics achievement in particular countries.

An interesting example of complex interactions between common indicators of teacher quality and achievement can be seen in the 2003 PISA results for Ghana (Akiba et. al., 2007). The analysis of PISA results showed that 8th-grade pupils in classrooms with a "more qualified" teacher (in terms of certification and more than three years of teaching experience) demonstrated lower levels of mathematics achievement, on average than pupils taught by a "less qualified" teacher. This was termed a "negative opportunity gap" and Ghana was one of two countries that showed this effect, the second being South Africa (Botswana was the only other sub-Saharan African country to participate in PISA 2003). At the same time, Ghana showed only a modest achievement gap between rich and poor pupils, but its overall achievement in mathematics on the PISA test was poor: 45th out of the 46 countries that participated (South Africa took the 46th position).

Much of the recent systems-level research into the "low-learning crisis" serves as a benchmarking function for global progress toward global education targets. Targets and benchmarking reinforce commitments made by countries and international development

organizations, beginning with the Education for All (EFA) movement in the 1990s, then the UN-sponsored Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the turn of the century, and most recently commitments toward progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Global commitments and target-setting stem from collective efforts to address challenges that cut across national and regional borders, such as extreme poverty, armed conflict, inequality for marginalized groups, and environmental sustainability. SDG 4, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," (https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4) is premised on the belief that education plays a key role in solving most global challenges. Monitoring and evaluating global targets are also seen by prominent international development actors, such as the World Bank, as a way of mobilizing donors and national policymakers around key "data-informed" agendas and motivating the efficient use of resources (World Bank, 2018). However, this benchmarking approach, which puts countries into league tables according to simplistic quantitative proxies for "education quality" and "learning outcomes," is contested within CIDE (Klees et al., 2019; Samoff, 2012). These differing perspectives are discussed below.

For some scholars, it is not the econometric approach per se that is of concern, but the availability of data and methodological challenges associated with identifying useful and unbiased "education quality" indicators and the narrow scope of using test scores as a sole measure of the expected outcome of an education system (Levin, 2012; Pritchett, 2015). Well-known educational economists Glewwe and Kremer (2006), in a comprehensive review of studies investigating the impact of the provision of basic inputs and education policy changes on test scores in developing countries, identified numerous methodological and interpretation challenges with even the best retrospective and randomized experimental studies. The only

generalizable "education quality" conclusion they could draw from the review was that addressing weak teaching was statistically significantly correlated to increases in learning in several "rigorous" studies. Weak teaching was addressed in different ways among the studies in the review, including greater use of textbooks during instruction, teaching by radio, and schools where mathematics teachers were trained within the past three years.

Socio-Cultural Perspectives

However, other scholars take issue with the whole enterprise of scholarship that attempts to reduce education quality and learning outcomes to a small set of value-neutral quantitative input and output measures. Klees et al., (2019) argue that such an approach fails to include sociological and political perspectives and that a focus on learning in terms of inputs and outputs ignores the complexity of what happens in between. Barrett and Tikly (2010) contend that such an approach fails to consider important outcomes beyond cognitive achievements, such as human capabilities, human rights, equity, and democracy. With regard to the role of teachers in econometric studies, many scholars take issue with the 'Third-World Teacher' discourse that paints unmotivated and unskilled teachers as a principal source of the "low-learning crisis" (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2012; Thomas et al., 2014; Buckler, 2016; Tao, 2016; Kleese et al., 2019). Tao (2016) argues the 'Third-World Teacher' discourse does not recognize the complexity of different teachers' professional and personal lives that can be related to their teaching practices. Rather a term such as 'Third World Teacher' is used for "its explanatory potential as the origin of problems, which overlooks the material, social and personal factors that constitute behavior" (Tao, 2016, p. 7).

An additional critique of the “low-learning crisis” narrative and the econometric research orientation that aims to “fix it” argues that teaching and learning processes are historically,

culturally, materially, and spatially constructed and that each dimension is essential to understanding and addressing the vastly unequal situations of schooling in sub-Saharan Africa (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2012; Vavrus, 2016). Barrett and Tikly (2010) and Samoff (2012) share this view and emphasize that understanding specific colonial histories and the cultural and political legacies embedded within the institution of formal schooling are necessary starting points for improving education quality and educational outcomes on the continent. Additionally, Tabulawa (2013) cautions that without considering the socio-cultural context, scholars and policymakers will never be able to explain why efforts to reform teaching and learning processes in sub-Saharan Africa have not yielded the desired results. This study is situated within this socio-cultural perspective.

Upgrading Teacher Education to Higher Education

A key objective of Ghana's suite of system-level reforms to teacher education is to empower colleges of education with "greater choice and control over how they train teachers to meet national standards" (Ministry of Education Ghana, 2019a, p. 21). The Ministry of Education is addressing this objective in several ways. First, through the creation of the National Teaching Council (NTC), a professional body mandated to develop national teaching standards and criteria for licensure. Second, through the implementation of the Colleges of Education Act 2012 (Act 847), a policy that mandated Ghana's public colleges of education function as autonomous tertiary institutions, but which had yet to be implemented. And third, through the development and implementation of the new B.Ed. degree as the minimum qualification for basic school (K-9) teachers. However, even with the new law in place and the transition to undergraduate-level institutions well underway, it is far from certain whether colleges of

education will attain greater autonomy and whether the suite of reforms will have their intended impact.

The issue of autonomy within Ghana's system of teacher education is a significant one because it involves the organization and distribution of power to individuals and groups with a stake in the education of teachers (Bates, 2007). Recent regulatory changes represent a noteworthy departure in this respect. By initiating the implementation of the 2012 Act, power has shifted, to some degree, from the centralized bureaucracy of the Ghana Education Service (GES) to a more dispersed form of oversight and supervision through accreditation by the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) and the system of university affiliation. The authority of the teaching profession has been elevated through the creation of the National Teaching Council and its mandates around standards and licensure. And finally, at some point in the future, colleges of education are slated to become autonomous higher education institutions. This study delves into the significance of these regulatory and curricular changes by considering their historical antecedents (RQ 1), implementation within colleges of education (RQ 2), and the views of key stakeholders today on the likelihood that shifts in autonomy, through the reorganization and redistribution of power, will lead to the improvement of teacher education in the country (RQ 3).

Well-known scholars in global higher education quality assurance, Lee Harvey and Jethro Newton, argue that "without a degree of autonomy, educational institutions cannot take charge of improvement" (Harvey & Newton, 2007, p. 288). This research uses Ghana as a specific case study to explore this proposition in a post-colonial African country. Specifically, I seek to shine a light on ways the autonomy of teacher training institutions (called colleges of education today) was constrained by the crafting of colonial education regulations in the early 20th century, and

how this curtailment has continued for nearly 70 years, enshrined in regulatory processes, such as oversight, examination, and certification, following the end of colonial rule in 1957.[2] And, in light of these enduring constraints, how do those with a stake in the education of teachers view the role of greater autonomy in the improvement of teacher education today?

Processes of Quality Evaluation

Processes for evaluating quality are a feature of all systems of formal education. The focus ranges from evaluating the quality of institutions, specific subjects and programs, service provision, and the learner or learning outcomes (Harvey & Newton, 2007). Familiar approaches to quality evaluation within systems of primary, secondary, and higher education include accreditation, audit, assessment, external examination, or some sort of external review of outcomes. When an educational institution is the focus of quality evaluation, such as for accreditation or audit purposes, onsite inspection is traditionally part of the process. However, the objectives, processes, and outcomes of inspections vary widely. During the period of British colonial administration, the primary purpose of inspections of teacher training colleges ("college" during this period referred to post-middle school or secondary level training institutions) was to improve their organizational efficiency to ensure a worthwhile use of scarce government funds (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1975). Governor Guggisberg, whose tenure as Governor of the Gold Coast lasted from 1919 to 1928, had this to say in response to a new scheme of government grants to support the training of teachers:

> Teachers need to remember this, for it is very greatly on their efficiency that the grants… are based, and this imposes on them a still greater obligation to keep themselves efficient. (Guggisberg, 1927, as quoted in Asiedu-Akrofi, 1975, p. 456)

[2] The Gold Coast was a British Crown Colony from 1821 until it became the independent country of Ghana in 1957.

According to Asiedu-Akrofi's 1975 study of the system of inspection in teacher training colleges in Ghana before and after independence, during the period of colonial administration, "Inspection and inspectors became instruments of control of the colleges. The methods of inspection therefore encouraged rigid conformity to certain approved standards" (p. 456). Asiedu-Akrofi noted that inspectors' reports emphasized the work of college teachers rather than trainees, the qualifications of college teachers, and even conducting examinations to assess their subject knowledge, "This was in accordance with the aims of inspectors, namely the maintenance of standards as opposed to improvement of instruction" (p. 458).

After Ghana's independence in 1957, the responsibility to inspect secondary schools and teacher training colleges resided within the Inspectorate Division of the new Ministry of Education. In his assessment of the institution of inspection nearly 20 years after independence, Asiedu-Akrofi (1975) concludes:

> While it is conceivable that the rigidity of inspections has relaxed, the basic philosophy and organization of the present inspectorate remain essentially the same as before. One cannot but be impressed that to a large extent, inspectors continue to order and direct college teachers; their positions of authority as part of the Ministry of Education whose employees teachers are, do not seem to encourage the real partnership expected; except to exculpate themselves from, perhaps, unjust criticism, teachers have no share in the inspections even though the recommendations of the inspections are binding on them. This kind of administration one can concede, seems authoritarian. (p. 464)

In more recent times, before changes initiated in 2016, colleges of education were regulated through the National Inspectorate Board (NIB) of the Ghana Education Service (GES), which oversees K-12 education in the country. Although NIB inspections covered all aspects of

the college, such as staff qualifications, enrolment, buildings, and accounts, a primary concern was with subjects taught in the college. Inspectors were university faculty selected as experts in the subjects they inspect, typically drawn from the Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast, or from one of several other public universities with faculties of education. Many inspectors played a dual role in setting questions for external examinations administered to teacher trainees. Commenting on the composition of the inspection teams, a principal of one of the colleges in 1975 wrote “they are sure of their subjects but unfortunately our work goes beyond subject matter” (as quoted in Asiedu-Akrofi, 1975, p. 460).

When the learner is the focus of quality evaluation, the use of examination is ubiquitous. However, like inspection, the form, purpose, and emphasis of examinations vary. High-stakes external examinations—examinations created and administered by an external body at key points in the educational program—are the norm at all levels of education, including teacher training, in most former colonies in Africa. External examinations have played a major role throughout the history of western-type schooling in Africa. The London University exams, which were administered in Britain's African colonies beginning in the 1880s, were viewed by many Africans as an avenue to higher status and employment outside of traditional systems of wealth and birth (Omolewa, 1980; Ajayi et al., 1996). A teaching post often served as a steppingstone for those aspiring to enter the professions and new middle-class lifestyles—an opportunity to work and earn a salary while preparing for the London University matriculation (entrance) or degree exams (Omolewa, 1980).

Several recent studies have noted the effect of high-stakes external examinations on teacher education, shaping both the behavior of teacher trainees and their instructors. In their 2011 study of teacher preparation in six African countries, Akyeampong et al. concluded that

examinations focused on propositional knowledge—knowledge presented as factual or true statements (commonly expressed as knowing “that” as opposed to knowing “how”)—often subverted the intention of efforts to focus on pedagogical knowledge and practice, such as the teaching practicum. Further, opportunities for formative assessments of teaching practice were noticeable by their absence (pp. 64-65). Vavrus (2009), in her study of teacher education reform in Tanzania, concluded that examinations taken by teacher trainees and the importance of high-stakes examinations for their future pupils "limited the likelihood of a fundamental shift from formalistic teaching to constructivist approaches" (p. 309).

Although external examinations evaluate “student quality” and inspection teams evaluate “institutional quality," both processes are rooted in taken-for-granted assumptions about the locus of authority for teacher education knowledge. Historically, both processes have emphasized subject knowledge as the most important knowledge for future teachers in Ghana. Both processes assume expertise over the knowledge to train teachers resides in external bodies and not in the collective knowledge and experience of college of education tutors and leaders. And, both processes may have left colleges of education without the degree of autonomy needed to take charge of their own improvement.

This study is timely because recent regulatory changes in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa have sought to improve teaching and learning in schools through changes to systems of teacher preparation. However, government regulations—through rule setting, monitoring, and sanctioning activities—are only one way structures of quality evaluation stimulate and shape individual and group actions. According to institutional theorists, deeper forms of legitimacy come in the form of shared values and norms that dictate what is preferred and desirable and offer familiar ways to compare and evaluate behavior. The deepest form of legitimacy, according

to Scott (2014), comes in the form of tacit conceptions and meanings that constitute social reality and exclude alternatives that are inconceivable. In the context of teacher education in Ghana, this may include taken-for-granted conceptions about the knowledge future teachers ought to acquire, mental models of quality teaching, legitimized processes for evaluating future teachers and teacher education programs, and beliefs about quality standards that underlie all of these. Thus, the term *quality evaluation*, which conceptualizes the evaluation of quality as a social institution, goes beyond the notion of compliance and conformity associated with government regulation and the term *quality assurance*. The next section gives a brief overview of new institutional theory and a rationale for its use as the theoretical framework for this study.

Institutional Theory: An Introduction

> The beginning of wisdom for an institutional theorist is the recognition that current actors and events are greatly shaped by past efforts and their enduring products.
> (Scott, 2014, p. 1)

Teacher education can be thought of as a social institution because there are many shared meanings, norms, and rules associated with it. Consider these questions: What is a teacher? What ought a teacher be able to do and what ought a teacher not do? What is the purpose of teacher training and how is it carried out? Who is involved? What resources are needed? How are processes and products of teacher training fairly evaluated? Who has authority to make decisions about all of these things?

There is no single answer to these questions, but there are distinctive patterns in how people within particular regional or national contexts will respond based on shared meanings, norms, and regulatory forms. The meaning systems, normative systems, and governance systems of any social institution are shaped by historical and cultural forces and by material and spatial contexts. Other examples of social institutions are marriage, medicine, police forces, and

football. Institutions exist at the intra-organizational level, the level of organizations, systems of organizations, nation-states, and world systems. According to Scott (2014), institutions can be thought of as:

> Functionally specialized arenas of social life governed by distinctive logics… They provide stimulus, guidelines, and resources for acting as well as prohibitions and constraint on action." (p. 57)

Institutions exhibit distinctive properties: they are relatively resistant to change; are enduring features of social life; can be transmitted across generations, maintained, and reproduced; and can change over time. This study will be guided by the following definition of institutions offered by Scott (2014): "institutions comprise regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life" (p. 56).

Institutional theory provides a useful set of conceptual and analytical tools to examine the historical and cultural forces that infused conceptions of quality and processes of quality evaluation in teacher education with value when they were crafted in the early 20th century, and that continue to orient many individuals toward upholding these values today. Institutional theory focuses on all the actors who have a stake in quality teacher education. It draws attention to the conflicts and contradictions between institutional elements (regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive) and efforts at political and cultural action that may be the impetus for institutional change today (Lawrence et al., 2009).

My Interest in this Study

The idea for a study that examines how beliefs about education quality and how it ought to be evaluated interact with efforts to improve teaching and learning came out of my work since

2008 as a mathematics lecturer from the United States teaching at a new private university in Ghana. As a young institution, the system of governance and oversight of higher education in Ghana required each syllabus and final assessment for every course to go through a vetting process by a mentor institution—an established public university in Ghana with whom our institution was required to have an affiliation agreement. Every semester, inspection teams would travel to our institution, sit among a mountain of brown envelopes, and review course syllabi and final assessments—these included examination questions, and controversially at the time, alternative forms of assessments in lieu of examinations, such as essays, projects, and presentations, among others. When I began teaching at the university, the mentor institution was reluctant to approve the use of projects, presentations, or final papers as summative assessments in lieu of examinations. There was a firm belief that to ensure quality and objectivity in evaluating university students in Ghana, our institution should follow the same "academic standards" as the mentor university. And this included rigid views about the percentage of marks that should be allocated to seated examination versus continuing assessment. There were many back-and-forth discussions between the leadership of both universities in order to break through the impasse. Disagreements on other “quality” issues also arose, such as admission requirements, faculty hiring and academic hierarchies, and programmatic requirements that inspection teams felt ought to match those of the mentor institution. Eventually, over about a decade, these disagreements and discussions diminished as our graduates performed well in the job market and the university’s reputation grew. In 2020, after 18 years under the system of university affiliation, the university received a presidential charter and became an *autonomous higher education institution*, and the twice-yearly vetting process was no longer required. Now a system of accreditation, with periodic inspections and curriculum reviews, is in place.

From this experience, I learned that conceptions of quality, regulatory processes aimed at maintaining standards, and rigid authoritative relations (mentor/mentee) are structures that appear to resist change and slow innovation in higher education in Ghana. At the same, a statutory process does exist for new higher education institutions to become autonomous, although it can take decades. Once an institution receives a presidential charter and becomes autonomous, it must still meet accreditation requirements, but opportunities for innovation and change become easier. Teacher education in Ghana, on the other hand, has historically functioned more like secondary education than higher education. Within the arena of curriculum and assessment, uniform academic programs and course materials are imposed on all colleges of education and final examinations are developed and administered by an external body. College of education tutors have had little authority to make key decisions about the content or assessments in the courses that they teach. Instead, the role of tutors has been historically one of "delivering the curriculum."

Therefore, when I read in a news article that a key regulatory change in the effort to improve teacher education was to upgrade colleges of education to the undergraduate level—initially under affiliation relationships but with a pathway to becoming autonomous universities—I immediately felt this was significant. Going from an arrangement of imposed uniform curriculum and system-wide external examinations to moderation teams that vet syllabi and final assessments represents a significant increase in the authority over the knowledge of teacher education for tutors (the term used for teacher educators in Ghana's system of teacher preparation) and a stepwise increase in institutional autonomy. The new arrangement has begun with each college of education assigned to one of the five mentor universities—public universities that have faculties of education—with the promise of a pathway to becoming

autonomous universities sometime in the future. However, there is no guarantee that within these new affiliation relationships colleges of education will end up on the side of innovation and change rather than continuing to uphold the status quo or acceding to the directives of the mentor university. In the case of the university where I teach, the university's leadership played a crucial role in ongoing discussions that eventually led to a degree of acceptance of alternative assessments and other innovations in teaching and learning, for example, by effectively articulating the educational purpose of alternative forms of assessment to regulators and successive Vice Chancellors of the mentor university. That is why, in this study, I am also interested in the perspectives of the college of education principals and their views on the nature of teacher education quality and the quality of teacher education graduates and how they ought to be evaluated.

Significance of the Research to CIDE

My perspective imagines decades of reforms bumping up against enduring conceptions of quality and conventions of quality evaluation within teacher education: mainly evaluating teacher education knowledge through externally written examinations and a tradition of oversight and supervision that today is embodied in the system of university affiliation. Both external examination and university affiliation have roots in British colonial administration and such structures may underlie the pedagogical stability observed within education systems in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. This perspective draws on the theoretical framework of new institutional theory, which examines how people actively construct meaning within institutionalized settings through language and other symbolic representations. New institutional theory emphasizes the need to pay more attention to the concrete historical actors who built a particular institution, their purposes, and their contexts (H.D. Meyer & Rowan, 2006). Although

there is a large body of work applying institutional analysis to organizational research and education reform in the United States, and to the diffusion of educational forms through globalized educational organizations and professionals, a new institutional theory approach has rarely been used to understand impediments to educational reform at the organizational level in the sub-Saharan Africa context.

Organization of the Dissertation

The remainder of the dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 reviews three bodies of literature: a corpus of studies that paint a detailed picture of teacher education in Ghana and sub-Saharan Africa in contemporary times; scholarship that introduces the sociological perspective of new institutionalism and highlights several studies of educational change from a new institutional theory perspective; and finally, scholarship that examines the role of autonomy in institutional processes. Chapter 3 lays out the study's comparative case study approach and details procedures used for sampling, data collection, and analysis, and concludes with a consideration of trustworthiness and ethics.

Chapters 4 and 5 are organized around eight institutionalized social structures that emerged as themes in the analysis of the case study data. Chapter 4 delves into the historical antecedents and cultural and material contexts of these structures—with a particular focus on enduring patterns and conventions in processes of quality evaluation—and examines the ways in which these have shaped the organizational character of colleges of education in Ghana. Questions such as: How did these structures come about? Whose interests did they serve? How are they interconnected and what accounts for their reproduction over time? are addressed. Chapter 5 applies the lens of new institutional theory to the study's interview, observational, and present-day documentary data and draws out a comparative perspective on the ways in which

institutionalized structures shape actions and activities within colleges of education today. The analysis reveals important transformations in teaching methods stemming from reform processes, as well as disjuncture and dilemmas that differed for tutors and principals implementing reforms within colleges of education on the one hand, and faculty at mentor universities supervising reforms on the other. The study's final chapter, Chapter 6, draws out the major findings from the case study of Ghana's reforms upgrading teacher education to university education and offers four evidence-based "propositions" that are of general value for teacher education stakeholders in Ghana and elsewhere and CIDE scholars. The chapter goes on to discuss the study's implications, offers five lessons for policymakers and practitioners, and concludes with a discussion of the study's limitations and ideas for further research.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

In the preceding chapter, I outlined the ways in which teacher education reform in sub-Saharan Africa is currently positioned as a response to the "low-learning crisis" narrative in international development. Broadly, econometric studies, which investigate various quantitative inputs into education and their association with learning outcomes, show that there are no simple "fixes" to the low-learning crisis and that system-level dynamics, which are unexplainable in retrospective and randomized experimental studies, account for most differences in how much students learn in school (Pritchett, 2015; Glewwe et al., 2011). Scholars from the sociocultural perspective conceptualize these "system-level dynamics" as rooted in the historical, cultural, and material context of the institution of schooling in a particular region or country (Tikly & Barrett, 2010; Samoff, 2012; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2012; Tabulawa, 2013). The purpose of this chapter is to situate this study of Ghana's policy to upgrade teacher education to university education—aimed at improving teaching quality and how much Ghanaian pupils learn in school—empirically and theoretically within institutional structures that surround teacher education in Ghana today.

I begin the review with studies on the contemporary situation of teacher education in Ghana. These studies identify the key challenges and weaknesses within teacher education at the turn of the century, highlight various reform efforts since that time, and examine the extent to which teachers' classroom practices are related to the pre-service teacher education experience. For the most part, these studies suggest that teacher education reforms over the past 20 years have not led to changes in teachers' classroom practices nor improved how much students learn. Therefore, new understandings are needed to support policymakers and teacher educators to implement system-wide changes that will lead to desired outcomes.

The second section delves into the theoretical framework of new institutional theory and examines how "new institutionalism" has been applied to studies of contemporary educational change, mostly in the US and South American contexts but with one recent example in sub-Saharan Africa. This section attempts to differentiate new institutional theory that will be used as the analytical framework for this study from "old" institutionalism and from the world systems approach, which is strongly contested in CIDE. I lay out how Scott's (2014) analytical framework of the regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements of institutions can be productively applied to a historical analysis of institution crafting, the stabilizing process of institutionalization, and opportunities for institutional disruption and change in teacher education in Ghana.

The third section explores the role of autonomy in institutional processes. Current reforms introduce a pathway to greater autonomy for colleges of education in Ghana. In this light, reforms can be seen as a form of political action aimed at bringing about a reorganization and redistribution of power among individuals and groups (Bates, 2007). The implications of historical constraints on autonomy within the field of teacher education in Ghana are discussed.

In wrapping up, I make the case for new institutional theory as an appropriate sociocultural lens and analytical framework to guide a study of teacher education reform in Ghana. New institutional theory tells us that institutions construct action *and* action constructs institutions. In seeking to understand how the actions of those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education maintain or alter enduring structures and conventions of the past, this study aims to generate useful insights that could benefit other teacher education reform projects.

Teacher Education in Ghana and Sub-Saharan Africa at the Close of the 20th Century

A detailed picture of preservice teacher education in Ghana at the turn of the century emerged through the Multi-Site Teacher Education Research (MUSTER) project hosted by the University of Sussex. Between 1997 and 2002, The MUSTER project, funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), explored different aspects of initial teacher education in five low-income countries: Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, and Trinidad and Tobago. Baseline and exploratory studies in each country involved over 50 researchers, most of whom were based within academic institutions in the focal countries (Lewin & Stewart, 2003). Academics from The Institute of Education at The University of Cape Coast carried out the MUSTER studies in Ghana. This is particularly relevant, as we will see below because the Institute of Education superintended the oversight and accountability role in teacher education in Ghana until recent reforms, and therefore, the MUSTER partnership facilitated a strong link between academic scholarship on teacher education and subsequent reforms and policy changes.

In summarizing the formative stage and shaping of the MUSTER project, Lewin and Stewart (2003) noted some patterns in what was known about teacher education in the five focal countries in the mid-1990s as well as gaps in knowledge. First, countries allocated substantial resources to teacher preparation in the belief that it enhances the quality of teaching and student achievement. Second, training programs based on models developed by former colonial powers persisted. Third, there was widespread dissatisfaction among stakeholders with the efficacy of teacher training and that teaching methods in schools had been slow to change. Fourth, commitments of governments to realize Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) to ensure universal access to primary school were putting a severe strain on teacher training in each country. Fifth, the ways in which teachers acquire and use professional knowledge in the focal countries, and low-income countries in general, were not

well understood. Finally, Lewin and Stewart noted that most empirical and theoretical conceptualizations of initial teacher training at the turn of the century were grounded in high-income countries with very different sociocultural contexts and material resources.

The Ghana MUSTER research used a three-stage framework—inputs, processes, and outputs—to capture experiences and perspectives along the journey of becoming a teacher (Akyeampong, 2003). Data examining *inputs* focused on who entered initial teacher training, the experiences and backgrounds of new trainees, and their expectations of the teaching profession. Data examining *processes* focused on the teacher training college curriculum, its delivery, and financing. Data examining *outputs* focused on the early experiences of newly qualified teachers—their perceptions of what they gained or did not gain from teacher training, changes in their images and expectations of teaching, and perceptions of head teachers regarding newly qualified teachers' preparation and effectiveness in the classroom (Akyeampong, 2003). Data was gathered using a variety of methods, including surveys, interviews, focus groups, classroom observations, life-history journals, and official statistics. Each stage will be discussed below.

Inputs

Akyeampong and Stephens (2002), in a MUSTER study that surveyed 100 trainees in their first and third year of training at each of four teacher training colleges (TTCs) in the southern part of Ghana, found that trainees for primary and junior secondary teaching ranged in age between 17 and 29 years, the majority (73%) were between the ages of 19 and 21, and 63% had delayed between two and five years after completing secondary school before entering teacher training. Most trainees came from modest family backgrounds that included parents who were teachers, farmers, and traders. Teacher trainees reported job security and social mobility as the primary motives for choosing to enter teacher training, though altruistic motives, such as "the

desire to impart knowledge, interest in working with children and an interest in raising the standard of education in the country" (p. 269), were also mentioned. The teaching profession has historically been a steppingstone for social and academic mobility in Ghana, and the Ministry of Education program of study leave *with* pay, available after three years of classroom teaching, continues to draw young people to teaching for an interim period (Akyeampong & Lewin, 2002). This finding is consistent with the Akiba et al. (2007), who reported that Ghana had the lowest number of teachers with more than three years of experience out of 46 countries that participated in the 2003 PISA test.

The academic level of those entering teacher education was found to be weak and two MUSTER studies concluded that many trainees struggled with the academic content of the teacher training program (Akyeampong & Stephens, 2002; Akyeampong & Lewin, 2002). Entry requirements for teacher education during that time (and until recent changes to upgrade teacher education) were a minimum exam mark of E8, considered a weak pass on an A1 to F9 scale, in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, and two electives.[3] In the four-college sample, Akyeampong and Stephens (2002) found that 69% entered with an E8 in English and 22% with a D7; 40% entered with an E8 in mathematics and 25% with a D7.

Beginning trainees brought generally positive views of what they believed they could achieve as teachers (Akyeampong & Lewin, 2002). Most believed that teachers could improve the academic performance of slow learners (59%) and most disagreed with the statement "teachers are born and not made" (60%), suggesting that they expected the training experience to improve their capacity to teach. In terms of pedagogy, 86% of those entering teacher training

[3] The WAEC grade scale is as follows: A1 (Excellent); B2 (Very Good); B3 (Good); C4, C5, C6 (Credit); D7, E8 (Pass, No Credit); F9 (Fail) (www.wikipedia.org).

agreed that “the most important thing a teacher can do is teach pupils facts” but at the same time felt that “pupils learn more from asking questions than listing” (62%).

The Muster data for Ghana also showed that the images trainees brought with them of teachers from their own educational experiences were both positive and negative. Trainees recalled teachers who impacted them positively through their resourcefulness, teaching approaches that made learning feel easy, their moral guidance, subject knowledge, and their commitment to helping pupils remain in school when circumstances of hardship arose. Negative images were often around corporal punishment— “caning" as it is called in Ghana—which could be meted out by teachers for poor academic performance, failure to answer questions in class, and for disciplinary reasons. According to Acheampong (2003), "in general, trainees perceive these as counterproductive, but others felt it served a moral purpose by shaping character and motivating hard work" (p. 44). Being labeled by teachers as slow learners, poor teacher attendance, or teachers coming to class inebriated were also recounted as negative experiences.

Processes

During the time of the MUSTER studies, teacher training colleges structurally and operationally resembled secondary schools (Akyeampong & Furlong, 2000). Training for teaching at the primary level was a secondary qualification until 1978. Campus infrastructure typically included residential boarding facilities (dormitories), a dining hall, classrooms seating 40 to 50 students with desks arranged in rows facing the chalkboard, a small library, staff bungalows, an administrative block, and sports fields. Daily life for trainees was highly regimented, with uniforms, daily chores, scheduled class time and prep, and co-curricular activities required. According to Akyeampong (2003):

> [The] life of students on the college campuses seems too highly structured and regimented. This may be a legacy of the missionary roots of most of these colleges. But in the extreme, it may create a feeling of dependency on authority; it could undermine the spirit of autonomy and responsibility that trainees need to internalize for effective professionalism once they start full-time teaching. (p. 50)

In Ghana's post-secondary system of teacher training, instructors were referred to as tutors. Generally, tutors interviewed by the MUSTER team believed that teacher training colleges should be responsible for instilling a sense of discipline and duty commensurate with a teacher's role in society and upholding strict rules and regulations was an appropriate means to that end (Akyeampong, 2003). On the other hand, there was a feeling among some teacher trainees that the strict college rules and regulations made trainees feel as though they were "being treated like primary pupils" or that the training was "somehow like military training" (p. 46).

By the year 2000, the Certificate 'A' qualification for teaching at the primary and junior high school level (JHS) had transitioned to a three-year program, consisting of 33 instructional weeks, eight of which were allocated to teaching practice in a primary or JHS classroom. The Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast regulated the curriculum for initial teacher training in collaboration with the Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service and the Ministry of Education. Subject panels, composed of TTC tutors and subject chief examiners from the University of Cape Coast, periodically reviewed the curriculum under guidelines from the Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service. Subject chief examiners from the University of Cape Coast were also responsible for overseeing the development, administration, and marking of external examinations for each level of teacher training, as well as certifying graduates (Akyeampong & Furlong, 2000)

The three-year initial teacher training course was structured as follows: 30% general education, consisting of eight subjects (mathematics, English, science, a Ghanaian language, physical education, cultural studies, education, and agricultural studies); 30% elective subjects, five courses chosen from either math/science-oriented courses or English/vocational skills courses; and the final 40% oriented around education theory and practice, but not tied to a specific disciplinary area. However, second- and third-year subject courses are to be divided between subject knowledge and teaching methods. In terms of assessment, external examination constitutes 70% of trainees' overall marks, with 30% coming from internal continuous assessments administered by training college tutors.

Each subject is examined in two papers. The first paper focuses on subject knowledge and the second on subject application or teaching methodology. Exams are a combination of short-structured questions, multiple-choice, and questions requiring written responses. In order to pass each subject, a mark of 40% on both papers is required. Continuous assessment marks are sent to the Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast where they are combined with exam scores in the calculation of trainees' final grades. To pass the teaching practice component of the program, trainees write a 'long essay' on an approved topic related to teaching and learning and receive marks from their practicum supervisor. According to Akyeampong and Furloug (2000), it is uncommon for trainees not to pass teaching practice. On the other hand, trainees who do not pass final external examinations are still given teaching posts but receive the lower salary of an untrained teacher until they re-sit and pass the exams.

Although the introduction of the continuous assessment component in 1990 was intended to provide an opportunity for TTC tutors to improve the link between teaching competencies and assessment, in reality, Akyeampong and Furloug (2000) found that the assessments given by

tutors were similar to final external examinations in their form and theoretical orientation and sometimes generated from past examination questions. There was little indication that continuous assessments were used to support formative feedback or to improve students' teaching competencies.

In addition to being time-consuming and expensive, Akyeampong and Furloug (2000) offered the following critique of the examination system:

> The current method of assessing teacher trainees based on summative end-of-year assessments through final examinations moderated by an external agency only tests students' ability to demonstrate acceptable cognitive objectives. In other words, the current system of assessment for post-secondary teacher education may be lacking in construct-related validity due to the highly cognitive nature of the content of assessment. (p. 30)

The MUSTER studies also sought to profile those who teach trainees. In the four-college sample, TTC tutors were 76.4% male and 75% over age 40. Most had a bachelor's degree (71%), while 3.6% possessed a master's degree, and 25.4% had a diploma qualification. Slightly more than half of tutors (55%) had no experience teaching at the primary school level while the remaining had between one and five years of primary teaching experience. In contrast, 70% of tutors had taught at the JHS level, with 43% having between one and five years of JHS teaching experience and 27.2% more than five years. About 10% of tutors had university teaching experience (Akyeampong, 2003). Most tutors received their Diploma or Bachelor of Education degrees at either the University of Cape Coast or the University College of Education of Winneba (Akyeampong & Furloug, 2000).

In order to gain insight into the delivery of the curriculum, MUSTER researchers observed lessons in three TTCs in the following subjects: science, mathematics, education, English, and religious studies (Akyeampong, 2003). Observations were followed by interviews with tutors to understand underlying objectives and the philosophy behind instructional practices. By far, the dominant instructional approach was transmission of knowledge, where tutors lectured to their students and there appeared limited engagement or active participation and only occasional questioning for clarification. Tutors justified this approach by explaining that "it ensured good coverage of the syllabus, in view of the limited time available to complete teaching before external examinations" (Akyeampong, 2003, p. 50).

Although less common, there were some active learning and student-centered approaches observed, including debates and lively discussions. Tutors who used these approaches felt they promoted better understanding since students had to defend their views and were useful in generating a "wealth of information," additionally, it made learning more interesting. A question-and-answer approach was also observed in some lessons, which tutors tended to use particularly when reading was assigned prior to the lesson.

In observing teaching methods lessons, a common approach was through "lectures interjected with questions and answers, and occasionally by a demonstration of a teaching apparatus," for example a manipulative or fraction board (Akyeampong, 2003, p. 52). Akyeampong (2003) remarked that while there was a lot of rhetoric about the activity-based approach and student-centered learning, "Further investigation revealed that it was mostly perceived as physical involvement with manipulative materials, or greater student participation through the question-and-answer technique" (p. 52).

According to Akyeampong (2003), during interviews tutors alluded to the "hidden," or sometimes open, pressure from students to teach in ways that maximize their chances of scoring high marks on external exams. Taken together, the examination system, the fact that the curriculum is overloaded with disciplinary subjects, and the perception that formative and alternative assessments are add-ons and therefore increase the workload, all appeared to be disincentives for tutors to engage in instructional practices that have greater potential to enhance trainees' learning experience and teaching practice.

Expenditure

During the 1997/98 academic year, 20,399 teacher trainees were enrolled in 38 government-run TTCs each offering the same three-year post-secondary Certificate 'A' qualification for K-9 teaching (Akyeampong & Furlong, 2000).[4] Recurrent expenditure for teacher education was met by the Ministry of Education budget while capital expenditure, for example, funds for refurbishing existing structures or for new buildings, tended to be funded by donor agencies or donations to colleges from community groups and alumni.

Recurrent expenditure on teacher education as a percentage of total recurrent expenditure on education was estimated at 6.9% in 1997/98 compared to 2.7% in 1989/90. In order to increase the number of classroom teachers with preservice training, in 1992 the government increased the allowance paid to teacher trainees, resulting in a dramatic increase in the number of new trainees (Akyeampong & Furloug, 2000). In the year 2000, over 90% of recurrent expenditure allocated to TTCs was spent on trainee allowances and salaries paid to teaching and non-teaching staff (some college operating costs are taken from trainee allowances), leaving only

[4] The qualification for secondary school teaching required some tertiary (university level) education. Tertiary programs leading to a Diploma Certificate, Bachelor of Education, or Post-Graduate Certificate in Education were available in the early 2000s through the University of Cape Coast or the University of Education at Winneba.

about 10% for other expenditure (Akyeampong, 2003). This finding explains to some degree persistent challenges with poorly maintained infrastructure and insufficient supply of materials reported by several MUSTER studies.

Outcomes of the Teacher Training Experience

In a MUSTER survey (Akyeampong, 2003) in which newly qualified teachers were asked to indicate areas in which their training experience was relevant and useful for teaching, they reported: lesson notes preparation (67%), subject content (87%), teaching strategies (90%), classroom management (92%), assessment methods (90%), attending to individual pupil needs (83%), designing teaching/learning materials (78%), and using teaching and learning materials (87%). Newly qualified teachers consistently pointed to teaching practice as the most significant experience of their training. However, MUSTER's in-depth case studies found that often new teachers were unprepared for the realities of their classroom settings and did not know how to respond to them adequately (Hedges, 2000). Basic school head teachers also felt that newly qualified teachers were often unprepared, taught at the wrong level, and did not select appropriate activities and methods (Akyeampong, 2003). In the case studies of newly qualified teachers, Hedges (2000) observed that without experience and practice from real teaching during college training, new teachers often took up prevailing practices in their schools and sought tips and suggestions from head teachers when faced with teaching challenges.

One of the MUSTER studies used the same questionnaire administered to first-year teacher trainees, final-year teacher trainees, and newly qualified teachers to determine to what extent views of teaching change over the course of training and the transition to early teaching (Akyeampong & Lewin, 2002). Questions were asked regarding views on motivation for teaching as a career, teacher control, and different aspects of teaching and learning. Noting

limitations due to the survey approach and cross-sectional method, the authors tentatively offered the following seven conclusions:

1. The initial expectation that there would be progressive changes in perspective consistent with the teacher education curriculum were only evident in a few of the results.
2. Positive attitudes toward teaching deteriorate as trainees move from their first year of training, final year of training, and into early teaching.
3. While still in training, most trainees disagree with the statement that ‘caning is necessary to maintain discipline’ but this changes significantly once teachers are faced with maintaining control in actual classrooms.
4. Across the three groups, trainees and new teachers maintain their optimism that they can improve the achievement of their students and introduce new teaching methods.
5. Final year trainees and beginning teachers are more likely to feel that teachers are 'born not made' compared to first-year trainees.
6. There was strong agreement among all three groups about the benefit of children working in groups.
7. Enthusiasm for teaching facts seems to diminish and agreement with ‘pupils learn more from asking questions than from listening’ remained high for all groups. (p. 348)

The authors pointed out that the emphasis on teaching as the presentation of facts is not inconsistent with the use of questioning as a teaching strategy because questioning can be predominantly focused on factual recall and this approach “reflects the deeply entrenched

tradition of knowledge transmission practiced in Ghanaian schools" (p. 348). In fact, this approach was often emphasized as an effective strategy by training college tutors and was also used regularly by tutors in their own teaching (Akyeampong, 2003).

The findings of the Ghana-based MUSTER studies are reflective of the results from the other four focal countries (Lewin & Stuart, 2003) with a few exceptions. For example, South Africa began the process of incorporating teacher education into the system of higher education during the period of the MUSTER project in the early 2000s. Of particular relevance to this study is a general conclusion about teacher educators across the five countries. According to Lewin and Stuart (2003):

> The MUSTER study shows the extent to which teacher educators as a group have been overlooked, and suggests some of the reasons why most colleges are not playing a more creative and innovative role in their education systems. (p. 703)

In sum, the MUSTER project brought a significant body of evidence to bear on understandings of who became a teacher in Ghana at the turn of the 20th century, the teacher education experience, and its impact on newly qualified teachers' classroom practice at that time. Social mobility was a primary reason young people pursued teacher training, many trainees did not intend to remain in the profession, and many entered with poor academic preparation. Training colleges were socially organized like secondary boarding schools and the experience was a highly regimented one. The teacher education curriculum had a theoretical orientation, transmission of knowledge was the primary approach used by tutors, and assessment was based on external examinations. Although the training experience included some practice teaching, most newly qualified teachers were unprepared for instructional decision-making within the context of real classrooms.

Significantly, the voices of training college leaders (principals in the case of Ghana) were absent from the entire body of MUSTER research in all five countries, and this represents an important gap that this dissertation research aims to fill. Leaders of educational institutions play an important role in either upholding or shifting normative commitments. They are key actors in processes of quality evaluation, those that are externally imposed, such as accreditation and external examination, and internal processes, which may be oriented toward maintaining existing values and structures or toward innovation and change.

Teacher Education Reforms between 2002 and 2015

The In-In-Out System.

Already in the works during the time of the MUSTER studies but not implemented fully until 2002 is the In-In-Out system, in which teacher trainees complete coursework work during the first two years and then complete a one-year teaching practicum in a primary or JHS school. The In-In-Out system sought to address the need to make training more practically focused and give prospective teachers better insight into the actual job of teaching (Akyeampong, 2003). In 2013, Adu-Yeboah et al., (2016) conducted a study to examine the In-In-Out system and how the process of mentoring and supervision prepared trainees to teach. Through surveys of 232 trainees at 12 placement schools in the Central Region of Ghana, follow-up focus group interviews, as well as interviews with mentor teachers and college of education supervisors, the study concluded that the practicum experience had important weaknesses and that the objective of the practicum bumped up against norms of assessment and the prevailing examination culture. First, observations by supervisors were geared to summative assessments of teaching, resulting in scores that would become part of students' grades, rather than formative assessment which could support trainees' gradual improvement. Second, during the practicum year trainees were also

focused on preparing for final examinations, which weigh more heavily on their grades than teaching practice, and ultimately determine their certification. Another weakness pointed out by the authors was the fact that there was little engagement with mentor teachers. Mentors were often not present, were generally unfamiliar with the benchmarks against which trainees would be evaluated, and received little or no training in the process of mentorship. As a result, the practicum experience offered little opportunity to "engage in practical reflective activities which help student teachers to function effectively in real classroom situations" (p. 22). This shows that methods of evaluating trainees' teaching practices—such as formative feedback—that did not align with norms of quality evaluation (i.e., examination) were less valued.

The New Diploma in Basic Education.

The next set of reforms targeting weaknesses in preservice teacher training came in 2004/2005. The post-secondary Certificate 'A' was replaced with the three-year Diploma in Basic Education, considered a tertiary or higher education qualification, though not equivalent to a bachelor's degree. TTCs were thus upgraded to Colleges of Education (COEs), however, admission requirements remained lower than undergraduate degree programs. The In-In-Out structure remained, but curricular changes were made to reflect a new basic school curriculum that included greater use of activity-based and student-centered approaches. The innovation of micro-teaching, where trainees plan 20-minute lessons on an assigned topic and deliver the lesson to their peers, was also added to the teacher training curriculum at this time (Adu-Yeboah, 2011).

Unfortunately, changes brought about by the Diploma in Basic Education, which were meant to emphasize teaching practice and help trainees develop skills to deliver active and student-centered approaches, encountered familiar obstacles. Studies examining how teacher

education prepares new teachers to teach early reading and mathematics concluded that while COE tutors appeared to have good knowledge about pedagogies (for example phonics or 'look and say', reading for understanding, etc.), their own practice mostly involved "telling" and "showing" and failed to engage prospective teachers in "reasoning about practice" (Adu-Yeboah, 2011; Akyeampong, 2017). Adu-Yeboah (2011) noted that micro-teaching was relegated to time slots after regular lecture hours and tutors complained that it was undervalued by trainees because "it is not examinable" (p. 29). Tutors recognized that much of the knowledge trainees gained was theoretical and blamed the lack of teaching materials and the examination system for creating "negative attitudes toward practical learning activities at the college" (p. 30). According to one tutor, this "creates demand for 'teaching pamphlets' and un-referenced tutor notes which focused on providing definitions and descriptions of terms, listing and providing model answers to past exam questions" (p. 30).

The strong link between the academic scholarship on teacher education in Ghana and policy reforms since the 2000s was facilitated by the MUSTER partnership between the University of Sussex and The Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast. The In-In-Out system and changes implemented with the new Diploma in Basic Education are clear attempts to address findings from the academic research. It is also clear, however, that the external examination system was a force acting in opposition to these reforms by continuing to orient stakeholders—tutors, teacher trainees, those at the Institute of Education who carry out the external examinations, among others—toward a view of teacher education knowledge as mostly academic, examinable, propositional knowledge.

Teacher Preparation and Continuing Professional Development in Africa (TPA)

The partnership between the Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast and the University of Sussex continued with a second multi-country study intended to fill the knowledge gaps identified by MUSTER around how initial teacher education impacts the pedagogical practices of teachers in low-income countries (Pryor et al., 2012). Called Teacher Preparation and Continuing Professional Development in Africa (TPA), the study, funded by the William and Flora Hewitt Foundation, focused on how teachers acquire pedagogical practices that contribute to or impede early learning and progression in reading and mathematics. TPA involved teacher training institutions and newly qualified teachers (within the first three years of teaching) in six sub-Saharan African countries: Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda.

The TPA study took a mixed-methods approach and was conceptualized around making a series of comparisons between the knowledge, understanding, and practices relevant to the teaching of early reading and mathematics that are expected to be included in training and those that are exhibited at different points during training and early career (Akyeampong et al., 2013, p. 273).

The conclusions of TPA are very relevant to my study because they strongly support the view that teacher training is “sticky,” meaning that the training experience has a significant impact on teachers’ practices in the first three years of teaching. First, Akyeampong et al. (2013) report that in all the countries studied, initial teacher education was identified by newly qualified teachers as having the most lasting impression on their teaching practice when compared to other inputs, such as their own experience as learners or teaching knowledge gained from colleagues. From interviews, this appeared to be the case because training college learning "provided an authoritative confirmation of a correct way of teaching" (p. 275). Further, the structure of lessons

and the sequence of teaching procedures observed by newly qualified teachers conformed to the same procedures identified in college-level observational data (in other words, how training college tutors actually taught), though the perceived 'correct way' to teach early reading or mathematics varied in each country.

Second, the research team found that teacher training is focused mostly on subject content, not methods. One reason for this is that many aspects of the teacher education curriculum repeat subject content from the previous cycle of schooling (secondary in the case of Ghana), which leaves little time to delve into pedagogical content knowledge needed to effectively teach early reading and mathematics. Third, “training induces misplaced confidence and leads to standardized ‘correct’ approaches to teaching” (Akyeampong et al. 2013, p. 276). For newly qualified teachers, confidence was derived from their knowledge of specific procedures and a belief that their professional responsibility was the effective delivery of those procedures, “conspicuously missing was attention to children’s understanding and the processes they were using in learning” (p. 276). Simulations and demonstrations in teacher training “idealized children’s responses” and did not reflect the classroom reality of many children from poor and or rural backgrounds, households where parents have little education, and who do not speak the language of instruction. Newly qualified teachers rarely used strategies that tracked pupils’ understanding and progress and more often ascribed poor pupil learning to a lack of resources or parental support, or low ability levels on the part of children.

Fourth, the TPA findings show that opportunities to develop teaching practice did not deliver the practical skills needed to teach early reading and mathematics. Reasons varied by country but included poor sequencing of the practicum (coming too late in the training experience, in the case of Ghana), teaching practice not connected to methods instruction, lack of

formative feedback, and lack of or ineffective mentorship during the practicum. However, one reason for the failure to develop practical skills was common to all TPA countries: the methods of assessment did not focus on the application of teaching knowledge but instead on cognitive examinations of factual information about subjects, education terms and definitions, and 'correct' teaching procedures—in other words, propositional knowledge.

Fifth, primary school curricula were more advanced than the teacher training curricula, utilizing content and teaching approaches that were not sufficiently studied in college. This appeared to be the case even in Ghana, where the Diploma in Basic Education had specifically sought to align subject courses in teacher education with new activity-based primary school curricula. Sixth, teachers across the TPA countries do not learn to teach reading for meaning. The common view of tutors was that comprehension was for upper primary, even where the official curriculum indicated otherwise. Seventh, teachers are not prepared for the language of learning and the reality of multilingual classrooms, where teachers' own, or preferred language, may not be represented. And finally, teacher education does not link learning activities that use manipulatives to specific concepts in lower grade mathematics. In other words, the activities that use manipulatives are mostly viewed as a stage in the lesson, sometimes a "free activity" or to make the lesson more appealing, but without a direct connection to conceptual understandings pupils ought to acquire.

Overall, the TPA research filled an important gap in scholars' and practitioners' understanding of how initial teacher training impacts the pedagogical practices of primary school teachers in sub-Saharan Africa during the first decade of the 20th century. An issue that emerges from TPA as well as MUSTER is the widespread view of teaching knowledge as propositional, in other words, knowledge *about* the disciplinary subjects that will be taught (What is a

compound sentence? What is an improper fraction?) and knowledge *about* education theories and teaching procedures (What is phonics? What are the correct steps for teaching long division?). The TPA research shines a light on the ways this singular view of teacher knowledge impedes early learning of reading and mathematics because it neglects the range of processes that children use when learning these foundational skills and does not emphasize the need to track individual pupils' understanding and progress. Where did this view of teacher knowledge come from? Why is it so highly valued? Why has it persisted in Ghana over many decades? These questions will be addressed in Chapter 4. The next section summarizes the first part of the review of literature before continuing to the second part delving into the theoretical framework of new institutional theory.

Summing Up: A Picture of Teacher Education in Ghana Prior to 2016

So far in this first section of Chapter 2, I have presented a detailed picture of teacher education in Ghana at the turn of the century that emerged from the MUSTER project and a series of reforms aimed at addressing some of the weaknesses that were identified, particularly the need for a shift in emphasis from theoretical subject knowledge to pedagogical content knowledge and teaching practice. These reforms included the In-In-Out system, innovations such as micro-teaching, and better alignment between updated basic school curricula that aimed to be activity-based and student-centered, and new pedagogical approaches taught in teacher education courses.

Subsequent studies evaluating these reforms revealed that hoped-for changes in primary school teaching in Ghana were hampered by, among other things, conceptions of teacher education knowledge and how teacher trainees ought to be evaluated, such as assessments of trainees' teaching practice that produced "scores" rather than formative feedback and the

importance placed on external examinations by the entire system of teacher education. Although some tutors indicated an awareness that examination culture was problematic and hampered the development of teaching practice, they felt constrained by the need to cover a prescribed syllabus and the lack of alternative teaching materials. The TPA research confirms the disconnect observed in Ghana between the knowledge and skills gained during preservice training and what is required for effective primary school teaching, and this disconnect exists in other sub-Saharan African countries. And perhaps most importantly, the TPA study shows that the teacher education experience matters—it matters because it legitimizes a vision of good teaching that focuses on the successful delivery of a set of "correct" procedures and is divorced from pupil learning (Akyeampong, 2013, p. 277).

Why do teacher education stakeholders—tutors and college of education leaders, policymakers, academics, teacher trainees, and the larger society—in Ghana and many sub-Saharan African countries, continue to conform to ways of evaluating teacher trainees that appear to interfere with achieving the purposes of teacher education? Why do external examinations remain so highly valued that even when repeatedly criticized in research and government reports, the entire system of teacher education adheres to and is oriented around them? The next section introduces the theoretical perspective of new institutional theory in order to lay a foundation for answering these questions—theoretically and empirically—in Chapters 4 and 5.

Institutional Theory of Organizations

Institutional theory as a sociological approach has its roots in the 19th-century fields of economics, political science, and sociology. An important scholarly focus during the 19th century was debates about theories of economic change that reflected societal shifts toward

industrialization and market systems. In the 20th century, an institutional theory of organizations became prominent and drew on developments in cognitive psychology, anthropology, and ethnomethodology. At that time, institutional theorists sought to understand cultural processes through which societal institutions—such as market capitalism, legal systems, systems of public administration, or *any functionally specialized arena*—affected organizational practices and structures (Lawrence et al., 2009; Scott, 2014). According to Lawrence et al.,

> The institutional perspective has brought to organization theory a sophisticated understanding of symbols and language, of myths and ceremony, of decoupling, of the interplay of social and cognitive processes, of the impact of organizational fields, of the potential for individuals and groups to shape their environments, and of the processes through which those environments shape individual and collective behavior and belief. (Lawrence, et al., 2009, p.2)

The leading early American figure in the institutional analysis of organizations was sociologist Philip Selznick, well known for his 1949 study of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Selznick emphasized institutionalization as a process:

> It is something that happens to an organization over time, reflecting the organization's own distinctive history, the people who have been in it, the groups it embodies and the vested interests they have created, and the way it has adapted to its environment… In what is perhaps its most significant meaning, "to institutionalize" is to *infuse with value* beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand. (Selznick, 1957; emphasis in original, as quoted in Scott, 2014, p. 24)

According to Selznick, leadership plays an important role in the process of institutionalization because leaders within organizations participate in defining and defending

values commitments. As an organization becomes infused with value, participants want to see its ideas, practices, and interactions preserved:

> By embodying a particular set of values, the organization acquires a *character structure*, a distinctive identity. Maintaining the organization is no longer simply an instrumental matter of keeping the machinery working, but becomes a struggle to preserve a set of unique values. (Scott, 2014, p. 24; emphasis in original)

However, Selznick also showed, through his study of the Tennessee Valley Authority, that the structures and goals of an organization can transform over time due to changes in the commitments of members and the environment within which the organization is embedded.

Early institutionalists, such as Selznick, held a functionalist and macro view of organizations as "adaptive, organic systems affected by the social characteristics of its participants as well as by the varied pressures imposed by its environment" (Scott, 2014, p. 24; Abrutyn, 2009). American sociologist Talcott Parsons took this further with his "cultural institutional view," which argued that wider normative structures within societies serve to legitimate the main functional patterns in the existence and operation of organizations and that these are necessary to implement societal values (Scott, 2014, pp. 27-28).

Institutionalism in Education

John Meyer and Brian Rowan are well known for applying such institutional arguments to patterns of bureaucracy and organizational forms within the US education system in the 1970s and 1980s. Meyer and Rowan (1978) contend that nation-states use education to manage the socialization of a country's citizens and future workers for the modern state and economy. Therefore, one of the outcomes of schooling is a set of standardized public credentials used to incorporate "citizen personnel" into society. This provides the impetus to certify and classify

pupils, to certify teachers, to accredit schools, and to control curriculum on a large scale, resulting in the increasing corporate control of education (p. 219). According to Meyer and Rowen (1978),

> As education organizations' purposes and structures are defined and institutionalized in the rules, norms, and ideologies of the wider society, the legitimacy of schools and their ability to mobilize resources depend on maintaining congruence between their structure and these socially shared categorical understandings of education. (p. 219).

One of the unique features of educational forms in the United States (until recent times) was a lack of evaluative standards for controlling instructional activities in schools at either the state or federal level. Meyer and Rowan (1978) note that in many modern educational bureaucracies, instructional activities are controlled through examinations and the inspection of instructional activities to ensure conformity to the rules. However, in the US, "institutionalized patterns of localism" and the fact that in some communities much of the population would be categorized as failing, had made the imposition of national standards too risky and costly. Instead, they argued that organizational controls in the US education system are designed to avoid inspecting actual instructional activities and outcomes of schooling, that is, "a school's formal structure (its ritual classifications) is 'decoupled' from its technical activities and outcomes" (p. 221). Rather than examination and inspection, the US system employs elaborate displays of confidence and trust, the "myth of teacher professionalism and the autonomy associated with it, which functions to increase the commitments of teachers" (p. 222). In the US system, Meyer and Rowan argue, decoupling allows schools to adapt to the plurality environments, "parties bring to each other the taken-for-granted, good faith assumption that the other is, in fact, carrying out his or her defined activity" (p. 223).

A New Institutional Theory

Partly inspired by the work of John Meyer and Brian Rowan, DiMaggio and Powell's influential 1983 paper *The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields*, laid out new methodological and theoretical directions for institutional theory and opened up new possibilities for empirical studies of organizations (Greenwood & R. E. Meyer, 2008). First, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argued for the "organization field" as the appropriate level of analysis in organizational studies. They defined *organization field* as "those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life" (p. 148). (The term *organizational field* is typically used today and will be used in the remainder of the dissertation.) One could think of a school district in the United States as an example of an organizational field. Constituent groups include teachers, pupils, parents, voters, school administrators, textbook publishers, state regulators, state, federal, and local funders, private tutoring companies, professional development providers, schools of education, etc. DiMaggio and Powell's definition aims to capture the totality of relevant actors and explicitly link institutional thought to ideas about networks—a clear adaptation of the "field" concept from Pierre Bourdieu, who viewed a *field* as a "social arena" (Greenwood & R. E. Meyer, 2008; Scott, 2008; Scott, 2014, p. 17). DiMaggio and Powell argued that a relational approach among and within organizations in a field was more consistent with ethnographic research on how organizations actually work than older models that rely on a functionalist theory of change or view organizations as competing firms, as in a population ecology theory of organizations (DiMaggio & Powel, 1983).

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) were primarily interested in explaining processes of isomorphism—change processes through which organizations within a field take on similar

forms and processes. Therefore, the second key contribution of the 1983 paper was an explanation of three homogenizing "processes of social reproduction" that spur organizational isomorphism—what DiMaggio and Powel labeled as coercive, mimetic, and normative forces. Coercive isomorphism stems from political influence and the problems of legitimacy, such as government regulation, sources of funding, or the need for social acceptability and credibility. Mimetic isomorphism results from responses to uncertainty by organizations that lead to imitation of others within the field. Normative isomorphism is associated with professionalization and standard-setting activities, such as standardized reporting and data collection (what is measured is what is focused on), professional credentials, and diffusion of "best practices" through activities such as professional associations, conferences, and newsletters. Coercive, mimetic, and normative forces intermingle in homogenizing processes, they "accelerate or slow each other's effects, or even tug in different directions" (Greenwood & R. E. Meyer, 2008, p. 262).

A third contribution of the DiMaggio and Powell (1983) paper, one that received little attention at the time but is of more interest today, is a discussion of the link between institutions and elite interests (Greenwood & R. E. Meyer, 2008). In their concluding discussion, DiMaggio and Powell emphasized the need to investigate where new organizational forms come from and whose interest they initially serve. They argue that,

> A theory of institutional isomorphism may help explain the observation that organizations are becoming more homogeneous, and elites often get their way, while at the same time enabling us to understand the irrationality, the frustration of power, and the lack of innovation that are so commonplace in organizational life. (p. 157).

Issues of power in the crafting of institutions and in processes of institutional change are important themes of the *new institutional theory*, which built upon DiMaggio and Powel and began to take shape in the 1990s (H. D. Meyer & Rowan, 2006; Scott, 2008). An example is a study by Benveniste (2002) on the rise of national assessment systems in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. Benveniste (2002) argued that countries' formulation and organization of national assessment systems cannot be fully understood without taking into consideration the political environment that gave birth to them and the nature of power relations between relevant educational actors. Benveniste (2002) concluded that in decentralized educational environments, such as Argentina and Chile, central states can afford to acknowledge inefficiencies in schooling revealed by national assessments as they are not necessarily formally responsible for poor performance. In these contexts,

> National assessments may seek to promote change in the behavior of educational actors by linking student outcomes to public accountability or performance incentive schemes—without these outcomes or schemes necessarily representing an affront to state legitimacy. (p. 90)

In contrast, Uruguay limits the public dissemination of test results and instead highlights the relationship between learning outcomes and student sociocultural factors as a way to signify the government's commitment to equity while "blurring the deficiencies in educational service provision" (p. 117).

Besides issues of power, there are two other key shifts associated with new institutional theory today: (1) an emphasis on the social construction of institutions and the processes through which individuals and organizations affect the institutional arrangements in which they operate (Lawrence, 2009, p. 3); and (2) a greater recognition of how societal frameworks, such as civic

and economic institutions, shape perceived costs, benefits, and preferences within organizational fields (H. D. Meyer & Rowan, 2006, p. 7). Analytically, new institutional theory brings greater focus to the co-production of relational systems and meanings as the constituent element of organizational fields and a recognition that fields are often the site of conflict among contending factions (Scott, 2008).

These shifts in theory and approach are in line with the interpretivist turn in the social sciences that took place toward the end of the 20th century. Interpretivists construe social reality through interpreting human actions, and such interpretation allows the researcher to identify motivation, belief, intention, etc., that are not visible directly (Schwandt, 1998). Social structures are viewed by interpretivists as both a product of and the context for action. For institutional scholars, this has resulted in a shift in attention to the relationship among actors, agency, and social institutions (Lawrence et al., 2009), where actors are conceived of as individuals, organizations, or nation-states. Scott (2008) explains the relationship this way:

> Structures provide an ongoing context within which actions transpire, but are themselves either reproduced or changed by the understandings and choices made by knowledgeable purposive and reflexive actors. (p. 438)

A good example of the new institutional theory approach in the African context is the 2012 thesis by Addy (2012) that examines how teachers' roles in shaping or being shaped by reform processes vary depending on the education system context. Addy compared teachers' roles in cases of curriculum reforms with similar objectives in Botswana and South Africa in the early 2000s. He details differences in the two countries' socio-political histories that are reflected in varying levels of teacher involvement in curriculum reform processes in the early 2000s. Addy concludes that in the post-Apartheid South Africa context teachers were engaged in more

expansive non-teaching activities, such as participating in union meetings, which ultimately resulted in curriculum reform outcomes with larger policy-practice gaps than in Botswana.

A second example, which highlights "institutional work" in educational practice (Lawrence et al., 2009), is a study by Spillane and Burch (2006) that re-examines the issue of coupling between school administration and the instructional core (all of the activities surrounding instruction, including instruction) in the United States. Spillane and Burch challenge the conventional wisdom of loose coupling and show that different dimensions of instruction are coupled differently based on curricular domain. Practices, such as committee work, designed to connect the instructional core to school administration and the broader institutional environment, were more frequent and involved greater leadership participation for mathematics and language arts than other subjects because these domains are now under state standardized testing regimes. Further, curriculum content and materials are more tightly coupled to school administration than teaching strategies, and textbook publishers have become important players that facilitate such coupling. Spillane and Burch conclude that school leaders' and teachers' cognitive scripts for instruction and how to improve it differ for language arts and mathematics. Cognitive scripts were linked to distinctive subject area subcultures that contribute to different patterns of tight and loose coupling within different disciplines (p. 99).

World Culture Theory

A variety of new institutionalism, referred to as *world culture theory*[5] and associated with John Meyer, Francisco Ramirez, John Boli, and colleagues at Stanford University (see Boli et al., 1985), views actor agency as a social construction developed in contemporary societies, and which is both a cause and a consequence of mass education (J. Meyer, 2010). The world culture

[5] World culture theory is sometimes confused with *world systems theory* associated with Immanuel Wallerstein.

approach seeks to understand globalized institutions that maintain systems of "autonomous and purposive individual and organized actors" (J. Meyer, 2010, p. 1). World culture theorists argue that the agentic individual is central in modern societies, a privileged position that is supported by modernizing systems such as the rationalized and scientized knowledge system made possible by the "education revolution" (the pervasive adoption of mass education) and the expansion of individual rights made possible by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These ideas diffuse through international organizations and professionals who travel the globe to advise, train, and mobilize democratic processes and economic market systems (Boli et al., 1985; J. Meyer, 2010; Baker, 2014; Ramirez, 2012). Baker (2014) asserts, "Both the demographic and cultural impacts of the education revolution create what can be called the *schooled society*: a distinctive new social order where the practice and ideas of formal education are a central primary institution" (p. 6). Ramirez (2006) characterizes the world culture perspective on education this way: "As nation-states seek to enact a world-validated 'imagined community' pursuing standardized progress and justice goals much national and educational isomorphism ensues" (p. 125).

An example of comparative education research framed by the world culture perspective is the study by Chabbott (1998), which examines the effects of international development organizations and the professionals they produce on educational norms and conventions, such as the 1990 World Conference on Education for All. Chabbott (1998) argues that international development organizations constitute an organizational field and that institutionalizing processes, such as professionalization and the development of "recipes" and values commitments through world conferences, drive global education norms. Furthermore, she contends that the spread of these norms takes place somewhat independently of nation-state interests (p. 207).

Often, comparative education research framed by world culture theory uses large-scale, cross-national quantitative data and methodologies (Wiseman et al., 2014; Carney et al., 2012). A typical example is a study by LeTendre et al. (2001), which investigated the degree of isomorphism of core instructional practices and teacher beliefs using both quantitative and ethnographic data from TIMMS 1995. The authors compared TIMMS teacher survey and case study data for Germany, Japan, and the United States—countries with distinctive historical and cultural foundations for their systems of mass education. The authors found effects on teacher practices and beliefs at three levels: (1) a globalized institutional form of schooling; (2) national or regional laws that affect the organization of schools; and (3) national, regional, or local systems, customs and expectations (LeTendre et al., 2001, p. 12). LeTendre et al. (2001) conclude that, while there are undeniable national cultural factors that affect teaching in the U.S., Germany, Japan, and other nations,

> An overemphasis on the effect of the general "culture" or cultural ideals within a given nation leads to studies that downplay how global dynamics in national educational policy and school organization affect teachers' working lives. The global isomorphism of schooling that has occurred in the last century is a process that creates similar predicaments for teachers. Classroom environments are remarkably similar around the world, and teachers must work within rather homogenous parameters of instructional practice that are institutionalized on a global level. (p. 12)

The world culture variety of new institutionalism is highly contested in CIDE. Scholars challenge the assumptions, methods, and homogenizing generalizations about education globally. Carney et al. (2012) take issue with the view of education as constructed for an "imagined world society" with taken-for-granted ideas about "what society is and how it works that reflect

Western liberal conceptions of the individual, progress, childhood socialization and the role of the state" (p. 368). They suggest that the strategies of world culture scholars "do not support claims of a 'world culture' but instead tend to *produce* them" (p. 368, emphasis in the original). For example, while empirical studies in the world culture vein often rely on quantitative national-level datasets coordinated by centralized international agencies (for example, UNESCO Institute of Statistics), key world culture actors are also involved in designing these instruments, which are often imposed on governments in aid-dependent countries (Carney et al., 2012; Samoff et al., 2012). Along similar lines, Steiner-Khamsi (2010) counters that,

> The main reason why education reforms in developing countries look similar to those in developed countries is because international donors (development banks, international organizations) provide funding under the condition that a specific reform package—presented as "best practices"—is imported and implemented. (p. 331)

Furthermore, while acknowledging that at a high level of abstraction, there are many similarities in national education documents, how schools are organized, and reform agendas, Anderson-Levitt (2003) concludes that anthropological studies from around the world "point to huge gaps between a model (or models) and actual practice on the ground" (p. 16).

Finally, an additional critique of world culture theory is that questions of power are mostly ignored. Critical scholars in CIDE believe that *all thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are social and historically constituted* (Kincheloe et al., 2018, p. 237). In asserting a grand all-encompassing explanation of educational convergence, world culture theorists gloss over the central fact of power and domination in social structures (Sadovnik, 2011). Carney et al. (2012) assert that the "[s]o-called enactment processes appear entirely consensual in world culture scholarship" (p. 370). Vavrus and Seghers (2010) show that in fact,

even with participatory models of development, partners in policymaking "are not equal because they do not, literally, speak the same language or have the same authority to produce, consume or evaluate policy" (p. 99). Thus, "national preferences" for progressive discourses in education and "shared meanings" that appear in national policy documents and reform agendas are unsubstantiated because voices of those with less authority and those who are out of step with national priorities or obligations are marginalized (Carney et al., 2012).

I argue that neither extreme—the consensual adoption nor the colonial imposition of the Western model of education—fully describes the scene in Ghana in the early 20th century that created and has sustained educational forms. There was certainly administrative and cultural domination by the British colonial government in accountability structures and in what was considered authoritative school knowledge, but other interests supported these forms too. For example, the system of external examinations allowed Africans to compete for jobs in the new wage economy, and, for a few, to ascend into the professions through study at foreign universities. Missionaries consented to the rationalization of oversight and inspection by colonial officials in return for much-needed financial resources for their school-evangelizing projects. And there were important alignments as well between African educational forms, the character and morality orientation of schooling, and highly authoritative adult-child relations in schools (Ball, 1983; Tabulawa, 2013; Assie-Lumumba, 2012). This argument will be laid out in detail in Chapter 4. The next section introduces the analytical concepts and definitions from new institutional theory that will be employed to examine patterns and conventions from the past as well as present-day efforts by those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee Ghana's system of teacher education to create, maintain or alter conceptions of quality and institutionalized structures of quality evaluation.

Institutional Pillars: An Analytical Framework

For this study, I will rely heavily on institutional scholar Richard Scott's (2008, 2014) analytical framework for the empirical study of organizations. Richard Scott was among the prominent institutional scholars at Stanford University and collaborated with Meyer, Rowan, Ramirez, Boli, and others on a wide range of theoretical and empirical studies of organizations. In *Approaching adulthood: The maturing of institutional theory*, Scott (2008) summarizes the general trends in the institutional analysis of organizations since the 1970s, emphasizing early theoretical limitations in the formulations of Meyer, himself, and his Stanford colleagues, and the cumulative course corrections and improvements to empirical approaches that evolved into what is now referred to as new institutional theory.

Scott's (2014) conceptualization of institutions brings the focus to what he calls the *three pillars of institutions*: "Institutions comprise regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life" (p. 56). Scott (2014) views the regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive pillars as the central building blocks of institutional structures and the ingredients behind DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) coercive, normative, and mimetic process of isomorphism. He argues that "[e]ach element is important, and sometimes one or another will dominate, but more often—particularly in robust institutional frameworks—they work in combination" (p. 56).

As defined by Scott (2014)*, regulative elements "*stress rule setting, monitoring, and sanctioning activities" (p.60); *normative elements* "introduce prescriptive, evaluative and obligatory dimensions into social life" (p. 64); and *cultural-cognitive elements* "emphasize the shared conceptions that constitute the nature of social reality and cognitive frames through which meaning is made" (p. 66). Elaborating, Scott (2008) explains,

> The three elements vary substantially in the type of institutional order they support. They employ different compliance motives, logics for action, mechanisms, and indicators. Each element offers a different rationale for claiming legitimacy: legally or state-sanctioned, morally authorized, or culturally supported… It makes a difference whether one complies out of expedience (to avoid punishment), because one feels morally obligated to do so, or because one cannot conceive any other way of acting. (p. 429)

All three elements support and sustain stable behavior. However, Scott (2008) argues that cultural cognitive elements provide the deeper foundation for institutional forms because "they shape classificatory systems, assumptions and premises that underlie institutional logics, and provide the infrastructure on which rules, norms, and beliefs rest" (p. 429).

Importantly, Scott's framework also accounts for individual and collective activities that "bring institutions to life" and the material and human resources that sustain them. Actions, goals, and decisions of individual and collective actors work to produce, reproduce, and change institutions. Material and human resources also play a key role in sustaining institutions and account for asymmetries of power in institutional processes.

In the fourth edition of *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities*, Scott (2014) lays out his analytical framework for empirical studies of organizations that articulates seven properties associated with each of the three institutional elements (pillars): basis of compliance, bases of order, mechanisms, logic, indicators, affect, and basis of legitimacy. The analysis will be guided by these properties, which are presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. *Three Pillars of Institutions*

Properties	Institutional Elements (Pillars)		
	Regulative	Normative	Cultural-Cognitive
(1) Basis of compliance	Expedience	Social Obligation	Taken-for-grantedness Shared understanding
(2) Bases of order	Regulative rules	Binding expectations	Constitutive schema
(3) Mechanisms	Coercive	Normative	Mimetic
(4) Logic	Instrumentality	Appropriateness	Orthodoxy
(5) Indicators	Rules Laws Sanctions	Certification Accreditation	Common beliefs Shared logics of action Isomorphism
(6) Affect	Fear Guilt/Innocence	Shame/Honor	Certainty/Confusion
(7) Basis of legitimacy	Legally sanctioned	Morally governed	Comprehensible Recognizable Culturally supported

Note. From Scott, 2014, p. 60

In Chapter 4, I apply Scott's analytical framework to literature that delves into the historical construction of institutions surrounding western-type schooling in Ghana, teacher education in particular, and institutionalizing processes that reproduced these forms during the period of Ghana's independence and beyond. I argue that these enduring forms and conventions mediate meanings and relations that have shaped individual and collective action in opposition to teacher education reforms of the past. In Chapter 5, I show how reform processes today and those implementing, leading, and overseeing change, contend with social institutions from the past, in some cases transforming them, and in others, reconstructing the status quo.

In the final section of this review of literature, the role of autonomy in institutional processes is discussed, as shifts in autonomy afforded by new regulations in teacher education in Ghana are a major concern of this study.

The Role of Autonomy in Institutional Processes

A final perspective on institutional theory looks at the role of autonomy in institutional processes of differentiation from the perspective of sociology. Abrutyn (2009) views institutions as "the paramount structures facilitating and constraining action, goal setting and decision making" (p. 452). He defines autonomy as freedom of action and hypothesizes a dynamic relationship between autonomy within a social institution and processes of differentiation. Using the law (i.e. the legal arena) as a comparative case study, Abrutyn shows that in countries where the law has greater autonomy, the law as an institution has evolved to become more independent from other social institutions, such as religion and government. According to Abrutyn, "autonomy is a tenuous process, characterized by struggle between and within groups" (p. 457). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) use the concept of professionalization to describe a similar process:

> We interpret professionalization as the collective struggle of members of an occupation to define the conditions and methods of their work, to control 'the production of producers'… and to establish a cognitive base and legitimation for their occupational autonomy. (p. 152)

Abrutyn identifies several conditions that propel or constrain the autonomy of social institutions (i.e., professions), such as population growth, geographic circumscription, emergent political autonomy, and economic surpluses.

It could be argued that teacher education in Ghana is a good example of the corollary to Abrutyn's claim. In other words, uniformity within a social institution reflects low autonomy.

For example, the form and processes of teacher education are similar to secondary education and other post-secondary, non-higher education sectors in Ghana, such as polytechnic education, journalism, and nurses' training, with curricula organized around mostly academic subjects; familiar patterns of formalistic teaching and transmission learning; examination culture; and similar oversight and inspection regimes. Historically, these educational sectors have not evolved to be strongly differentiated. The centralized, resource-constrained environment of the education arena in Ghana has limited individual and collective actions that might otherwise have led to innovation and differentiation for teacher education relative to other post-secondary courses of study. In addition, teacher education remains strongly intertwined with the social institution of religion, another indication of low autonomy, according to Abrutyn's conception. Although colleges of education are no longer mission-run, strong ties remain with founding churches (Presbyterian, Catholic, Methodist, etc.). It is not uncommon for college of education principals to be ordained in the denomination historically associated with the college.[6]

A related argument made by Abrutyn is that whenever collective actors within an institution (for example professional associations) are able to organize material and symbolic resources to produce and distribute goods and services that are valued, institutional autonomy increases (Abrutyn, 2009). Again, the case of teacher education in Ghana could be seen as a corollary to this argument. The lack of satisfaction with teacher quality means that more constraints and less autonomy have been afforded over time, resulting in more layers of oversight and bureaucracy to address quality problems. This is one reason the opportunity for greater autonomy afforded by upgrading teacher education to higher education is significant, as it represents a potential break from this trend. One wonders if upgrading teacher education, along

[6] For an interesting perspective on where religion and education "meet" in Africa, see Stambach, 2020.

with the establishment of the NTC and new National Teaching Standards, could be part of a larger process of teacher professionalization, in other words, for the teaching profession to become more engaged in defining "the conditions and methods of their work," and to "control the production of producers" (DiMaggio and Powel, 1983, p. 152).

Wrapping Up: A Justification for the Theoretical Framework

There are several reasons I view new institutionalism as an appropriate theoretical framework to guide a study of teacher education reform in Ghana. First, I argue that the arena of teacher education in Ghana can be productively conceptualized as an organizational field. Colleges of education are the focal organizations, but the field is comprised of networks of individuals and organizations that have a stake in the education of teachers, such as government regulatory bodies, the Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast, the four other mentor universities, the National Teachers Council, those training to become teachers, local and international NGOs and consultants who promote and support reform (e.g.., T-TEL), and affiliated churches, among others.

Second, new institutionalism emphasizes the coproduction of relational systems and meanings between individual and organizational actors occupying the organizational field. For example, the roles and statuses of those involved in the processes of external examinations for teacher education—subject chief examiners positioned in universities, college of education tutors, future teachers who sit the high stakes exams, etc.—and the symbolic meaning and value attached to examination results. Additionally, the roles and statuses of those involved in processes of accreditation—inspectors and subject experts, college of education principals, staff, tutors, and students—and the symbolic meaning and value attached to inspection reports and program accreditation.

Third, new institutionalism stresses that fields are often the site of conflict among contending factions and the extent to which field participants hold similar beliefs regarding goals, norms, and social logics should be treated as variable (Scott, 2008). Scott (2014) warns:

> Studies of highly institutionalized organizations or organization fields can easily overlook the role of self-interest and power processes because opposing interests have been suppressed and dissenters silenced. (p. 115)

This is relevant to my study because a study of teacher education reform is fundamentally about the possibilities for institutional change. Institutional change emerges through contentions and power dynamics. It emerges through the efforts of those who delve into taken-for-granted routines and assumptions and whose efforts involve political and/or cultural action that can break down cultural-cognitive, normative, or regulative institutional pillars.

Finally, new institutionalism offers a way to link past and present processes and events (Scott, 2014, p. xii) to the study of organizational forms. The institutional lens brings a sociocultural perspective to the present-day predicament of education quality and persistent low learning and Ghana's attempts to address these issues through upgrading colleges of education to universities. Through this lens, I hope to counteract the tendency toward presentism found in much education scholarship today:

> Presentism is a positioning that neglects processes, continuities and discontinuities and rupture – in other words, the temporal and spatial dimensions that may lead to a rich connection with the present. (Bruno-Jofre & Johnston, 2014: 4)

Although fieldwork for this study will focus on the present moment and potential for institutional change, an understanding of where enduring patterns and conventions of teacher education came from, the forces and processes through which they have been reproduced, and the ways in which

they continue to shape relations and meanings in the arena of teacher education in Ghana today, are crucial to understanding the opportunities and processes of institutional change. Furthermore, the MUSTER and TPA studies highlighted the importance of the teacher education experience in shaping newly qualified teachers' classroom practices, and thus, point to the potential for change to impact classroom teaching and how much children learn in school. In the next chapter, I will discuss how these insights and the sociocultural approach of new institutional theory informed the study's methods of data collection and analysis.

Chapter 3: Research Design

To recapitulate, this study aims to understand how Ghana's recent reforms upgrading colleges of education to universities interact with enduring structures and conventions within a system of teacher training that arose in the early 20th century when Ghana was under British colonial administration. The focus is on processes of quality evaluation, for example, the system of external examinations for evaluating teacher trainees' academic learning and the system of university affiliation for ensuring universities meet quality standards. As Chapter 2 points out, no study to date has interrogated how institutionalized structures of quality evaluation interact with teacher education reforms from the theoretical perspective of new institutional theory, and in the post-colonial sub-Saharan Africa context. In this chapter, I detail the study design that aimed to achieve these objectives and produce findings that are useful to policymakers in other countries, particularly countries in sub-Saharan Africa with similar histories of British colonial oversight seeking to improve teacher quality and student learning with changes to their systems of teacher education.

Understanding how changing national policy and regulatory arrangements impact educational organizations is a complex endeavor. The study of policy as it unfolds must account for the fact that educational organizations are subsumed within larger societal contexts, which include social institutions and power structures. Additionally, educational policy formation today is subject to global flows of ideas and resources, while its implementation reflects the local context and "policy-in-practice" when the implementation began. In the case of Ghana's policy upgrading teacher education to higher education, which began in 2014 and is the focus of my doctoral research, the methodological approach must also align with new institutional theory, the study's theoretical framework. New institutional theory calls for rich detailed case studies at the

level of organization fields to understand the practical actions of individual and organizational actors attempting to create, maintain, and alter social institutions (Lawrence et al., 2009). To achieve these ends, I used the comparative case study (CCS) approach, which is well suited to an examination of policy-in-practice, with its view of both policy formation and policy implementation as social and cultural processes, its emphasis on comparison, and its attention to issues of power and inequality (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016). I spent four months in the field, during which time I made numerous visits to three colleges of education, interviewed college of education tutors and principals on each campus, and conducted classroom observations. In addition, I interviewed faculty involved in the supervision and oversight of teacher education, a representative of T-TEL, and examined relevant policy and curriculum documents. The remainder of this chapter will proceed in four parts. First, I present the CCS approach and the epistemological and methodological assumptions that make CCS an appropriate choice for a teacher education policy study framed by new institutional theory. Second, I outline the study design and methods of data collection and analysis. Third, I address issues of validity and my positionality in the context of the study. And finally, ethical issues are given due consideration.

What is a Comparative Case Study?

Comparative case study (CCS) is an approach formalized by comparative and international development education scholars Lesley Bartlett and Frances Vavrus (2016) that applies a sociocultural lens to multi-sited studies of policy-in-practice with the aim of theorizing through comparison. From a sociocultural perspective, policy formation and implementation are seen as processes of cultural production engaged in and shaped by social actors with diverse motives, intentions, and levels of influence. Practice then, is the ways in which such social actors "work in tandem with and/or in response to social forces to routinely produce the social and

cultural worlds in which we live" (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016, p. 2). For the purpose of this study, social forces of particular interest are historically-produced institutionalized structures that have shaped the organizational character of Ghana's system of teacher education and that individuals and groups must "work in tandem with and/or in response to" as they "produce" teacher education reform.

A strength of the CCS approach is the emphasis on comparison. The CCS methodology specifies three axes of comparison: the horizontal axis compares how policy unfolds and is socially produced in distinct locations; the vertical axis directs attention to multiple scales (local to global) within a social arena (e.g., teacher education) and the flows between them; and a transversal axis draws out historical comparison and situates present-day processes in relation to what came before. Along each axis of comparison, CCS brings a critical positioning that seeks to shift the research away from discovering the meaning of symbols, language, or ideas, to examining *processes of meaning-making* (or idea-generation), particularly as they develop in relation to systems of status and authority.

In general, qualitative case study research in the social sciences shares a concern for the meaning of human actions. Qualitative case studies ask open-ended questions about phenomena as they occur in real-world settings, and they favor particular understanding gained from examining one or a small number of "cases" in-depth over broad generalization across many settings, situations, or persons (Yin, 2018; Carter & Little, 2007). Based on Maxwell's (2013) conceptualization, Bartlett and Vavrus (2016) distinguish between three types of case studies—variance-oriented, interpretivist, and process-oriented—and position CCS firmly in the third category of process-oriented case studies.

Process-oriented case studies follow in the interpretivist tradition and take an epistemological view that reality (thus knowledge) is subjective and constructed as opposed to objective and "found" (Sipe & Constable, 1996). Scholars in the interpretivist tradition see meaning construction as a social process and seek to clarify what and how meanings are embodied in the language and actions of the study's participants (Schwandt, 1998). The influential case study scholar Robert Stake distinguished between propositional knowledge gained from observations of objects and events and tacit knowledge, which also dwells on objects and events "but is knowledge gained from experience with them, experience with propositions about them, and rumination" (Stake, 1978, p. 5). According to Stake (1978), our construction of tacit knowledge allows us to recognize others and their roles, to comprehend symbols and metaphors, and to 'know ourselves'" (p. 6)—that is why, understandings based on tacit knowledge guide human actions, "in fact they are inseparable from action" (Stake, 1978, p.5). I follow in this interpretivist tradition using qualitative case study to understand how participants' experience with reforms, and their ruminations about them, guide their practical actions. I aim to provide findings that detail how reform processes unfold and interact with the social institutions—their regulative, normative, cognitive-cultural elements and the resources and relational systems that surround them—that form the particular context in which Ghana's teacher education reforms take place.

Processes-oriented case studies branch off from interpretive case studies in the approach to explanation. According to Maxwell (2013), process theory "sees the world in terms of people, situations, events, and the processes that connect these; explanation is based on an analysis of how some situations and events influence others" (p. 29). Influential organizational scholar Andrew Pettigrew (1997) elaborates on the dynamic nature of process thinking: "It occurs rather

than merely exists. Human conduct is perpetually in a process of becoming. The overriding aim of the process analyst, therefore, is to catch this reality in flight" (p. 338). For studies of policy-in-practice, Pettigrew (1997) asserts that process-oriented case studies are "capable of generating sound knowledge not only of processes and outcomes but also of why and how outcomes are differentially shaped by processes" (p. 342). Although Pettigrew (1979) calls for comparison between a small number of longitudinal case studies, the CCS approach of Bartlett and Vavrus (2016), and the one taken here, favors the three axes of comparison mentioned earlier: a multi-sited horizontal axis, a local to global vertical axis, and a historical transversal axis.

In order to capture flows between multi-level players within a social arena, both new institutional theory and CCS draw on Bourdieu's concept of social fields. The term *organization field* was first used by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) to mean "[t]hose organizations that, in aggregate, constitute a recognized arena of institutional life" (p. 148). Today however, organizational scholars use the term *organizational field* and emphasize the relational and network features of a social arena, directing attention to systems above an individual organization and the environment within which an organization is embedded (Scott, 2014). Certainly, colleges of education are major actors within the arena of teacher education as well as key sites where the ambitions of reforms are being tested. But to understand the broader significance of colleges of education in this process, it is necessary to see their role as players in larger networks in Ghana and globally. For example, global-to-national flows (e.g., the trend of university education for teachers globally, consultants in UK universities that collaborated with Ghanaian government officials and local academics through T-TEL), national-to-organizational flows (e.g., dissemination of national policy documents, flows of financial and material resources, capacity building initiatives, interactions between national bodies such as GTEC,

NTC, The Conference of Principals of Colleges of Education, and denominational churches), organizational-to-within-organization flows (policy implementation processes, such as administrative restructuring, within college quality assurance processes and professional development, etc.). Flows may also skip levels, for example, when international NGOs support the goals of reforms by working directly with colleges of education. Further, bottom-up processes take place at different levels of the field, processes such as meaning-making and interpretation (differentiating new processes from old), goal setting, operationalizing, framing and reframing challenges, monitoring and appraisal, innovation or conformity, compromise or avoidance, etc. The field concept also accommodates interconnections between spatially dispersed locations involving instances of the same phenomenon, for example, flows between colleges of education, such as information sharing, as colleges work to implement new policies and processes. While we may have some notion of the relevant players and the flows between them at the study's outset, CCS suggests an emergent design that allows data gathered in the field to help capture complex networks and policy implementation's "reality in flight" (Pettigrew, 1997, p. 338).

A second feature shared by new institutional theory and CCS is the view that adequate explanation must account for historical roots and changes over time that surround policy processes. Restricting a case study to contemporary time boundaries, as is often recommended by case study textbooks (such as Yin, 2018), limits the possibility of alternative explanations for phenomena that may only become evident if examined from a historical perspective (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016, p. 94). For example, what appears today in Ghana as a habituated interaction between inspectors and instructors during accreditation visits at colleges of education may have transmuted over time from an interaction in response to a new regulation aimed at improving

teaching in missionary schools, to an accepted norm codified at the time of Ghana's independence, to many years later as an interaction based on shared understandings of specific roles with unquestioned assumptions about who has authority over the knowledge for training teachers. Therefore, knowledge of what has come before is vital information for explaining points of resistance and easy alignment to large-scale reforms.

Finally, a third commonality between CCS and new institutional theory is a critical theoretical stance, with its assumptions regarding power and inequality. Both CCS and new institutional theory emphasize that fields are subsumed within larger societal contexts, which include social institutions and power structures. According to Scott (2014), "Fields are seen as a contested arena within which multiple types of players pursue their interests and defend their turf" (p. 225). An important aim of comparison in CCS is to critique inequality and change society by revealing how historical, material, and structural forces allow some groups to have greater influence over dominant meanings and representations (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016, p. 40). In studying teacher education reform in Ghana, it's important to ask whether social institutions, particularly processes of quality evaluation such as external examination and university affiliation, persist because they have been regarded as appropriate by entrenched authorities, and when power and authority are distributed differently, their legitimacy may be challenged.

To sum up, the organizing principle of CCS is to follow a policy—its formation and implementation—through assemblages of actors—processes, gatherings, text, and speech—along a multi-sited horizontal axis, a local to global vertical axis, and a historical transversal axis. CCS comes out of the qualitative interpretive tradition that recognizes meaning construction as a social process and seeks to understand how significant meanings are embodied in the language

and actions of the study's participants. CCS takes a processual and critical approach to policy analysis by focusing on understanding policy processes, networks of influence, and how some situations and events influence others to create differentiated outcomes. Following a policy becomes an iterative process of inductive and deductive reasoning as data cumulates and the tri-axial boundaries of the case fluctuate and eventually stabilize. The next section details the specific CCS design for this study and the methods of data collection and analysis.

Design of the Study

Before proceeding, it will be helpful to review the research questions guiding the study.

1. How are recent reforms upgrading Ghana's system of teacher education to higher education transforming enduring structures and conventions, which historically, have shaped the organizational character of colleges of education?
2. In navigating new regulatory arrangements in teacher education, what practices constitute the range of ways those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education work to create, maintain or alter conceptions of quality and institutionalized structures of quality evaluation?
3. How do those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education perceive the opportunity for greater autonomy for colleges of education under Ghana's system of higher education?

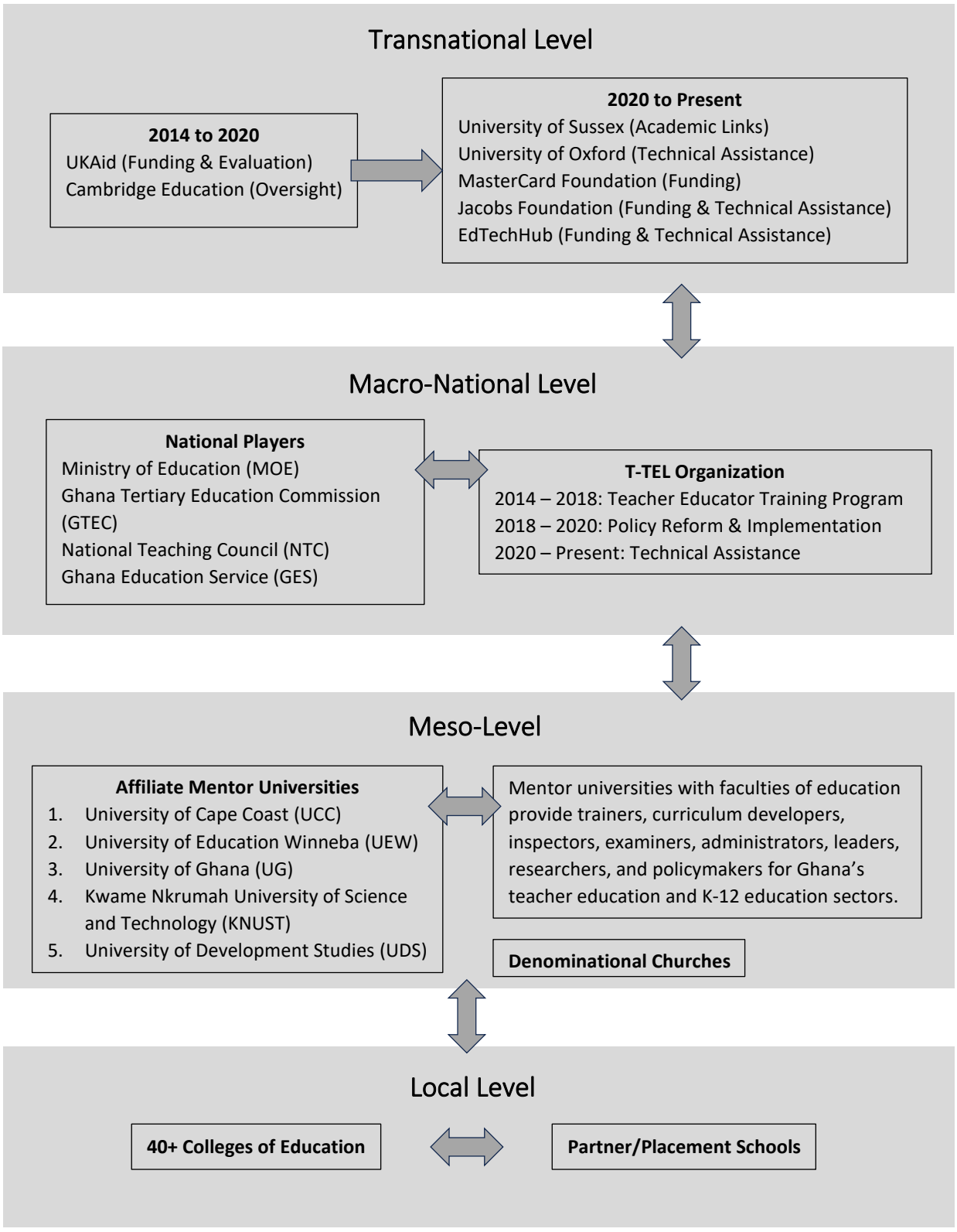
Unit of Analysis

To answer these questions based on a coherent image of the systems above and the environment below which reform processes take place, the study adopted the organizational field of teacher education in Ghana as the level of analysis. The organizational field encompasses, as

much as possible, all those engaged individually or collectively in processes related to the delivery of preservice teacher education in Ghana, who share resources of many kinds to achieve their goals, and who build shared conceptions about how to go about their day-to-day activities (Scott, 2014).

Although the organizational field was conceptualized as contingent when fieldwork began, after speaking with officials at T-TEL, faculty at mentor universities, including those who are directors of institutes for teacher education, college of education principals and tutors, and delving into Ministry of Education documents, T-TEL reports, Bachelor of Education curriculum materials, Ghana's new National Teaching Standards, as well as websites and online sources, a relational network of connections, interactions, and influence within and between global-to-local levels emerged. A relational scheme was conceptualized with four levels. At the *ground level* are 40+ colleges of education and basic schools with which they partner and place their students for teaching practice. Above ground level is the *meso-level,* which consists of the five public universities with whom colleges of education are affiliated and the denominational churches that continue to exert influence on many colleges of education. Next is the *macro/national level*, which includes the Ministry of Education, T-TEL, GTEC, and other national players, such as the NTC and Ghana Education Service. Finally, the *transnational level* includes Ghana's funding partners for teacher education reform and international academics, consultants, and non-governmental organizations offering technical assistance and project oversight. Flows of individuals, documents, data, resources, expertise, and authority, between and among these four levels, mediate teacher education reform processes in Ghana. Figure 2 below gives a visual description of the organizational field conceptualized as the unit of analysis for the study.

Figure 2. *Conceptualization of the Organizational Field and Unit of Analysis for the Study*



Horizontal Axis of Comparison

The cornerstone of current reforms is the upgrading of colleges of education to universities and the implementation of the new Bachelor of Education degree. Therefore, the horizontal axis for the study comprised instances of reform implementation within three colleges of education in Ghana. I approached six colleges of education in the southern part of Ghana and selected three based on two criteria. First, each selected college of education was affiliated with a different mentor university. This was to probe whether affiliation processes varied depending on the mentor institution. A second criterion was the willingness of the principal to participate in the study. Focal processes for data collection at each site included teaching and learning processes; assessment and examination processes; affiliation processes; internal quality assurance processes; capacity building and professional development; facilities upgrades; and processes required by GTEC or T-TEL. Data collection at each site comprised interviews with tutors and principals, classroom observations, observing physical traces, and examining each college's website. The details of interview and observation protocols and approach to document analysis are discussed later in the chapter.

Vertical Axis of Comparison

The vertical axis of comparison comprised a subset of individuals and collective actors positioned at different levels within the organizational field. Beginning at the ground level, three tutors from each of the three participating colleges of education took part in the study, nine in all. At two colleges, the principal called a meeting with heads of departments where I spoke about the study and solicited volunteers. At the third college, I was directed to the quality assurance officer, who pointed me to the offices of various heads of departments and shared their contacts. In the end, the selection consisted of tutors who were interested in participating, had been

teaching for more than five years, were teaching in the upcoming term, and taught different disciplinary subjects. The study took place three years after the implementation of the Bachelor of Education degree, therefore, those who had taught for more than five years would have experienced the transition from the Diploma to the Bachelor of Education.

Although the three principals were embedded in colleges of education, their leadership position and accountability to reform, affiliation, and accreditation processes meant that their perspectives were an important link to higher levels within the organizational field. In some cases, principals were also connected to the denominational church that had a long-standing relationship with their college. From the meso-level, I interviewed faculty at each of the three mentor universities affiliated with the colleges of education participating in the study. In two cases, the faculty members were directors of institutes of teacher preparation at their universities, and in the third case, the faculty was a subject lead for science. From the macro-national level, I reviewed Ministry of Education and T-TEL reports and documents. I also coordinated with GTEC for approval of the study. The primary source of evidence for the transnational level was the website for Cambridge Education https://www.camb-ed.com), the conduit for UKAID funding and project oversight for T-TEL's partnership with the Ministry of Education.

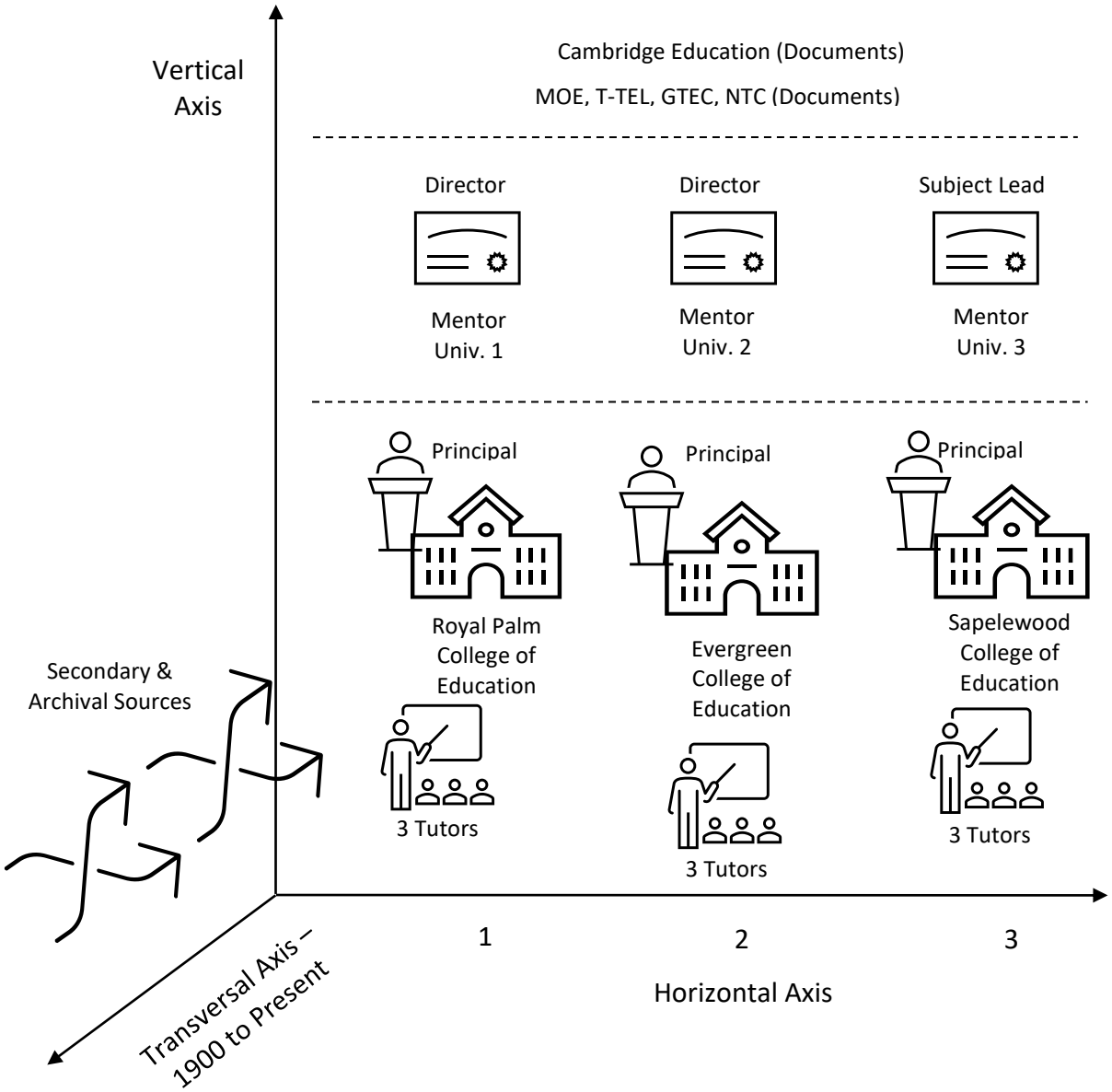
Transversal Axis

Finally, the transversal axis of the study connects the vertical axis and three instances of reform implementation through comparison over time. The historical roots of teacher education in the period of colonial oversight during the early 20th century, the codification of oversight processes and quality standards in the period leading up to and following Ghana's independence in 1957, and reforms to teacher education that continued into the 21st century, are important

institutional structures within which reforms today must contend. The transversal axis also draws attention to the different phases of current reforms that have been shepherded along by the Ministry of Education-T-TEL partnership: T-TEL began as a Ministry of Education capacity building project; the project shifted to efforts at policy reform and statutory change; moved to supporting a consensus-building effort for new teaching standards and regulatory arrangements; facilitated Bachelor of Education curriculum development and implementation; facilitated college of education capacity building and new governance structures; finally arriving at T-TEL's incarnation today as a Ghanaian NGO continuing to provide technical assistance for teacher education and the education sector more broadly. Evidence for the transversal axis of comparison came from a combination of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources were accessed from the Ghana National Archives in Accra, and online from the New York Public Library (https://archives.nypl.org), Internet Archives (https://archive.org/), and The National Archives (UK) (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/). Included among these documents are Church Mission Society correspondence and church bulletins that narrate missionary educational activities, correspondence between colonial officials in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and the Colonial Office in London, advertisements for civil service examinations, publications of the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, papers relating to the founding of the West African Exams Council in 1948, and the Phelps-Stokes Commission Report (1924), among others. For secondary sources, I emphasized African and Western scholars writing about education and development in West Africa throughout the 20th century. A thesis by Yoshiko Namie (1989) titled *The Role of the University of London Colonial Examinations between 1900 and 1939, with Special Reference to Mauritius, The Gold Coast and Ceylon* was particularly helpful in sourcing information regarding the early years of external examinations in Ghana.

Below is a visual depiction of the three axes of comparison for the study. The next section delves into the methods of data collection and analysis used to answer the study's research questions.

Figure 3. *Three Axes of Comparison*



Semi-Structured Interview

Each of the research questions concerns understandings, opinions, and feelings people have based on their experiences with the transition of teacher education in Ghana to higher education. Following Merriam and Tisdell (2016), semi-structured interviews were the chief means through which I gathered tutors', principals', and mentor university faculty's understandings, opinions, and feelings about these changes. According to Charmaz (2011), "multiple sequential interviews form a stronger basis for creating a nuanced understanding of social processes," (p. 10). Following this advice, principals and tutors at each participating college were interviewed twice during a single term with a series of classroom observations taking place in between. I began in September 2022 with a first round of interviews. Principals and tutors were asked about their journey into teacher education; their conceptions of quality teacher education; changes brought on by the upgrading of teacher education to higher education; and issues surrounding assessment and examination in the new Bachelor of Education program. The intention was to ask principals and tutors similar questions on each of these themes, but in a semi-structured way with a conversational style.

The second round of interviews with tutors used the classroom observations as a starting point and delved into teaching and learning processes; new curricula and teaching materials; perspectives on the complex issue of the poor learning outcomes in Ghana; perceptions of the system of university affiliation; and views on university autonomy for colleges of education. Second-round interviews with principals covered similar terrain, except questions on accreditation and the new governance structures were substituted for teaching and learning processes. Second-round interviews were cut short when tutors went on strike in early December 2022. By that time, first-round interviews had been completed at all three colleges of education,

but classroom observations and second-round interviews had been completed at only two colleges of education. In the end, after delving into initial coding and memo writing, and noting saturation on most themes, the fieldwork was brought to a close.

Mentor university faculty were each interviewed once during the September to December 2022 period. These interviews touched on the same themes as principals and tutor interviews but went into greater depth on external examination and affiliation processes overseen by mentor universities. Finally, early in the study, I interviewed a director at T-TEL. This interview was particularly useful in understanding the Ministry of Education's partnership with T-TEL and the different phases of the large-scale reform project. Taken together, the corpus of interview data yielded useful comparisons of experience, opinions, and feelings among those engaged in teacher education reform at three colleges of education, and between those implementing, leading, and supervising reforms at the local, meso- and macro-national levels.

In total, I interviewed 16 individuals, of whom nine were tutors, three were principals, three were mentor university faculty, and one was a director at T-TEL. I conducted 21 face-to-face interviews and one interview over Zoom. Interviews took between 50 and 70 minutes, were audio recorded (except for one interview that was not recorded due to user error), and transcribed using an online transcription service. Following the online transcription, I listened to the recordings and reviewed the transcriptions alongside, making corrections and jotting down reflections. Following the review, transcriptions were imported into NVIVO for coding. (See Appendix A for the interview protocols for tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty.)

Observation

Observational data served several purposes for the study. First, using multiple methods portrays different aspects of the changes taking place within the organizational field. While interviews are used to understand the perspectives of those involved, observations are used to account for activities themselves, and the settings and behaviors that surrounded them (Maxwell, 2013). Second, observations are particularly important for gaining tacit understandings and participants' "theory-in-use" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 103). Akyeampong (2017) gives a good example of the importance of understanding "theory-in-use" in his study of the practice and vision of teacher educators in Ghana:

> The teacher educators in our study generally perceived that they are introducing innovative teaching methods that incorporate TLM [teaching and learning materials] and small group discussions to change the traditional teaching methods such as rote learning, chorus responses, and copying and imitation. However, their belief that innovative teaching should be teacher-centered, in which the instructor demonstrates before students practice with TLMs through small group activities to discover that they all reach the same conclusion, means they do not realize the importance of understanding real classroom contexts. For them, teacher-centered innovative methods can be taught to any classroom regardless of the context. (p. 201)

The second research question explores practices that constitute the range of ways those implementing, leading, and overseeing teacher education reforms create, maintain, or alter institutionalized processes of quality evaluation. Answering this question comes down to observing the "theory in use" of those engaged in the everyday practices of teacher education,

regardless of regulatory intent or statements in documents or views expressed in interviews. For this reason, observation was a vital form of evidence for the study.

Two forms of observation were undertaken. First, classroom observations with tutors who participated in the study were used as a point of departure for second-round interviews. The observation protocol attended to instructional processes, such as classroom arrangements, teaching methods, assessment activities, use of technology, as well as classroom interactions and discourse, cognitive demands on students, and student level of engagement and affect. Classroom observations typically lasted for 90 minutes. Follow-up interviews then probed the extent to which instructional processes and choices were mediated by new curricula, teaching standards, assessment frameworks, professional development, or other influences. In addition, classroom observations supported a greater understanding of the meaning tutors ascribed to quality teaching and learning. In total, five classroom observations were conducted. (See Appendix B for the classroom observation protocol.)

A second form of observation involved spending time on college of education campuses and noting *physical traces*, or the "changes to the physical setting brought about by the activities of people in that setting" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 172). During the three-months of fieldwork, I visited college of education campuses one or two times each week for introductory meetings, to schedule and conduct interviews, and to observe classes. I walked around, was given tours by students, tutors, or principals, ate lunch, and had casual conversations with receptionists, administrators, and tutors. I noted campus infrastructure, including new construction, maintenance projects, discarded furniture, instructional technology usage, office spaces, student spaces, computer labs, library usage, etc. Noting physical traces gave evidence of

the priorities of actors, particularly when resources are constrained. An advantage of physical trace measures is that they recorded the results of actual behavior not reported behavior, and therefore, were a way to triangulate findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Physical traces were recorded in field notes and memos.

Document Analysis

Public records are important sources of data for studying past and ongoing activities of collective actors at different levels. For this study documents were used to supplement the vertical axis of comparison and transversal axis of comparison. Present-day documents at the college level included classroom assessments, teaching and learning activities, rubrics for assessing micro/macro teaching by teacher trainees, course manuals, students' project work, students' reflection reports from school placement experiences, and colleges of education websites. Some of these sources, such as student reflection papers and project work, I viewed during campus visits and recorded details in field notes. At the meso-level, documents included course manuals produced by mentor universities and affiliation documents available online. At the macro-national level, the T-TEL website archived many documents relating to the roadmap to tertiary status for colleges of education, policy briefs detailing new governance and regulatory arrangements, Bachelor of Education curriculum writing and assessment guidelines, National Teaching Standards, and college leadership and management training manuals, among others. Also available online were Government of Ghana statutory documents, Ministry of Education sector reports, GTEC accreditation guidelines, etc. Taken together, documents reflect an official narrative of ongoing national-level reform implementation, standards, and regulatory guidelines. Analysis of present-day documents was an interpretative process carried out through iterative

reflection and memoing, while attending to the source of each document and issues of positionality and bias.

Historical documents available from the Ghana National Archives and digital archives supplemented secondary sources in building an institutional narrative of the development of teacher education in Ghana during the colonial period. Among the documents collected were an assortment of handwritten and typed official government correspondence detailing school accounts and attendance, appeals for funds, and official travel; tallies of examination results; church bulletins and mission correspondence; a teacher training course offered by Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone under affiliation with the university of Durham; and advertisements for civil service examinations in the colonies. Physical documents were scanned to PDF using a mobile phone and uploaded to the computer for note-taking and coding. In addition to useful data, primary documents served as a way to triangulate and give weight to more thorough historical accounts of the development of education in Ghana and Britain's former colonies in Africa (e.g., in-depth studies by Ajayi et. al. (1996), Berman (1975), Foster (1965), Graham (1971), Hilliard (1957), among others)

Analyzing Data

Data analysis in CCS is not prescriptive. Bartlett and Vavrus (2016) do, however, offer a number of guidelines: the data analysis plan should be tailored to the methods used (for this study, methods were interviewing, observation, and document analysis); include an approach to comparison that explores similarities and differences across each axis of comparison; a reminder that "qualitative data collected with a process orientation requires an emergent, iterative approach to analysis" (p. 122); and finally, the data analysis plan "will require an extra step—a

synthesis of the data collected across multiple sites, scales, times, and methods" (p. 122). Following these guidelines, two primary methods were used, coding and memoing (Charmaz, 2001, Saldaña, 2016), which proceeded in four phases. Coding and memoing were aided by NVIVO software.

Phase 1: Memoing and first-cycle coding during data collection. An ad-hoc mix of first-cycle coding methods (Saldaña, 2016) was used initially, including coding for collective actors (T-TEL, UCC, Mentor, GTEC), process coding that labeled references to key processes (accreditation, affiliation, external examination processes, college quality assurance processes, admissions, curriculum processes, professional development processes, and steppingstone), in vivo coding for beliefs and concepts (for example, "the tertiary path" for beliefs about mentorship), codes that tagged historical information, and codes that tagged evidence of institutional logics (stimulus, guidelines, and resources for acting as well as prohibitions and constraints on actions). Simultaneously, I took notes on historical sources and wrote analytical memos applying concepts from institutional theory to the data.

Phase 2: Versus coding. An outcome of reflecting on first-cycle coding and concepts from new institutional theory was the idea of applying versus coding to the interview and observational data. According to Saldaña (2016), versus coding seeks to identify dichotomous groupings: processes or concepts in conflict or dilemmas and power asymmetries revealed in the data. Data are coded as "X vs Y"—for example, "continuous assessment vs examination," "external examination versus tutor written examination," "theory versus practice," "control versus autonomy," "standards versus professionalism," "content standards vs teaching methods," etc. These categories, in combination with concepts from Scott (2014), such as process versus

product contradictions, dilemmas stemming from change processes taking place at different rates, and autonomy versus prescriptions dilemmas, led to useful insights through memoing.

Phase 3: Comparing the past and the present. The next iteration involved analyzing the data in light of the historical development of teacher education in Ghana. Transversal comparison was an iterative process involving a search for "temporal interconnectedness" (Pettigrew, 1997, p. 341). Following Pettigrew (1997), I looked for ways "the past was alive in the present"—through coding of the interviews, classroom observations, field notes of time spent on college of education campuses, and discourses in official documents—and for "antecedent conditions" (p. 341) in the historical narrative emerging from my reading of studies and documents relating to the history of western-type education in Ghana and Africa. In the end, eight institutionalized social structures emerged that were both "alive in the present" and could be traced temporally, and these became the organizing themes for the remainder of the study.

Phase 4: Sorting codes along the horizontal and vertical axes. Using NVIVO to sort the coded data along the horizontal and vertical axes of comparison was a straightforward process. I noted down in memos where similarities and divergences came through.

Phase 5: Synthesizing data around eight institutional social structures. Finally, I chose to synthesize all three axes of comparison around the eight institutionalized social structures and wrote both Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 using these as key themes.

Validity and Positionality

Validity in qualitative research deals with the credibility of descriptions, interpretations, and conclusions drawn from the data (Maxwell, 2013). In other words, "how congruent are the findings with reality?" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 238). Threats to validity—how the inferences and conclusions drawn from the data could be wrong—can come from several

sources: the study's design and data collection methods, researcher bias, the effect of the researchers' presence on the study participants (called reactivity), the approach to data analysis, and how the results are reported. In this section, I discuss each of these threats to validity and how addressed them as I carried out the study.

Validity threats were made less plausible through the following efforts. First, evidence came from differing perspectives horizontally—instances of the transition to higher education unfolding at three colleges of education—differing perspectives vertically—individuals and organizations involved in implementing, leading, and overseeing teacher education reform at four levels—and different perspectives temporally—gathered from individuals who have many years of experience in the system and from present and past institutional documents. Second, experiences and understandings were gathered from individuals who play different roles and who have differing levels and types of influence. Third, frequent site visits that took place over a sustained period of one full term (14 weeks), and included classroom observations, multiple sequential interviews, and physical tracing, brought to light contrasting ways meaning was constructed through a variety of processes (reform processes, teaching and learning processes, assessment processes, affiliation processes, etc.). Taken together, this robust collection of data reduced the risk of biases due to a specific method, helped rule out early spurious associations and premature theories through long-term involvement, and allowed for testing inferences and conclusions through triangulation (Maxwell, 2013).

The study design and data collection methods were also aligned with the theoretical and methodological frameworks that underlie the research. Both new institutional theory and CCS take the view that what is being investigated are people's constructions of reality, of which there

are many (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The data collection helped shine a light on the overlaps and divergences in the constructions of meaning that surround teacher education reform in Ghana. In turn, these multiple constructions were compared within and between the three axes. Thus, comparison was an important strategy for testing threats to validity.

Researcher bias is another important source of validity threat in qualitative research. Rather than trying to eliminate sources of bias, which is impossible, credibility and trustworthiness come from a clear articulation of how a researcher's subjectivity may influence the conduct and conclusions of the study (Maxwell, 2013). My subjectivity in carrying out this study was influenced by my US-based teacher education program, my twenty-plus years of experience teaching mathematics in the US and Ghana, and my experience as a mathematics lecturer at a private university in Ghana since 2008. This research merges my background and interest in pedagogy with a curiosity about Ghana's system of higher education regulation and quality assurance sparked by teaching in a university regulated under the system of university affiliation. As I collaborated with my Ghanaian colleagues to design our courses and submit documents required by our mentor institution, I observed the strong isomorphic pressure exerted by the affiliation system within administrative and instructional processes at our institution. I began to wonder if a similar system of quality assurance within teacher education in Ghana might be one explanation for the striking uniformity in instructional and classroom practices that I observed conducting teaching workshops in public and private schools over the years and through engaging with teachers and principals as a parent. Although this subjectivity is what drew my attention to the phrase "a pathway to autonomy for colleges of education" buried within both Ministry of Education and T-TEL documents, and subsequently shaped the direction of inquiry for this study, in carrying out the research I needed to be open to whatever

understandings, feelings or opinions were expressed by participants, in words or actions, concerning recent reforms. Whether or not participants shared perspectives that aligned or diverged from my own, I made a point to probe and ask follow-up questions so that I could get a fuller sense of what they meant, and curb judgement based on my own conceptions and values. To further reduce the plausibility of threats to validity from my own biases, I triangulated data from multiple sources, looked for data that supported alternative explanations, and reflected on my subjectivity in memos from the earliest stage of data collection.

The influence of my presence on the setting or participants, called reactivity, is another potential threat to the validity of the study's inferences and conclusions. This is because principals, tutors, or university faculty may behave in ways that veer from their normal everyday actions or may report what they believe is expected rather than their own beliefs and feelings on an issue. As with researcher bias, reactivity cannot be eliminated, and instead, the goal is to put measures in place to prevent its negative consequences (Maxwell, 2013). These included multiple visits over a sustained period and working to establish rapport through conversations about shared interests (for example, two tutors were currently completing their PhDs). During interviews participants willingly shared support and criticism of reform implementation and challenges they faced in their roles. Perhaps reactivity was more evident in the classroom observations since these were scheduled in advance. However, the fact that tutors may have taken extra care in preparing their lessons segued well into follow-up questions regarding deliberate choices and conceptions of quality teaching and learning.

Finally, my positionality as a foreigner and researcher meant that I was perceived as an outsider. However, the fact that I have lived in Ghana for many years, that I teach at a local

higher education institution, and that I have a Ghanaian last name afforded me partial insider-peer status and helped establish relationships of mutual respect and trust with participants and others within the colleges. My life experience and training meant that some values and understandings I have concerning teaching and learning were different from those participating in my study. However, there were also values we shared, in particular, the value of the educational enterprise itself. Additionally, I pilot-tested my interview protocols and received feedback from a Ghanaian colleague who attended teacher training college and is very familiar with Ghana's system of higher education, which helped reduce the effect of outsider status due to question phrasing or expected etiquette.

Ethical Issues

Having reflected on issues of validity and positionality in the context of the research, I now turn to a discussion of the ethical considerations of risks to participants, confidentiality, anonymity, and obtaining consent. In preparing for the research, I realized there were several potential risks that participants may be concerned with regarding the study. For example, affiliation and accreditation processes are political, and principals and tutors may worry about a negative portrayal of themselves or their college in the final report. Or they may be reluctant to express critical views of oversight agencies or processes so as not to jeopardize key relationships. To minimize these concerns, I asked participants to review the findings prior to publishing the work and made this clear in the consent form. I also assured participants that I was an independent researcher and in no way associated with GTEC or T-TEL and that the research was not evaluative. For instance, rather than going through contacts at GTEC to obtain access to colleges of education as was suggested, I opted to reach out to principals directly. Finally,

participants knew they could withdraw from the study at any time if they felt their participation had the potential to cause them harm or made them uncomfortable in any way.

Mindful of my responsibility to protect confidentiality, for the final report, I have identified participants by their roles (tutor, principal, faculty) and removed personal details so that quotes cannot be traced back to individual participants. When referring to specific colleges, I used pseudonyms. Even with such precautions, it is possible that individuals within the system could deduce specific colleges or participants described in the findings. Therefore, in my writing, I put myself in the shoes of participants and made sure each person was depicted in a respectful manner. All the study data has been stored on a secure system and shared only in aggregate to further ensure confidentiality.

Finally, I approached my time in the colleges as a guest and as an opportunity to forge collegial professional relationships. As such, I offered reciprocity in the form of professional development, or other ways that principals or tutors may find helpful. For example, I conducted a four-hour training workshop for first- and second-year students in Giving Voice to Values at one of the colleges during the week-long college anniversary celebrations. Finally, I will share the final report and will offer to present the findings to participants and teacher education stakeholders.

Chapter 4: Crafting a Social Institution: Teacher Education in Ghana

> The beginning of wisdom for an institutional theorist is the recognition that current actors and events are greatly shaped by past efforts and their enduring products. (Scott, 2014, p. 26)

Social institutions like teacher education have deep linkages with the past. Both comparative case study methodology and the analytical framework of new institutional theory share the view that explanations for reform processes today must incorporate analyses of the historical roots and social reproductive processes that surround them. According to Bartlett and Vavrus (2016),

> The study of history allows us to assess evidence and conflicting interpretations of a phenomenon, heightening our ability to question assumptions about the shape and form it has taken in the contemporary era. Too often, researchers take for granted the ways institutions operate today rather than looking at them analytically through a historical lens. (p. 93)

This chapter takes up that challenge by bringing a historical lens to an analysis of enduring structures and conventions associated with teacher education in Ghana. Understanding how social structures came to be in the first place and how they became accepted conventions over time is important background for interpreting the achievements and challenges of those implementing, leading, and overseeing major reforms in teacher education today.

The focus of the chapter is a descriptive history encompassing eight institutionalized social structures that emerged as important themes in the interview, observational, and present-day documentary data, and could be traced temporally through studies and documents dealing with the history of education and teacher education in Ghana. These include, in the order in which they will be discussed below: (1) a formalistic style of teaching and transmission mode of

learning; (2) the system of external examinations; (3) teacher education knowledge conceptualized as objective, propositional knowledge; (4) teacher education as a socioeconomic steppingstone; (5) the locus of authority for teacher education knowledge resides outside of institutions that train teachers; (6) teacher education patterned on secondary education; (7) hierarchical patterns of status and authority between university faculty and college of education tutors; and (8) the system of university affiliation for oversight and quality assurance in universities. Chapter 5 discusses these structures within the present context of reform, while this chapter aims to answer questions such as: How did these social structures come about? Whose interests did they serve and why did they remain highly valued? How are these structures interconnected and what accounts for their reproduction over time?

These questions were addressed using a combination of historical studies of the development of western-type education in West Africa and Ghana; a collection of primary sources from the Ghana National Archives in Accra, The National Archives (UK) (https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk), Internet Archives (https://archive.org), and The New York Public Library archives (https://archives.nypl.org); and the academic literature on indigenous, missionary, colonial, and 20th century education on the continent. An attempt was made to draw as much as possible on sources by African scholars. Important studies of the development of education in West Africa and the Gold Coast include: *The History of Education in Ghana From the Earliest Times to the Declaration of Independence*, by Ghanaian academic C.K. Graham (1971); the study *Education and Social Change* by American sociologist Philip Foster (1965); *A Short History of Education in British West Africa*, by F.H. Hilliard (1957), the former Head of the Institute of Education at the University College of the Gold Coast; *The African Experience with Higher Education* by African historians and academics J.F. Ade Ajayi,

Lameck K.H. Goma, and G. Ampah Johnson (1996); *African Reactions to Missionary Education*, a series of first-person accounts of 20th century missionary schooling collected by comparative and international education scholar Edward H. Berman (1975); in-depth studies of external examinations in colonial West Africa by Nigerian scholar Michael Omolewa (1977, 1980) and Yoshiko Namie (1989); *A History of the University of Cape Coast* by Ghanaian academics D. A. Dwarko and K.O. Kwarteng (2003), and *A History of University of Ghana: Half A Century of Higher Education (1948-1998)* by Ghanaian historian Francis Agbodeka (1998), among others. Included among primary archival sources are Church Mission Society correspondence and church bulletins that narrate missionary educational activities, correspondence between colonial officials in Ghana and Sierra Leone, correspondence between the Colonial Office in London and officials in Accra, advertisements for civil service examinations, and papers relating to the founding of the West African Exams Council in 1948.

The remainder of this chapter proceeds in four sections. The first section discusses the pedagogical foundations of the system of education that developed in the Gold Coast over several hundred years of missionary and colonial activities. The second section explores the emergence in the early 20th century of a system for training and certifying teachers in the Gold Coast, and related social structures and conventions from that time. The third section focuses on the role of external examinations in carrying these structures and conventions forward, through the independence period and into the present day—in other words, their reproduction and institutionalization. The fourth section focuses on the system of university affiliation and historical patterns associated with affiliation relationships between mentor and mentee institutions. The chapter concludes with a summary of the institutional analysis and its relevance to the research.

A Pedagogical Foundation of Formalistic Teaching and Transmission Learning

New educational forms emerged in 18th and 19th century sub-Saharan Africa in the comingling of indigenous formal and informal education, Islamic education—which had arrived in parts of West Africa over a century earlier—Christian missionary education, and European trade and colonial interests (Graham, 1971; Martin, 1976). Indigenous education in sub-Saharan Africa differed across regions and ethnic groups, yet scholars point to similar patterns in the culture of learning and means of knowledge transmission among many groups (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003; Assie-Lumumba, 2012; Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019). For example, the education of children was carried out in everyday settings and involved many teachers. Religious and character training was a central focus, and children were taught to respect elders, appreciate their social obligations and responsibilities, and, above all, subordinate their individual interests to those of the wider community (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003).

In describing modes of teaching common in indigenous African education, Assie-Lumumba (2012) identifies teaching by participation; the use of demonstration, where the student observes and then progressively gains skill through imitation and repetition; and the mentoring of young adults by older community members. Other scholars mention learning through attachment and apprenticeship, and formal training through secret societies and puberty rites (Ajayi et al., 1996; Metz, 2013). Drawing on oral tradition, memorization and oratory were greatly valued in indigenous education. The telling of stories and use of proverbs were important forms of communication and the more a person mastered the oratory of historical and cultural knowledge or specialized fields, such as medicine, the more he or she became an authority and a widely revered learned figure (Assie-Lumumba, 2012; Burton, 1865).

Although there were obvious differences between the *content* of indigenous education and that which was imported by European missionaries and colonists, some scholars note synergies in their *form*—in other words, the ways in which teaching and learning were socially organized. According to Assie-Lumumba (2012), the intersection of age and socially legitimized knowledge constituted "a supreme nexus for power and authority in teaching and learning" (p. 22) within indigenous, missionary, and colonial education. Guthrie (2018) points out that intergenerational transmission of cultural and religious knowledge was a primary purpose of indigenous education, and that missionary and colonial education involved a similar unidirectional transfer of knowledge. In addition to religious and cultural knowledge, the survival of traditional communities depended on relational systems that kept the family, clan, and tribe together. Therefore, indigenous education systems were also meant to reinforce gender roles and social hierarchies (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003; Metz, 2013). In comparing authoritative relations in both indigenous and imported education systems, Tabulawa (2013) asserts,

> [The] imported model of education was bureaucratic and premised on structures of domination and subordination, and it interacted productively with an authoritarian African cultural ambiance to engender and subsequently entrench a correspondingly bureaucratic and authoritarian pedagogical style. (p. 123)

Thus, the pedagogical foundation—or social institution—of formalistic teaching and transmission learning was laid in the confluence of an authoritative flow of knowledge from the teacher to the learner within African indigenous education and the missionary and colonial forms that arrived with western-type schools. Modes of knowledge transmission in 18th and 19th century schools included recall exercises, dictation, choral response, and other forms of drill and

repetition. In an 1886 inspection report of a Church Mission Society school in Sierra Leone[7], the inspector noted "Scripture knowledge almost entirely limited to the repetition of a few texts and questions and answers from "the ten texts"—all this almost wholly mechanical."[8] In an article in The Methodist Herald and West African Education Times, also from 1886, the author notes,

> In our schools generally, great attention has been paid to verbal memory—even to the power of calculation. We have seen exercises in some of our schools where a whole class would give the answer to a difficult question in Arithmetic, as soon as the teacher had asked it.[9]

It is important to note that these pedagogical patterns were not unique to missionary and colonial schools in the Gold Coast or Africa generally. As C.K. Graham (1971), Edward Berman (1975), John Dewey (1933), and many others have written, schools in England, Europe, and North America at this time, particularly schools for children from low social classes, imparted knowledge to students through a robust and steady diet of rote learning.

An Academic and Religious Curriculum

Western-type schools touched ground sporadically along the coastal region of the Gulf of Guinea from the sixteenth century through trade and missionary projects of Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, British, Germans, and others (Martin, 1976). During the 19th century, sustained efforts at establishing schools beyond coastal trading forts are attributed to the Basel Mission (mostly Swiss and German), the Wesleyan Mission (British), the Bremen Mission (German), and the Roman Catholic Mission (Berman, 1975; Graham, 1971; Martin, 1976). Although European

[7] The first Inspector of Schools for all of Britian's West Africa settlements, Rev. M. Sunter, appointed in 1880, was Principal of Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone (Graham, 1971).
[8] Page 51 Original papers and letters relating to West Africa 1886, Ghana National Archives, GA/A1/1886.
[9] Page 178 Original papers and letters relating to West Africa 1886, Ghana National Archives, GA/A1/1886

trading companies supported a small number of schools for European-African children and coastal elites, and to fill the need for interpreters and clerks, the primary purpose of the schools beyond the coastal trading forts was proselytization and religious conversion (Berman, 1975; Foster, 1965; Graham, 1971; Kimble, 1963). A surge of missionary zeal in Europe and North America was concerned with remedying the scourge of slavery, imparting the civilizing effect of "legitimate commerce" and "peaceful industry,"[10] and extending the Christian message beyond its present geographical boundaries (Berman, 1975). The southerly expansion of the forces of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa further pushed missionaries inland. Schooling was seen as the most effective means of achieving religious instruction and religion pervaded the entire curriculum (Berman, 1975; Graham, 1971; Hilliard, 1957). In describing Christian missionaries in Nigeria, Ajayi (1965) states,

> They saw in schools 'the nursery of the infant Church', the principal hope for the success of their work. If most of the adults were too much wedded to the ideas of their fathers the children, whose minds were as yet unhardened, should provide more fruitful ground for the sowing of the seed of the new religion. (p. 134)

From the beginning, trained teachers for 'castle' schools (as schools within European trading forts along the Gulf of Guinea were referred) and mission schools were in short supply. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, a small number of promising African pupils and teachers received sponsorship from trading companies and Christian philanthropic societies to further their education and attend seminary in Europe, and ran schools, with mixed success, upon their

[10] Buxton, 1840, p. 301

return.[11] However, most African teachers were trained locally through apprenticeship and certifying examinations (Graham, 1971). At Freetown, Sierra Leone, the Anglican Church Mission Society (CMS) founded Fourah Bay College in 1827 to train African clergy and teachers for schools and the spread of Christianity across West Africa.[12] In 1876 Fourah Bay College became a degree-granting institution affiliated with the University of Durham in England,[13] meaning that the University of Durham provided the course syllabi and examinations for evaluating and certifying graduates.[14] The Basel Mission opened a seminary to train catechist teachers for their schools in the Gold Coast in Akropong in 1848.[15] The Basel and Wesleyan missionaries and African translators worked to develop Bible translations and teaching materials in several local languages, however, only the Basel mission schools used the vernacular as the

[11]Jacobus Capitein was sent to Holland at age nine, entered Leyden University in 1737, and was later ordained the first Protestant African priest, before returning to the Cape Coast area, where he worked as a minister and ran a school. Philip Quaque was sponsored by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to study in England, obtained a degree of Master of Arts at Oxford, returned to Cape Coast in 1766, and ran a school for many years. Joseph Smith, a school master and teacher, also from Cape Coast, traveled to England in 1836 and returned in 1838 to continue his educational endeavors (Graham, 1971).

[12] Fourah Bay College, founded by the Church Missionary Society in 1826, provided the first post-secondary education in West Africa and remained the only university institution in West Africa until 1948. Graduates of Fourah Bay College were among the Gold Coast's prominent citizens (Ajayi et al. 1996)

[13] Article from The Methodist Herald and West African Educational Times. Wednesday, May 26, 1886. Report of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the affiliation of Fourah Bay College with Durham University. Ghana National Archives. Original papers and letters relating to West Africa. Item 64.

[14] Records of the program of study at Fourah Bay were not found, however, a 1968 thesis by Wilkinson details the curriculum for the training of elementary school teachers and masters at the Durham Training School, associated with the University of Durham, between 1839 to 1886. In the 1860s, the teacher training was a two or three-year course, post-middle school, with the core of the curriculum consisting of the subjects taught in government elementary schools (religious knowledge, grammar, geography, history music school management, reading, spelling, penmanship, reading, writing, geography, arithmetic, and music, and the practice of teaching, with reference to the system of Dr. Ball) and additional tuition in subjects deemed beneficial to the students, such as Church history, literature, model drawing, geometry, mensuration, higher maths, physical science, industrial mechanics, Latin, and Greek. Students who completed the course could apply for matriculation at Durham University, though, according to Wilkinson, very few did. Additionally, the salaries graduates earned as teachers depended on their examination results.

[15] The seminary established by the Basel Missionaries has remained a teacher training institution and today is called the Presbyterian College of Education Akropong.

medium of instruction.[16] Basel mission schools were typically boarding schools and emphasized practical training, such as agriculture, trades, and home economy (Foster, 1965; Graham, 1971).

After the Gold Coast became a British Crown Colony in 1821, Crown authorities opened a number of government schools financed from public funds, however, most were later absorbed by mission institutions (Foster, 1965). In 1881, *The Board of Education Special Reports on Educational Subjects* recorded three government schools and 136 mission schools, including 47 schools run by the Basel mission, 84 schools run by the Wesleyans, four schools run by the Bremen mission, and one school run by the Catholic mission (Graham, 1971, p. 117). The Catholics began missionary work in the Gold Coast in 1880 (Hilliard, 1957), and expanded quickly. By 1901 the Catholic Church ran 12 schools in the Gold Coast. It wasn't until the early 20th century that colonial authorities became engaged in developing a system of education for the colony.

Educational sociologist Stephen Ball (1983) describes three competing school curricula in the colonial period in Africa with different versions of what counted as school knowledge: the evangelical curriculum, the academic curriculum, and the adapted curriculum. The evangelical curriculum involved teaching basic reading, writing, and arithmetic, with the Bible, Catechism, and religious texts forming the backbone of the curriculum (Berman 1975, Ajayi, 1965). The academic curriculum included religious and moral instruction but also required instruction in secular subjects. The academic curriculum was sequenced, planned, and ended in examination.

[16] The first vernacular language used for Bible translation and teaching by the Basel missionaries would have been Ga since that is the language used in the area around Christiansborg Castle, where the first Basel missionaries arrived in 1828 at the invitation of the Danish Governor. The first inland Basal mission settlement was established at Abokobi in 1854, 15 miles north of Christiansborg Castle. By the close of the century, there were over 100 Basal mission schools, boarding and day, attended by about 5,000 children (Graham, 1971). Ghana is highly linguistically diverse, so with expansion, it is likely that additional vernacular languages were used.

Initially, syllabi and teaching materials for the academic curriculum were the same as those used in working-class schools in Britain. Graham (1971) recounts the delivery of "a supply of books, viz. Arithmetic Tables for Madras schools, Sandboard, etc." (p. 34) recommended by Dr Bell for a school funded by the African Company at Cape Coast in 1816.[17] The shipment also included "one hundred copies each of the Sermon on the Mount, Church Catechism and Psalters" (p. 34). The Cape Coast school was later run by Joseph Smith, an African who completed seminary training at Clapham in London and returned to run the school in 1838. His students were examined on catechistical questions, scripture history, the Bible, and Murray's English Grammar, a popular grammar text in England and North American schools at that time (Graham, 1971). Hilliard (1957) gives a sample curriculum from 1914 for primary schools that received government assistance. In addition to religious studies, which were compulsory, the syllabus included the following secular subjects:

(1) Colloquial English
(2) English reading
(3) Writing
(4) Arithmetic
(5) Hygiene
(6) Plain Needlework (for girls)
(7) Hand and Eye: Industrial training to include Drawing or Nature Study and Agricultural Training
(8) Object Lessons in Nature Study and Elementary Hand and Eye Training in Infant Classes.

For more well-endowed schools, additional subjects could be taught, including:

(9) Vernacular Reading
(10) Singing
(11) Geography
(12) History
(13) Grammar

[17] Dr. Bell developed a system of using bright older pupils as teachers for younger pupils while the superintendent of a military orphan school in Madras, India. Upon returning to English in 1796, Bell formalized the monitorial system, which became widely employed in English charity schools and colonial schools (www.wikipedia.com).

(14) Drill and Physical Exercises
(15) Book-keeping
(16) Shorthand
(17) Mensuration
(18) Algebra
(19) Kindergarten

Finally, an adapted curriculum was put forth as a more "relevant" agricultural and industrial education "for the masses" and stipulated teaching in the vernacular for the first several years of primary school. The policy of adapted curriculum emerged from the 1922 report by the Phelps-Stokes Commission to Africa, sponsored by the Phelps-Stokes Fund, an American Christian charitable organization, and was taken up by The British Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies. The Phelps-Stokes Commission was chaired by Dr Jesse Jones, president of Hampton Institute, an industrial and agricultural school for Blacks in the Southern United States (Jones was Welsh-American), and included J.K. Aggrey, who was born in the Gold Coast and furthered his education at Livingston College, a historically black Christian college in North Carolina, USA. The Commission's specific recommendations for a system of education in the Gold Coast were:

> That the program of education be based upon the conception that the development of teachers and leaders for the masses is the first task, that the education of the masses is the second and great responsibility, and that the preparation of professional men according to conventional European standards is the third step. (Jones, 1922, p. 143)

The report's recommendations, written by Jones, paralleled the structure of education for Black Americans in the United States at the time, and both the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies as well as colonial officials in the Gold Coast endorsed them (Ajayi et. al. 1996, Berman, 1971). However, although adapted curriculum was official British policy for

colonial education after 1925, it was never embraced by Africans in the Gold Coast. According to Foster, western education had become "the most visible and tangible manifestation of European power, hence access to that power demanded entry to the type of education provided in the metropole itself" (p. 136). Adapted curriculum "for the masses" did not offer a route to employment within the expanding commercial and government sectors of the colonial economy and it was perceived by many Africans as an attempt to offer an inferior quality of education in the colonies (Ajayi et. al, 1996; Berman, 1971; Foster, 1965). A commentator in *The Gold Coast Leader*, 24th July 1926, accused those behind adapted curriculum of attempting to "make the African fit in with the European's scheme of African exploitation and control" (as quoted by Kimbal, 1963, p. 114). Pan-Africanists, such as W. E. B. Dubois, had nothing but scorn for adapted curriculum. In a review of the Phelps-Stokes Commission report, DuBois (1926) wrote:

> It is, however, absolutely clear that [Jones] means that Africans should not be trained as white Europeans are trained; that on the contrary—and this is the meat of the Jones thesis—Africans should be trained to be content with their present condition; to be submissive, peaceful and industrious; and to work in such ways and under such circumstances that their labor will be most profitable for the countries that are exploiting Africa. (p. 87)

Finally, an additional challenge to adaptive curriculum was cost. Neither the colonial government nor the missions had the resources to bring in tools and technology necessary to implement trades and industrial training to any great extent (Graham, 1971).

Despite Ball's assertion of competing curricula, many scholars point out that school knowledge brought to Africa by European missionaries and colonists, whether consisting of religious "truths" or grammatical, geographical, or arithmetic "facts," was based on the same

objectivist and rationalist epistemology (Boli et al., 1985; Tabulawa, 2013). In either case, school knowledge held a purported level of certainty that existed independently of the knower (Tabulawa, 2013). Within this formalistic view, the classroom teacher is evaluated by the degree to which he or she demonstrates an authoritative transfer of factual knowledge to the pupil. The pupil is evaluated as becoming a "knower" by the degree to which he or she identifies the "right facts," usually in the form of a predetermined set of "correct answers." In the colonial sub-Saharan African context, the dichotomy of correctness and incorrectness was heightened because much of the evangelical and academic curriculum was "external"—a foreign religion and an imported academic curriculum, usually imparted in a foreign language—and thus disconnected from the variability, uncertainty, and rumination of learners' everyday experiences. Coe (2002) describes how, even where attempts were made to bring in elements of adapted curriculum, for example, traditional wood carving or agricultural practices, carefully sequenced demonstration lessons were developed so that the "correct" steps and tools could be memorized and the knowledge "examined."

In sum, the formalistic teaching style and transmission mode of learning formed a solid pedagogical foundation within the social institution of schooling as the 19th century drew to a close. Formalistic teaching and transmission learning were well-suited to a religious and academic curriculum that emphasized a corpus of objective, propositional knowledge over which students were to be examined. Africans preferred the academic curriculum for purposes of economic advancement while missionaries were interested in elementary education and teacher training for evangelism (Ajayi et. al., 1996). Limited experiments with agricultural and industrial training largely failed because adapted education did not fit the purpose of those who provided most of the education—the missions—nor those who desired to obtain education—Africans in

the Gold Coast (Graham, 1971). The next section discusses the system of teacher education that emerged from these foundations in the early 20th Century.

The Crafting of a System of Teacher Education

The starting point for new institutions is somewhat arbitrary because beliefs, norms, and organizational forms inherited from the past are the initial conditions in processes leading to new institutions (Scott, 2014, p. 114). As mentioned above, a key initial condition for a system of teacher education, established by several hundred years of missionary and colonial educational activities, was the objective rational epistemology of school knowledge—its "facticity," the sense that school knowledge was “universal” and therefore, an external authority was best placed to "examine" the degree to which it has been imparted by a teacher or acquired by a pupil (Boli, et. al., 1985; Tabulawa, 2013). Although there were divergences in content, as pointed out earlier, there were also synergies between indigenous education and missionary education in terms of authoritative relations between adults and children and the value of memorization, oratory, and learning through repetition. Together, these existing social structures set a distinctive cognitive-cultural pattern of formalistic teaching and the transmission mode of learning that permeated the arena of schooling in the Gold Coast at the beginning of the 20th Century.

Differences in power and status between colonial officials, chiefs, merchants, missionaries, educated elites, and Africans seeking social mobility through schooling were also part of the context in which new social institutions emerged in the Gold Coast. Yet, at the turn of the century, dissatisfaction with the system of education that had developed in the colony came from all levels. The missions provided most of the education in the colony and were pushing for greater financial support from the government for their schools. Colonial administrators

complained that the quality and standards of missionary schools were generally poor, and in some schools, little beyond basic literacy needed to study the scriptures was taught (Ajayi et. al, 1996; Graham, 1971). Local chiefs added their voice to complaints regarding the "literary" orientation of school knowledge, which appeared to be of little practical use. Nana Annor Adjaye, a Paramount Chief, wrote in *Nzima Land*, published in 1931,

> In the olden days the son of a fisherman spent his mornings by the seashore swimming in the surf until he became proficient in swimming and diving as in walking and running. With a miniature net he practiced casting in imitation of his father… The son of the farmer accompanied his father to the farm and gradually acquired the father's lore. He studied when the planting should be carried out, the right times for clearing and growing crops, and when the harvest was ripe and ready for the planting.
>
> In like manner the girl trod in the footsteps of the mother. Almost as soon as she could walk, she accompanied her mother to the well and to the market, carrying her little waterpot or bundle of market produce… As she grew older she took her part in the household offices and was taught apprenticeship by mothering the younger members of the family… I may say, then, that the education of the African child by the African system is a preparation and practical training for the life that lies before it.
>
> The kind of education introduced here by our white friends was only literary. Boys' heads were filled with stuff which they did not understand, much less apply… As we were taught, so did we teach. (Quoted in Kimple, 1963, pg. 61)

Furthermore, greater economic and political engagement by Britain in the early 20th century meant there was the need for a higher level of education that could provide a cadre of clerks, bookkeepers, interpreters, and others for mid-level posts in government offices and trading

companies. At the same time, most Africans who completed only primary school were unable to find wage employment but reluctant to take up manual labor, and this was raising concerns about social instability (Foster, 1965; Graham, 1971). Other school quality issues included irregular attendance, poor completion rates, and the uneven distribution of schools between the different regions under colonial administration (Kimble, 1963).

By far the loudest voice for educational expansion came from the small but growing educated elite, principally lawyers, merchants, and doctors who had obtained their degrees in British universities (Foster, 1965; Graham, 1971; Kimble, 1963; Ajayi et al., 1996). They were mostly the sons and nephews of wealthy traders who could afford to send family members abroad for professional education. Missionary organizations also sponsored some of their African employees for further study at seminary or training colleges in Europe or America (Ajayi et al., 1996). African elites pushed for the provision of secondary and higher education in the Gold Coast and desired the same standard and quality as British secondary schools and university degrees that would have worldwide recognition (Foster, 1965; Graham, 1971). By 1900 there were four secondary schools in the Gold Coast totally staffed and supported by Africans (Foster, 1965). For Africans, comparability of certificates and degrees was deemed imperative because it allowed them to compete for jobs in government offices and firms that were previously reserved for expatriates and to pursue higher education abroad (Foster, 1965).

In addition to finances—since most schools were mission-run and depended on voluntary contributions—one of the key constraints on the expansion of education in the Gold Coast at the turn of the century was the lack of trained teachers. The two seminaries of the Basel Missions at Akropong and Abetifi were the only teacher training available at the time. In 1905, there were only 81 certificated teachers in the colony and most children in classrooms were drilled by pupil-

teachers under the supervision of a headmaster (Kimble, 1963). Pupil teachers were apprentice teachers who had passed Standard V. Generally, pupil teachers taught while working toward their Standard VII examinations, which were required to continue to secondary school (Hilliard, 1957). In 1909 the colonial government instituted two reforms aimed at addressing the acute need for qualified teachers (Hilliard, 1957). First, a government training college was opened in Accra to train teachers for government and missionary schools. The teacher training course was two years post-middle school and students' performance in their final examination at the end of training determined the type of certificate they received and the salary they earned as teachers (Bame, 1971). Second, a system of government grants to non-government schools was put in place to pay a percentage of teachers' salaries based on their qualifications. This was to provide an incentive to hire certified teachers. According to Kimble (1963), the influence of these reforms was soon felt, and by 1918 nearly every assisted school had at least one qualified teacher, trained either by the government training college or the Basel Seminary.

Foster (1965) argues that education never became a part of a coherent government policy, and its development during the colonial period was largely autonomous and uncontrolled. This claim is only partly accurate. The main tool used by colonial administrators to influence the content and form of schooling was the "grants-in-aid" system that was spelled out in an 1882 Ordinance by Britain's Colonial Office. The ordinance allowed for Boards of Education to be set up in each colony to assist in administering grants-in-aid, which offered financial incentives to the missions if their schools met certain standards of "efficiency" (Kimble, 1963; Graham, 1971). In the Gold Coast, funds were initially tied to the number of pupils in the school who passed examinations. Graham (1971) points out that this was a near replica of an earlier system in the UK and was premised on the view that "payment by results" would "exercise a profound

influence over the efficiency of the schools" and lead to a minimum level of academic attainment (p. 113). However, as in the UK, the scheme led teachers to cram the older classes approaching examination and neglect the younger pupils. The payment-by-results scheme was dropped in the Gold Coast in 1909 in favor of a policy that incentivized hiring certified teachers. There was still much concern for efficiency, however, and to receive funds, assisted schools were required to offer approved secular subjects according to a specific schedule, record attendance, meet certain standards in buildings and equipment, and submit to inspection (Graham, 1971; Kimble, 1963). Government inspectors were to "encourage improvements in quality, less learning by rote, and more relevance to local conditions" (Ajayi et al., 1996). Despite the coercive intention of the grants-in-aid policy, Foster's claim of autonomous and uncontrolled development of education in the Gold Coast is partly true because the majority of schools were unassisted and were therefore not obliged to meet any specified standards (Hilliard, 1957). Considering Anglophone Africa as a whole, Ajayi et al. (1996) call the grants-in-aid policy "ad-hoc."

A new constitution came into effect within the Gold Coast on January 1st, 1951, and later that year an ambitious Accelerated Development Plan for Education was adopted. Among the proposals were a six-year primary course at government expense, significant expansions in teacher education and secondary education, and a new education bureaucracy. Although religion remained part of the fabric of schools, and some attention in the syllabus was given to vernacular languages, hygiene, crafts, agriculture, and "housecraft" for girls, Ghana entered the independence era with the sequenced, examined, academic curriculum firmly in place (Graham, 1971). However, the limiting factors in the desired expansion of education in the period leading up to Ghana's independence in 1957, and in the period after, were finances and an inadequate supply of trained, certified teachers.

External Examination

An administrative tool that profoundly shaped the form and content of systems of education across all of Britain's colonies was the external examination. An *external examination* is "an examination prepared by someone outside the faculty of the school where the examination is given" ("External Examination," n.d.). Within African colonies, examining bodies such as the College of Preceptors, the Oxford Delegacy, and the Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate offered various examinations at the primary, junior secondary, and secondary school certificate levels while the University of London offered matriculation (university entrance) and degree examinations through arrangements with the Colonial Office in London (Ajayi et al., 1996, p. 47; Omolewa, 1980). By 1900, external examinations covered 17 different subjects from needlework to degree examinations, including Pupil Teachers' Certificate Exam and the Teachers' Certificate Exam (Namie, 1989). When the first government-supported secondary school in the Gold Coast, Achimota, opened in 1927, the Cambridge exams were adopted. Achimota absorbed the government teacher training college that had opened in 1909, offered technical training (engineering, auto mechanics, and building construction), general secondary education in addition to teacher training, and was coeducational and non-denominational (Graham, 1971). Achimota was an ambitious project championed by the governor of the Gold Coast at the time, Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg, and a flagship school under the Colonial Office's new policy of adapted education. The school aimed to create a new elite by "grafting" what is "true and good" in African culture with the "best" in British secondary education (as quoted by Coe, 2002, p. 30). According to Coe (2002), Cambridge examinations exerted a profound influence on the curriculum, even as Achimota's mostly expatriate staff sought to incorporate subjects they felt were relevant to the needs of the country, such as African languages, history, and culture (p. 33).

In the 1930s, the Cambridge Exams Council agreed to offer four vernacular languages as subjects for the School Leaving Certificate examination: Ewe, Fante, Ga, and Twi (Coe, 2002).

External examinations met the needs of different vested interests within the education arena in the early 20th century, and in the language of institutional theory, infused examination results with value "beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand." (Selznick, as quoted in Scott, 2014, p.137). For Britain's Colonial Office and local colonial officials, external examinations were a familiar and comprehensible tool to "objectively" evaluate and classify pupils and the "efficiency" of their teachers. British institutions, such as the Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate and the University of London, ensured that British influence and values were infused in the curriculum, but were independent of missionary organizations and colonial administrators. Using the same syllabi and examinations throughout British schools and Britain's English-speaking colonies brought significant financial benefits to British publishers (Omolewa, 1980; Wilson, 2016).

For African elites, external examinations that were the same for British and African pupils promoted a view of quality premised on standards. The examining bodies were viewed as fair and impartial (Omolewa, 1980). The credentialing function of external examinations provided the comparability, and thus utility, necessary to give Africans greater access to job opportunities in the colony's modernizing economy and the possibility of further education abroad (Namie, 1989). There was also the view among African elites and pan-Africanists, that Western education could be used as a tool against colonial exploitation (Ajayi, et. al., 1996; Berman, 1975). Finally, external examinations thwarted adapted curriculum, which, as discussed earlier, was unpopular with most Africans.

The relationship between the various missions and the colonial government in the Gold Coast was not always smooth. In government reports and correspondence, some mission schools were characterized as complete failures and condemned for their main object: "proselytism" (Kimble, 1963, p. 81). There were also disagreements regarding missionary attempts to destroy traditional customs and the fact that some missions did not comply with government restrictions, for example, to stay out of Muslim areas of the colony. Africans as well, especially those who came through missionary schools, were critical of the denigration and racist attitude of many missionaries (Berman, 1975). However, missions had a near monopoly on schools and their efforts were needed to meet the growing demand for education (Kimble, 1963). External examinations helped bring missionary schools more in line with the need for a standard secular curriculum and credentialing (Namie, 1989). Even if a school remained independent and did not receive government grants, if pupils performed well on examinations, local chiefs and community members were more likely to lend their support to the school and its teachers.

External Examinations as an Institutional Carrier

An institutional carrier is a mechanism that accounts for how ideas move through space and time—they are modes of transport for meaning systems, relational systems, routines, and artifacts (Scott, 2003). In the process of transmission, such ideas undergo interpretation by those who receive them and whose actions may maintain them in a similar fashion or alter their course. For more than a century, the external examination system—valued by many as a fair and impartial arbiter of academic comparability and utility—has played a key role in transporting three social structures forward that remain relevant to the arena of teacher education today: teacher education as a socioeconomic steppingstone; the conceptualization of teacher education knowledge as mostly academic, propositional knowledge; and the fact that the locus of authority

for teacher education knowledge resides outside of institutions that train teachers. The interaction between the external examination system and each of these institutionalized social structures will be discussed in turn.

Teacher Education as a Socioeconomic Steppingstone

Whereas the descendants of elites could pursue professional studies abroad, such as law and medicine, teaching was a career option open to those with aspirations of upward mobility but without the financial means to travel and study abroad (Budniok & Noll, 2018). Once University of London matriculation and degree examinations were available in the Gold Coast beginning in 1906, teaching became a means of socioeconomic progress and educational advancement that allowed those from humble backgrounds to teach and earn a salary while studying privately or by correspondence for degree examinations (Omolewa, 1980). The examination system promoted the idea that through hard work and effort, a "brilliant but needy" pupil could rise to the highest rungs of society. This view did not always match reality, however, as only a small number of individuals took the exams, and even fewer passed. Between 1906 and 1929, 55 Gold Coast candidates took London University matriculation and degree examinations resulting in only 15 passes (Namie, 1989). In 1929, Achimota began a university class to prepare pupils for London University exams, and the numbers began to increase. Between 1930 and 1939, 155 candidates passed matriculation or degree examinations (Namie, 1989).

During the second half of the 20th century, the nature of teacher education as a steppingstone shifted but performance on external examinations remained an important factor. In the period after Ghana’s independence, access to primary and secondary education expanded dramatically. Newly founded universities and professional schools opened up the professions to educated men and women from diverse social backgrounds (Budniok & Noll, 2018). The

Kumasi College of Arts, Science and Technology was founded in 1951 (called the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology today) and included professional courses in engineering and pharmacy. The Ghana Law School was established in 1958 and The University of Ghana Medical School admitted its first group of students in 1964 (Agbodeka, 1998). At the same time, the social and economic status of teachers, as well as rural and unattractive postings meant that teaching as a profession was less appealing to young people and their families.[18] Therefore, over time, lower performance on external examinations became associated with teacher education as a steppingstone. Government allowances during training and study leave with pay after two years (three years today) continue to serve as incentives for young people to choose teacher education when they lack the funds or examination scores to attend university, thus reproducing teacher education as a steppingstone to other educational or vocational pursuits. Interview and survey data collected by the MUSTER research team in the early 2000s found this view to be near universal amongst teacher education students and newly qualified teachers who participated in the research. A teacher education student asked about their reasons for entering teacher training, gave a typical response: "A teacher can further his or her education and there is study leave with pay" (Akyeampong & Lewin, 2002, p. 344). A newly qualified female teacher in a rural junior secondary school asked if she had doubts about being a teacher responded: "Yes. I thought it's just a steppingstone so I'm not having the joy that needs to be gotten from a real career" (Hodges, 2000, p. 27). The interview data for this study, reviewed in Chapter 5, demonstrates that teacher education remains a steppingstone today.

Teacher Education Knowledge as Objective, Propositional Knowledge

[18] In a study of the system of posting teachers in Ghana, Hedges (2000) found that women were reluctant to accept rural postings because they perceived remote villages to be unsafe.

The continued reliance on external examinations for teacher education and certification has carried forward to the 21st century a dominant view of teaching knowledge as objective and factual and legitimated by an external authority. In Ghana, those teaching future teachers have never been positioned as authorities over the knowledge to train teachers because they have never had authority over the syllabi or examinations. Today, as in the past, examinations for teacher education are predicated on a propositional view of teaching knowledge that separates knowing from doing. In summarizing the TPA study of preservice teacher education in five countries in Africa, including Ghana, carried out in 2010, Akyeampong et al., (2013) concluded:

> Although the situation varies from country to country, we conclude from the research that, in every case there is a discrepancy between what is required of teachers to teach the primary school curriculum and the preparation to do this received from their initial training. This was reinforced by methods of assessing trainees, where examinations focused on subject content knowledge or education knowledge and less on its applications in the classroom... (275-276)

Student and classroom contexts have not been emphasized in the teacher education curriculum because content knowledge and education knowledge are viewed as objective "facts" (Tabulawa, 2013). In teacher education, just as in education at other levels, the scope of action for the learner (the future teacher and their future pupils) is limited. Drawing on John Dewey's assessment of American education in the early 20th century: the experience of the learner and what is relevant for the learner is rarely considered, there is no place for knowledge construction as a social process (Dewey, 1933).

The Locus of Authority for Teacher Education Knowledge

During the Gold Coast era, course syllabi and examinations for most academic credentials, including teacher certification, either came from abroad or were developed in collaboration with expatriates or visiting experts. Therefore, the locus of authority for academic credentialing was deemed to be in London or Europe or somewhere "out there"—principals oversaw the delivery of programs of study, and local teachers "delivered" prescribed curricula and prepared their students for "external" exams. In 1952, as the independence era approached, the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) was established as a regional body that would take over from Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate and the University of London in the administering of examinations and awarding of certificates in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and The Gambia, and sometime later, Liberia (Bray & Steward, 1998). The mandate of WAEC was to ensure that its certificates did not represent a lower standard of attainment than equivalent examining bodies in the UK. Representatives of both Cambridge University and the University of London had seats on the governing council of WAEC until the 1980s and these organizations offered technical assistance and lent external credibility to WAEC, particularly in the early years (Bray & Steward, 1998). A 1954 letter from the Secretary of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate to the Registrar of the West Africa Examinations Council stated,

> Under this relationship the Syndicate will guarantee the standards of the examination so that the Certificates may continue to carry recognition of the same terms as the Overseas School Certificate by all authorities who recognize the latter for any purpose and in

particular the scheme of equivalence with the General Certificate of Education will remain unchanged.[19]

Another notable development soon after independence was the establishment under Nkrumah of a new public university set up to address the education and development needs of the country. The University College of Cape Coast (called the University of Cape Coast, or UCC, today), was established in 1962 with a mandate to produce graduate teachers and administrators for secondary schools, teacher training colleges, polytechnics, and technical institutes (Dwarko & Kwarteng, 2003). On behalf of the Ministry of Education, the Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast took over much of the responsibility for overseeing the curriculum for teacher education programs and courses, including developing and administering end-of-term examinations. Accreditation and inspection teams were typically made up of disciplinary experts from UCC and many UCC graduates entered positions within the Ministry of Education, overseeing teacher education policy and reforms over the past 60 years.

Specifically for K-9 teacher education, WAEC administered the Teacher's Final Certificate 'A' Examination in Ghana until the early 2000s when the responsibility shifted to the Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast. Meanwhile, the Institute of Education had been developing course syllabi and end-of-term examinations for K-9 level teacher education since the 1970s, and faculty from the University of Cape Coast also worked closely with WAEC. Therefore, under these arrangements, the locus of authority for the knowledge and expertise to train teachers shifted from the UK, Europe, and "out there" to the University of Cape Coast. Tutors at colleges of education continued to "deliver" the curriculum and prepare their students

[19] Letter from Ghana National Archives J. L. Brereton, Secretary University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate to K. Humphreys, Registrar West African Examinations Council, dated June 18th, 1954. Ghana National Archives. CSO 18/9/38.

for "external" examinations while the process was largely overseen by faculty teams from the University of Cape Coast.

In sum, this section sought to show how external examinations became a highly valued institution in the system of education that emerged in the Gold Coast in the early 20th century. For different reasons, external examinations had utility and significance for African elites, colonial officials, missionaries, and Africans seeking avenues for social mobility. Teacher certification was tied to external examinations, which legitimated knowledge for teaching as propositional, mostly academic knowledge handed down from an external authority. Moreover, external examinations supported a pattern of individuals entering teacher education as a steppingstone to socioeconomic advancement. Finally, as a process of quality evaluation, the system of external examinations encoded within regulations and oversight notions of quality and standards that led to the forward momentum and institutionalization of other enduring structures and conventions, still observable and valued within the arena of teacher education today.

Teacher Education Patterned on Secondary Education & Hierarchical Patterns of Status and Authority

A policy of educational expansion with a focus on teacher training initiated by Governor Guggisberg in 1925 meant that by 1950, 19 teacher training colleges were offering two-year or four-year post-middle school (i.e., secondary level) teaching certificates (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1975). Though partially government funded through the grants-in-aid system, the majority of teacher training colleges prior to independence remained mission-run—Presbyterian, Catholic, Anglican, and Methodist denominations each ran one or more teacher training colleges. Similar to secondary boarding schools for general education, the curriculum for teacher training included religious and moral education and "life skills" training and encompassed strict rules for

discipline, gender separation, school uniforms, and a regimented schedule for chores, classes, worship, and prep (Graham, 1971; Akyeampong & Furlong, 2000). In order to receive grants from the government of the Gold Coast, training colleges (just like secondary schools) underwent inspections by a board appointed by the Director of Education.

According to Asiedu-Akrofi's 1975 study of inspectors and teacher training programs in Ghana before and after independence, the primary purpose of inspection was to improve the organizational efficiency of the training colleges. Inspectors concerned themselves with checking the qualifications of training college teachers, assessing the provision of buildings, conducting examinations of both teachers and students, and "seeing to it that government grants were made in terms of the findings" (p. 455). In his view, the approach to inspections "encouraged rigid conformity to certain approved standards" and showed little concern with improvement in the quality of instruction (e.g., less teaching by rote) at the training colleges (p. 455).

Asiedu-Akrofi (1975) describes a clear line of authority between inspectors, who typically had university degrees and were mostly European, and training college teachers:

> There were two groups of people engaged in the educational enterprise: the educational administrator represented by the inspectorate and the service agent represented by the teachers. The former took administrative decisions because of the authority conferred by his position while the latter's job was limited to the process of instruction. The inspector not only directed but also ordered the teachers in carrying out the educational plan. Instead of looking upon the different roles as two sides of the same coin, a wedge was thrown between them. Authority therefore, flowed down from the inspector but it was not reciprocated from the teacher's side. (p. 457)

Due to the expansion in the number of teacher training colleges and the financial constraints of the interwar years, from the 1930s onward inspection of teacher training colleges took place every five years. According to Asiedu-Akrofi (1975), less frequent inspections strengthened the position of college principals who now had greater responsibility for enforcing government regulations and upholding the welfare of the college.

Ghana gained independence from Britain in 1957. Teacher education had provided a steppingstone to further education for Ghana's first president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, and first Minister of Education, Dr. Kojo Botsio, among many other prominent Ghanaian political leaders of the time. Nkrumah earned his teaching certificate at Achimota College in 1930 and taught in Catholic primary schools for several years before securing funds to travel to the United States to further his education at Lincoln University, a historically black college in Pennsylvania. Botsio also attended Achimota College, earned his first degree from Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone, taught at a Catholic teacher training college for some time, and proceeded to earn his postgraduate degree at Oxford University.

Under Nkrumah and Botsio, the missionary and colonial systems of education, including teacher education, consolidated into a national system. The Ghana Education Service under the new Ministry of Education included an Inspectorate Division responsible for inspecting all secondary schools, and this included teacher training institutions—most of which continued to be run as secondary boarding schools. In 1962, the Government of Ghana assumed responsibility for the payment of all teachers' salaries, irrespective of the type of school (missionary or government) in which they taught (Berman, 1975). In 1961 there were 33 teacher training colleges and in 1965 there were over 50. Despite this astounding increase, the output of newly

trained teachers could not keep pace with increasing enrollments and the majority of teachers in primary schools, now free and compulsory, remained untrained (Zimmerman, 2011).

According to Asiedu-Akrofi (1975), the nature of inspection after independence remained essentially the same. The college principal was notified ahead of the inspection team visit, each inspector was responsible for subjects and practices that fell under his or her disciplinary specialty. A Senior Inspector of Schools headed the team and evaluated the administrative side, checking records and reviewing the enforcement of the Ministry's regulations and the general welfare of the college. Following the inspection exercise, a meeting was held by the inspection team to share their findings with the staff and teachers of the college. A report was written and submitted to the Ministry of Education and any recommendations were binding for a training college to maintain its government accreditation and funding.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1975) noted that the authority structure between inspectors and training college teachers changed somewhat after independence because inspectors were increasingly fresh university graduates with Diplomas in Education but little classroom teaching experience—"both sides confess to the existence of some lack of mutual trust" (p. 461). With inspectors less experienced in actual teaching than tutors, the inspection process solidified around "fact-finding" and evaluating college teachers on their "techniques of teaching," such as preparation of lesson notes and coverage of subject matter, rather than the development of the students (those learning to become teachers) (p. 465). Asiedu-Akrofi noted that new developments in curriculum and teaching that were "more democratic" and sought to integrate the "experiences and personalities of the people in the programmes as a whole… draw a sharp contrast with the narrow subject-oriented curriculum upon which the concept of inspection was built" (p. 464).

Asiedu-Akrofi's study helps to shine a light on the ideas, practices, and social interactions that underlie an institutionalized approach to oversight and supervision observable within the field of teacher education in Ghana over the past century. First, inspection is a regulatory tool intended to coerce teacher training colleges to come in line with government policies; this was explicitly the case when inspection was part of the colonial grants-in-aid system and remained so in the period after independence when inspection became tied to accreditation rather than funding. Second, Ghana's system of inspection embodies a notion of excellence as conformance to specifications, with less emphasis on evaluating inputs or outputs. Using Harvey and Green's (1993) classification scheme for the nature of quality in higher education,[20] the conception of quality that underlies the system of teacher education in Ghana can be described as *quality as perfection or consistency* (p. 15). In this conception, specifications are a kind of normative social structure, predefined and measurable, applied in the same manner to all, bringing uniformity to the social institution. According to Harvey and Green (1993), education quality conceptualized as perfection or consistency embodies a philosophy of prevention; the assumption is that if procedures are followed to the letter, a quality output is guaranteed, so there's little need for measurement at the endpoint. Context is less important. Interventions to improve quality aim to improve processes that are deemed to have resulted in an unsatisfactory output, often leading to new layers of bureaucracy. The responsibility for ensuring quality is spread across the organization as everyone has a role in making sure processes are carried out as specified.

[20] Harvey and Green (1993) classify the nature of quality in higher education into five categories: quality as exceptional; quality as perfection or consistency; quality as fitness for purpose; quality as value for money; and quality as transformation.

In summary, Ghana's approach to quality assurance and conception of educational excellence within teacher education privileges academic subjects and teaching procedures (delivered in objective, propositional, and examinable terms) over teaching practice, control over autonomy, and standards over professionalism. Patterns of status and hierarchy draw a clear line of authority between university faculty overseeing quality assurance and those delivering the "service" of teacher training. These values commitments and hierarchies (relational systems) are a product of the historical convergence of African and European systems of meaning, codification over time, and perceptions of utility that surrounded the education of teachers in the 19th and 20th centuries—first in the Gold Coast and then, after 1957, in Ghana. Some, like Asiedu-Akrofi, were keenly aware of how these conceptions worked in opposition to the changing aims of education for development after independence and the new democratic objectives of education. Among other things, he recognized the need for greater professionalization of teaching and at the conclusion of his study expressed optimism that Ghana's newly established teachers' professional associations would play a role in shifting the nature of inspections: "The nature of the work of the associations seems to indicate that there is a gradual movement from emphasis on improvements of instruction to facilitation of learning" (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1975, p. 467). Sadly, this transition did not take place, possibly due to resource constraints, and the status of the teaching profession and professional autonomy of those who train teachers has remained low.

Thus far, this chapter has discussed the historical development and institutionalization of seven social structures that emerged as themes in interviews and observations conducted for this study. These include:

1. The formalistic style of teaching and transmission mode of learning;

2. The system of external examination;
3. Teaching knowledge conceptualized as academic, objective, propositional knowledge;
4. Teacher education as a socioeconomic steppingstone;
5. Locus of authority for teacher education knowledge resides outside the institutions that train teachers;
6. Teacher education patterned on secondary education;
7. Hierarchical patterns of status and authority between university faculty and college of education tutors.

Each of these social structures has characterized teacher education in Ghana since a system of training and certifying teachers emerged in the early 20th century when Ghana was under colonial administration. Over time, they have become institutionalized, often taken for granted, logics that have guided individual and collective actions and interactions, processes and approaches to problem solving, within the arena of teacher education. The comparative case study analysis in Chapter 5 will show how some of these enduring patterns are changing with reforms upgrading teacher education to university education, while others remain stubbornly resistant to change. The next section will discuss the final of the eight social structures: the system of university affiliation. While new to teacher education, university affiliation is a long-standing quality assurance practice within Ghana's system of higher education.

The System of University Affiliation

Colleges of education came under the system of university affiliation when they were upgraded to universities and began running the Bachelor of Education degree in 2018. In order for a new university to gain initial accreditation, it is required by Ghana's higher education

regulatory body, Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) today, National Accreditation Board (NAB) in the past, to undergo a period of mentorship (currently at least 10 years) with an established university willing to confer its qualifications on graduates of the new institution (GTEC, 2019). University affiliation is a system of formalized mentorship, a mechanism of oversight and quality assurance within Ghana's system of higher education for over 75 years. As a process of quality evaluation, the system of university affiliation embodies both similarities and differences with earlier patterns of inspection and accreditation of teacher education under Ghana Education Service (GES). The next section will begin with a discussion of the localized meanings of university affiliation and university autonomy within the Ghana context and the relevance to the issue of autonomy for colleges of education. The discussion then shifts to the historical development and institutionalization of university affiliation and brings the chapter to the present moment of reform. The chapter closes with a recap and pulling together of key themes that will inform the transversal axis of comparison in the comparative case study analysis in Chapter 5.

University Autonomy

Broadly defined, autonomy means freedom from constraint and entails the organization and distribution of power among individuals and groups (Bates, 2007). Within higher education, there are at least two dimensions to autonomy. First, autonomy relates to the free expression of ideas by individuals on university campuses. For the purposes of this study, this form of autonomy is referred to as *academic freedom*. In its second dimension, autonomy relates to the freedom of universities to design and oversee their academic programs and courses, set academic standards and policies, and pursue research agendas. (Graycar, 1975; Ashby, 1965; Newman, 2013). Here, I use the term *university autonomy* because I am primarily concerned with freedoms

and constraints for colleges of education in Ghana regarding academic programs, policies, standards, and quality evaluation. I argue that processes intended to ensure comparability of degree courses and class rank (first-class honors, second upper-class honors, third class, pass) between Ghana's first universities and British universities have evolved into an accountability system in Ghanaian higher education today that constrains rather than fosters university autonomy, including for colleges of education. The next section focuses on the historical antecedents to this claim and Chapter 5 draws out empirical evidence for this situation today.

Within national systems of teacher education, multiple groups assert claims for greater autonomy. For example, governments assert power and influence on behalf of citizens and the social purpose of education, and as the primary funder of teacher education; the teaching profession asserts power and influence as knowledge experts and advocates for the interests of those who complete their training and enter the profession; institutions that train teachers, including their leaders, individual academics, members of staff, and students all assert some degree of power and influence over the programs and courses, standards, policies, and research agendas of teacher education (Bates, 2007; Graycar, 1975). In Ghana today, two additional groups assert power and influence within teacher education: mentor universities, with whom colleges of education are required to affiliate and who are mandated by the government to ensure academic standards; and churches, which have strong historical ties to teacher education institutions in Ghana and maintain a keen interest in the character development dimension of teacher preparation.

A key focus of this research—explored in depth in Chapter 5—are the perspectives of tutors—those who train future teachers—principals—those who lead colleges of education—and mentor university faculty—those who are in positions of oversight—on the issue of university

autonomy for colleges education. The research examines the extent to which tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty, positioned at different levels within the organizational field of teacher education, believe their own college of education, or colleges of education in general, are "ready" to take on greater control: specifically the design and oversight of academic programs; the setting, maintenance, and evaluation of academic standards; the development and implementation of new policies around methods of instruction and assessment, admissions, appointments and promotions, and the setting of priorities for research. Their perspectives shine a light on what might be gained if colleges of education are accorded greater autonomy, what challenges or dilemmas tutors and principals may face, and how the relationship between traditional universities and colleges of education may evolve in the years ahead as increased autonomy leads to differentiation and less uniformity (Abrutyn, 2009).

Institutional Pillars of University Affiliation

In order to interpret the varying perspectives of research participants on these issues, the "institutional pillars" around which university autonomy is construed and that shape the actions and commitments of individuals within the system of higher education in Ghana must be examined (Scott, 2014). A key regulatory mechanism that governs the distribution of power within the system of higher education in Ghana, and consequently frames how university autonomy is understood, is university affiliation, a system of formalized mentorship. *University affiliation* is a process of quality evaluation with its roots in the establishment of Ghana's first university during the period of British colonial administration. In 1948, when the first cohort of 92 students began their studies at the University College of the Gold Coast (called the University of Ghana today), the University of London, under a formal Scheme of Special Relations, approved their programs of study, appointed their lecturers and administrators, vetted and

approved their examination papers, moderated the grading of their scripts, and, upon completion of their studies, awarded them University of London degrees (Agbodeka, 1998; Ajayi et. al., 1996).

The realization and maintenance of international standards through oversight and mentorship was the stated purpose of the affiliation between the University of London and the University College of the Gold Coast (Ashby, 1966). To African elites pushing for higher education in the colonies, ensuring international standards through University of London certificates was viewed as necessary for the project of Africanizing the civil service and gaining access to the positions held by expatriates in administrative and technical positions in the private sector (Ajayi, et al, 1996). The University of London certificates would also ensure Africans aiming for higher levels of university education abroad would have their degrees and class ranks recognized.

The system of affiliation with British universities also furthered important British interests at this time. First, affiliation would secure British influence on the educated elite who would govern the country. Second, universities founded in the colonies would serve to reduce the flow of African students seeking higher education in Britain and Europe. Third, there was a desire to stave off the competition of ideas from American higher education, for example, the doctrines of Marcus Garvey and the Pan-African movement, which threatened Britain's control of the process of decolonization and its continued neo-colonial influence (Ajayi et al., 1996). For example, Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria received support from USAID and cooperation from Michigan State University in the founding of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and Tom Mboya of Kenya secured philanthropic and US Government funding for an extensive scholarship program for Kenyan students to attend American Universities (Ajayi et al., 1996).

The special relations between the two institutions ended abruptly in 1961 when The University College of the Gold Coast was awarded a presidential charter by Ghana's first president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, in his effort to reduce the degree of dependence and control by London. As an autonomous institution, the renamed University of Ghana had the power to expand and modify its programs, set academic standards, promote faculty, administer its own examinations, and award its own degrees.[21]

Ghana's second university, the Kumasi College of Technology, which opened its doors in 1952, was also established under an oversight and mentoring relationship with the University of London. The Kumasi College of Technology was renamed the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in 1961 when it became an autonomous university through an Act of Parliament. When, in 1962, the Nkrumah government established the country's third university, the University College of Cape Coast, to prepare secondary school teachers and university graduates for Ghana's rapidly expanding education sector, an oversight and mentoring relationship was formalized with the University of Ghana rather than the University of London (Dwarko & Kwarteng, 2003). Thus, the localized *affiliation system* was set in motion.

Still in place today, the system of university affiliation is intended to "ensure the attainment and maintenance of standards for the promotion of academic quality" (National Accreditation Board, 2010, p.2). The University College of Cape Coast obtained its charter and became an autonomous university through an act of Parliament in 1971 when it was renamed the University of Cape Coast. Since the 1970s, 13 additional public universities and 11 new private universities have obtained presidential charters; hence, they have the status of autonomous

[21] The 1962 constitution of The University of Ghana named the Chancellor as the Head of State, among other governance changes, which were perceived by many faculty and administrators, particularly expatriates, as interference and constraints on both university autonomy and academic freedom (Ajayi et al., 1996, pp. 86, 95).

universities allowed to grant their own degrees. In Ghana, affiliation with a mentor university typically lasts 10 to 20 years, in some cases longer. Currently, over 100 universities, not including 48+ colleges of education, function under affiliation agreements with established public universities (GTEC Accredited Institutions, 2024).

Upgrading Colleges of Education to Universities

The policy to upgrade teacher training colleges to higher education began with the establishment of the University College of Education Winneba in 1992 (Brief History, University of Education Winneba, n.d.), under an affiliation agreement with the University of Cape Coast. The University College of Education Winneba brought together under one umbrella seven existing training colleges, including specialized programs in music, Ghanaian languages, special education, technical training, and agricultural training. The University College of Education Winneba obtained its charter to run as a fully autonomous university in 2002, through an Act of Parliament (Act 672, 2004), at which point it was renamed The University of Education Winneba (UEW). In addition to running general and specialized teacher education and degree programs for all levels of education, the original mandate of The University College of Education Winneba was to oversee teacher education in the country (PNDC Law 322, 1993). However, this objective did not materialize at the time and UCC continued to carry out its oversight role.

With the passage of the 2012 Colleges of Education Act 847, all remaining teacher training colleges were to be upgraded to tertiary level institutions and renamed Colleges of Education (in fact, the training colleges had been running a three-year post-secondary Diploma

in Basic Education since the early 2000s). [22, 23] The law stipulated that "A college of education shall be affiliated to an institution of higher learning established by law or charter for teacher education in the country" (Colleges of Education Act 847, 2012). Subsequently, all 38 colleges of education that existed at the time were affiliated with the University of Cape Coast. However, the change was not a substantial one, as the University of Cape Coast had worked closely with the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service in the delivery and oversight of teacher education since the 1970s. The Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast had been responsible for developing and reviewing the teacher education curricula; setting, administering, and moderating external examinations; and awarding diplomas and teaching certificates (Dwarko & Kwarteng, 2003; Newman, 2013). Meanwhile, the Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service allocated funding, made appointments and promotions, and set requirements for enrollment into initial teacher education. Significantly, because control over funding, appointments, and promotions remained with Ghana Education Service even after the 2012 Act, and the University of Cape Coast continued to develop and oversee academic programs, administer external examinations, and award degrees, little autonomy was gained for colleges of education under their new tertiary designation (T-TEL, n.d.).

One of the primary objectives of the T-TEL partnership with the Ministry of Education was to provide technical assistance and funding for a host of reforms necessary for colleges of education (COEs) to function as tertiary institutions and chart a path toward greater autonomy. The Ministry of Education's own Education Sector Analysis Report stated that:

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[22] Education Act 2008 (778) laid out Ghana's current system of basic, second-cycle, and tertiary education, where universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education were designated as tertiary-level institutions. However, the 2008 Act was not fully implemented for colleges of education.

[23] Though tertiary, the three-year Diploma in Basic Education was not equivalent to an undergraduate, bachelor's level degree.

> Colleges of Education do not have sufficient choice or control over how they train teachers to meet national standards. Although the Colleges of Education Act 2012 (Act 847) mandated COEs to function as tertiary institutions, with freedom to affiliate with any teacher education university of their choice, this has not happened yet. (Ministry of Education Ghana, 2019, p. 21).

On 28 September 2017, a firmer foundation for these changes was laid through a Cabinet Memorandum titled *Policy on Teacher Education Reform*, which provided for the official conversion of Colleges of Education into university colleges, offering the four-year undergraduate Bachelor of Education degree (B.Ed.), distributing their affiliation relationships among five public universities (T-TEL, 2020), and obtaining accreditation through Ghana Tertiary Education Commission. Shifting affiliation from one university (UCC) to five (UCC plus University of Education Winneba, The University of Development Studies, The University of Ghana, and The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology[24]) was an important step that widened the pool of expertise available to support colleges of education in their transition to university status. Moreover, the new B.Ed. degree and new National Curriculum Framework relieved the burden of one university, The University of Cape Coast, from the need to oversee and monitor the entire system of teacher education.

Summing Up

In this chapter, I have tried to point out the historical foundations and social reproductive processes that make up the context in which tutors, principals, mentor university faculty, and others working in the field of teacher education in Ghana today, construct meaning and carry out

[24] A sixth public university, Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED) has recently been added as a mentor university following its separation from UEW. The focus of AAMUSTED is mentoring colleges of education that offer technical and vocational teacher education programs.

their day-to-day activities. As a social institution, teacher education in Ghana has meaning systems, accepted values and standards, and legitimated approaches to organizing and solving problems that are informed by the past and shared by many. These cultural-cognitive, normative, and regulative elements work in representational, constructive, and directive ways—providing guidance and direction—but also in "evocative ways" creating feelings and emotions and affecting preferences and desires (Scott, 2014, p. 63).

The eight institutionalized social structures described in Chapter 4 encompass a mix of cultural-cognitive, normative, and regulative pillars—and as I will argue in Chapter 5, are intertwined with processes of quality evaluation today. The formalistic style of teaching and transmission mode of learning is pervasive orthodoxy at all levels of education in Ghana today and stems from the coalescing of cognitive-cultural patterns in indigenous education, education for religious conversion, and British 19th century models of education for the poor. A view of teaching knowledge as mostly academic propositional knowledge is both epistemological (hence cultural-cognitive) and a normative view. Training teachers to deliver the academic curriculum furthered what was most valued in western-style education by Africans: qualifying for employment in the colonial economy, opportunities for further education abroad, and thwarting attempts by colonial powers to offer an inferior quality of education in Africa. What is preferred together with the construction of standards to which behaviors can be compared and assessed is the essence of the normative pillar. Thus, while authority for teacher education knowledge has shifted—from London, to WAEC, to The Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast, to five mentor universities today—the system of external examinations remains a highly valued institutionalized process for evaluating the quality of future teachers.

In the missionary and colonial periods, teachers were accorded significant respect and teacher education became a steppingstone to middle-class wage employment, or for a small group, a step along the pathway to higher or professional education abroad. In the system of education that emerged under colonial administration in the early 20th century, teacher education was a form of secondary education, and most training colleges were boarding schools, thus they adopted the norms of the secondary boarding school model at that time. After independence, the status of teachers dropped dramatically, but teacher education remained a steppingstone to further education for those who could not afford or qualify for university education. Today, teacher education as a steppingstone is largely a regulative pillar, because strict rules for university admissions and the availability of financial resources govern the choices available to young people in their pursuit of further education. The system of university affiliation for oversight and quality assurance is also strongly regulative as it brings a set of rules and processes for monitoring and bringing colleges of education in line with new policies and the government's goals for teacher education. University affiliation empowers some and constrains others, consequently, embedded within it are normative patterns of status and authority between university faculty and college of education tutors. Additionally, the construction of standards for comparison and evaluation of colleges of education are normative processes.

While Scott (2014) acknowledges that "in the argument between autonomy and control, the thrust of institutional theory is to privilege continuity and constraint in social structure," he insists "that need not preclude attention to the ways in which individual actors take action to create, maintain, and transform institutions" (p. 92). This chapter set the groundwork for the transversal axis of comparison necessary to proceed along this line of inquiry. The next chapter delves into ways in which the activities and actions of those working within the field of teacher

education today, in part due to new regulations and curricula, maintain or transform the eight institutionalized social structures discussed here. It is within this historical and present-day context that the three research questions for this study need to be considered:

1. How are recent reforms upgrading Ghana's system of teacher education to higher education transforming enduring structures and conventions, which historically, have shaped the organizational character of colleges of education?
2. In navigating new regulatory arrangements in teacher education, what practices constitute the range of ways those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education work to create, maintain, or alter conceptions of quality and institutionalized structures of quality evaluation?
3. How do those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education perceive the opportunity for greater autonomy for colleges of education under Ghana's system of higher education?

To answer these questions, Chapter 5 presents the analysis of interview, observational, and documentary data along the study's three axes of comparison: horizontal comparison of reforms unfolding within three colleges of education in Ghana; vertical comparison between the perspectives of tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty; and temporal comparison of the eight institutionalized social structures and the extent to which they are being transformed or reproduced today.

Chapter 5: Analysis of Case Study Data

This chapter is concerned with the social institution of teacher education in Ghana today. The empirical data suggests that upgrading colleges of education to universities and the implementation of the new Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree are broadly supported and viewed as long overdue changes needed to bring teacher education into the 21st century. However, through an institutional analysis of comparative case study data, I show that while some enduring structures within the field of teacher education are clearly being transformed by these changes—such as an enduring pedagogical style of formalistic teaching and transmission mode of learning and teacher education patterned as secondary education—others—such as the system of external examinations; the conceptualization of teaching knowledge as academic, objective, propositional knowledge; teacher education as a socioeconomic steppingstone; the locus of authority for teacher education knowledge resides outside of the institutions that train teachers; hierarchical patterns of status and authority between university faculty and college of education tutors; and the system of university affiliation—are in the balance and could tip toward transformation or reproduction depending on how reform processes continue to unfold. What emerged as significant in the field and the varied data gathered, was the role processes of quality evaluation play as institutional carries—modes of transport for patterns, conventions, and ideas, from place to place and from time to time (Scott, 2003). And it is not solely the routines of evaluation that are transported, such as seated examinations or inspection team visits, but also a host of relational and meaning systems interlinked with them, the consequences of which are significant for efforts at teacher education reform.

The analysis of interview, observational, and documentary data is organized as follows. First, I delve into the transition of colleges of education from institutions patterned on secondary

boarding schools to institutions patterned on Ghana's system of university education. The transition is conspicuous in changing symbols and artifacts on college of education campuses and in the meanings, use, and utility tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty attach to the new Bachelor of Education degree, new quality assurance policies, and capacity building initiatives. Second, the issue of changing assessment practices in teacher education is examined, with particular attention to differing perspectives on new assessment policies within the Bachelor of Education program and the continuing role of external examinations. The third section examines the views of the study's participants on the system of university affiliation. Tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty shared what mentorship means to them, and some of the benefits and drawbacks of supervision and quality assurance under the system of university affiliation. The fourth and final section wraps up the analysis of the case study data by delving into the controversial issue of full autonomy for colleges of education, the meaning of autonomy, and the perceived impact of greater autonomy thus far. However, before proceeding to the presentation of these themes, I draw some general conclusions from comparison along the study's three axes of comparison and state the objectives of the chapter.

Comparative Case Study: Three Axes of Comparison

Comparative case study methodology emphasizes comparison along a horizontal axis (three colleges of education), vertical axis (college of education tutors and principals, and mentor university faculty), and transversal axis (over time) within a social arena (teacher education in Ghana). Along the horizontal axis of comparison, there was little obvious difference between the case study data emerging from the three colleges of education. Observable artifacts and characteristics on college of education campuses and perspectives of tutors and principals were remarkably similar and the data reached saturation more quickly than expected. This outcome

buttresses Abrutyn's (2009) claim of a relationship between institutional processes of differentiation and autonomy within a social arena. Here, the uniformity observed in institutional characteristics and perspectives of participants among the three colleges of education reflects a historical condition of low autonomy for institutions that train teachers. In contrast, there were patterned differences in perspectives along the vertical axis of comparison. Views expressed by tutors and principals embedded in colleges of education often contrasted with the views of mentor university faculty. These differences will be explored in the analysis below and can be understood within the context of underlying patterns of authority and status (i.e., relational systems) within the arena of teacher education.

Finally, analyses along the transversal axis of comparison sought to reveal temporal interconnectedness as well as patterns of continuity and change—and their intended and unintended consequences—among the eight social structures that emerged as themes from the data coding (Pettigrew, 1997, p. 341). Transversal comparison and explanations regarding patterns of continuity and change are integrated into the case study analysis presented below and draw on the historical antecedents discussed in Chapter 4.

The overall aim of the chapter is to (1) understand how recent reforms upgrading teacher education in Ghana are transforming enduring structures and conventions that have shaped the organizational character of colleges of education; (2) identify practices that constitute the range of ways tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty create, maintain, or alter institutionalized structures of quality evaluation; and (3) how these same groups perceive the opportunity for greater autonomy for colleges of education under Ghana's system of higher education.

The Transition of Colleges of Education to Universities

My analysis of interview and observational data show that four years into the implementation of ambitious reforms to Ghana's system of teacher education, significant transformations are underway on the three college of education campuses that were the sites for this study. First, colleges of education are shedding artifacts of their past as secondary boarding schools. Second, the new B.Ed. has ushered in updated curricula with more varied approaches to teaching and learning and with a greater emphasis on practice teaching. Third, the push for internet connectivity is providing a trove of resources and creative ideas for tutors and students to incorporate into their teaching and projects and for tutors and university faculty to share resources and collaborate. Overwhelmingly, the tutors, principals, and faculty in mentor universities who participated in my study viewed pedagogical changes underway as necessary and overdue improvements to the way preservice teachers are trained in Ghana. However, participants also shared a range of challenges that, broadly speaking, arise from the way pedagogy is intertwined with other historically rooted social structures. First, teacher education continues to be an important socioeconomic steppingstone—most students entering colleges of education aspire for social advancement but do not desire to become teachers. Second, the external examination system shapes teaching knowledge into a pattern of academic, objective, propositional knowledge. And third, the system of university affiliation reinforces the view that the authority for the knowledge and expertise to train teachers resides outside the colleges of education themselves.

Shedding Artifacts and Symbols of the Past

> Human conduct is perpetually in a process of becoming. The overriding aim of the process analyst therefore is to catch this reality in flight. (Pettigrew, 1997, p. 338)

A colorful gate and guard post mark the entrance to each of the three colleges of education in this study, one of many similarities in the physical structure of these institutions. Typically, one side of the gate remains closed, obliging drivers to slow down and check in with a security guard before entering the campus. Large stately trees along the breadth of the front wall separate Sapelewood College of Education from the main road and the bustling urban neighborhoods of Accra. Evergreen College of Education's main gate opens onto a vista of lush, forested mountains surrounding the campus, recently painted staff bungalows, and a mix of tidy one-story classroom blocks, newer multistory buildings, and ongoing construction. Royal Palm College of Education sits on a breezy hilltop overlooking Accra's spreading suburban landscape. Because of its pinnacle location, the campus is more compact than the other two, but it has the familiar mingling of modest one- and two-story blocks, newer multi-story buildings, and ongoing construction.

A feature of all three campuses is a centrally located, airy examination hall, which can accommodate several hundred students seated in long rows writing examination papers. Another common sight on all three campuses is the construction of new apartment-style student hostels intended to replace older dormitory-style accommodations.

Most colleges of education in Ghana began as secondary-level institutions, built during the colonial or early independence periods, and the three sites for this study are no exception. During the data collection period, Evergreen College of Education celebrated its 60th anniversary with a weeklong schedule of lectures and activities. The college was established as a women's training college through a partnership between local chiefs and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, soon after independence. Ten years later, Evergreen merged with a nearby men's training college and remains coeducational today.

On my first visit to Royal Palm College of Education, a large banner on the side of the administration building advertised the upcoming 94th Founder's Day Lecture. Royal Palm was established by missionaries as a sister school to a nearby seminary that offered teacher training to men only. The women's college moved to its current location in the 1950s, and today is associated with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

Sapelewood College of Education is the oldest of the three colleges. Established in the early 20th century to increase the supply of trained teachers for government and mission schools in the Gold Coast colony, Sapelewood was originally a day school. The college moved to its current location in the 1980s and added boarding facilities in 2001.

On all three campuses, history and tradition are visible in many ways. First, there are the physical structures described above on campuses with stately trees and well-kept grounds in prime locations in the cities or towns where they are located. Another feature is that students wear uniforms—slacks and shirts for men and skirts or dresses for women. One also finds statues and busts of founders or past principals, which suggests a reverence for the past. College principals expressed pride in their institution's longevity and accomplishments of graduates, who have gone on to become successful professionals and leaders in many fields. One principal emphasized, "Most of the colleges [of education] are even older than the universities!"

A respect for tradition and simultaneously a desire to bring teacher education into the 21st century is a source of tension within the current transition. When research participants at all levels spoke about colleges of education becoming universities, they often emphasized the importance of changing the physical and symbolic artifacts of teacher education patterned on secondary education. For example, in secondary boarding schools, students wear uniforms and sleep in dormitory-style accommodation, with bunkbeds lined up in rows, barracks-style;

students move through the day according to regimented timetables, waking up, taking meals, attending devotion and prep, all by the bell. A college of education tutor explained:

> One of the major challenges that we have has to do with building artifacts. For instance, if you take the residential facilities, most of them were built like dormitories. And so, you don't have self-catering facilities. If you say that we should be tertiary institutions where students do fend for themselves, then how are the students going to do the cooking for themselves?

A similar perspective was expressed by a college of education principal:

> Now we have more buildings… modernized buildings. All the traditional tables and chairs we were using have been removed. When it comes to staff accommodation, there's been significant improvement. Student accommodation—it has changed from the normal dormitory system into a kind of hostel system. The new buildings we are putting up, you have a balcony so that if you want to cook something, you do it. They have a library in their residential facilities, and they have reading rooms, which was not the case in the traditional teacher training college days.

Modern hostels and "canteen-style" dining, which offer choice and independence around food preparation and mealtimes, and student policies, such as more flexible dress codes and timetables, are important symbols of independence for most university students in Ghana today. However, there is also an underlying financial incentive driving these changes. When universities ask students to "fend for themselves," as the tutor quoted above put it, they are effectively transferring some of the cost of higher education to students and families. According to a principal:

> You are in charge of their feeding, their accommodation, their dressing and everything which is necessarily *not* part of the tertiary system. So as a principal, you wake up at dawn and you think about how you get food to feed your students which other vice-chancellors… are not thinking about. But this is where we find ourselves. So, these are some of the key challenges we are facing.

This principal then went on to detail the challenge of providing three square meals on a budget of roughly one dollar per day per student.

Another challenge with the secondary boarding school model are demands placed on tutor time, which make meeting new university research and publication requirements difficult. In the current system, tutors cycle through as hall (dormitory) tutors and have responsibilities for student monitoring and counseling. According to one tutor,

> In the main university, even if you may be a hall warden, it is not the same as our system… As we speak now, promotion is based on academic writing. Aside all of the responsibilities that you have, which are not added and counted as part of your promotion, if you fail to write, you are sinking.

A key reason teacher education has remained a steppingstone is lower admission requirements compared to requirements for university admission. Historically, admission into teacher training was set by the government at a lower standard than university admission. Prior to recent reforms, high school graduates seeking admission for the Diploma in Basic Education were required to obtain passing grades of A1 to D7 on the national exam in core subjects (English, Mathematics, and Science or Social Studies) and three elective subjects. On the other hand, universities require passing marks between A1 to C6 in three core subjects and three

elective subjects relevant to the course of study[25]. The issue of higher admission standards for teacher education is part of the ongoing debate surrounding the introduction of the Bachelor of Education degree.

Tutors who participated in the study argued on both sides of the admissions policy issue. On one side, several participants expressed empathy for students who are unable to perform well academically, often due to poor backgrounds and having attended low-quality schools, and felt such students should be given the chance to upgrade themselves. For example, when asked about the higher admission standard for the Bachelor of Education compared to the Diploma in Basic Education, a tutor at Sapelewood College of Education shared,

> I don't believe in it. Sometimes you pick students from villages who have weaknesses but when you bring them to an environment where things are okay, like you have a good school, good teachers, you can change the fortune of the learner. I come from a village, so I know what I'm talking about. I believe if we give opportunity to students earning D, it's not bad. If the student has a D, he has certain knowledge, so if that knowledge is promoted, he'll become very good. So changing it [admissions policy] to the university status, in my view, I don't see the need for it.

On the other side of the debate, the primary concern was for the colleges of education and tutors themselves who are faced with the challenge of teaching a core of academically poorly prepared students and the reality that many do not desire to become teachers. A tutor at Evergreen College of Education, weighing in on the debate about admissions requirements stated,

[25] According to WAEC, A1 is Excellent, B2 is Very Good, B3 is Good, C4, C5, and C6 are awarded Credit, D7 and D8 are awarded Pass (no credit), and F9 is Fail.

> You think eventually the standard for who's choosing to go to teacher training college might improve, but as of now, it's still not so good. It's not good because of a kind of sympathy. We have some traces still there. So it's like, let them come. We bear the consequences.

A tutor at Royal Palm spoke about the academic challenges faced by many students entering colleges of education,

> A lot of them have problems. They struggle all the way through, but at the end of the day, you realize that the content [foundation] isn't there. It doesn't help."

Another tutor at Royal Palm also focused on poor academic preparation,

> Teacher education students need to practice more. Particularly reading and writing. Some are not that strong themselves. And they don't like reading and writing when you assign it to them.

In summary, teacher education as a socioeconomic steppingstone is creating a dilemma for the full transition away from the secondary boarding school system model. Inexpensive traditional dormitory-style accommodation and dining, uniforms as a low cost and equalizing dress code, and allowances during training have made teacher education a viable pathway to further education and socioeconomic advancement for many Ghanaians for over a century. Asking students to "fend for themselves" and raising the admissions requirements so that the curriculum can become more rigorous and more of those who are admitted desire to become teachers, means that a well-trodden pathway to socioeconomic advancement will close for many young Ghanaians from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Teacher Education as a Socioeconomic Steppingstone

These historic and present-day realities are reflected in the reasons study participants themselves entered the field of teacher education. In sharing what led them into teaching, only four out of 14 participants recalled an early interest in teaching; even then, teaching was viewed primarily as an available avenue given financial constraints. One tutor put it this way:

> I just developed an interest in teaching. Even in my childhood, I was saying that I would teach. So I did have that passion, that interest. Aside that, to be frank too, my background is not strong financially. So going to the university, I wouldn't have had enough resources. It's the best place I could have gone. In those times they used to give us allowance. So, I know when I go, the allowance will push me through and truly it has helped. So, I think those are some of the factors that pushed me into teaching. One, I have the passion, secondly, my financial background.

A tutor whose performance on the national exams was not strong put it this way:

> It's like, after senior high school, if you don't qualify to go straight to the university, the perception is, okay, why not teaching as a profession or nursing? That was the mindset at first, if you don't get a strong grade that will take you to university, then you pass through teaching… And there is the allowance given to students, so it pushes you even more. Because if you're in the house, what are you doing? So that is how most of us found our way into the teaching.

Teacher education as a steppingstone was also reflected in the fact that most study participants did not remain as basic school (K-9) teachers for very long. Half of the eight tutors interviewed taught between two and three years at the basic school level and the other half taught five, six, eight, and 14 years, respectively. After completing their undergraduate degree, most spent several additional years as secondary school teachers before obtaining their master's

degree and joining the colleges of education. As part of the recent upgrade to universities, some funding for college of education tutors to pursue their PhDs has been made available and two participants were currently enrolled in hybrid/online doctoral programs.

College of Education principals and mentor university faculty who participated in the study had similar early trajectories but were able to go farther with higher education, in part, due to strong academic performance. Principals taught at the K-9 level for two or three years before continuing for further studies, typically teaching while they pursued multiple masters and or theological degrees. After teaching at a college of education for some time, one of the principals received sponsorship to pursue a PhD at a university outside of Ghana. For the three participants who are faculty at mentor universities, their careers in education similarly began with teacher training and two or three years of classroom teaching, followed by their first and second degrees and onward to the PhD. Two mentor university faculty pursued their PhDs outside of Ghana and one locally, before accepting positions within faculties of education at one of the public universities currently mentoring the colleges of education.

The B.Ed. Curriculum

In addition to new facilities and shifts in some of the symbols of their past as secondary boarding schools, the transition of colleges of education to universities has ushered in the new four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree as the minimum qualification for newly trained teachers in Ghana. A key achievement of the T-TEL-Ministry of Education partnership, the B.Ed. curriculum aims to tackle many of the weaknesses identified in the MUSTER and TPA studies conducted across several sub-Saharan African countries in the early 2000s (Akyeampong, 2003; Akyeampong & Furlong, 2000; Akyeampong & Lewen, 2002; Hedges, 2000; Lewen & Stuart, 2003) and, according to the Minister of Education at the time, “the on-going and

systematic problem of underachievement of Ghanaian children" (Ministry of Education Ghana, 2017, p. 2). In this section, I will first give an overview of the guiding framework for the new degree. Second, programmatic changes to teacher education that were broadly supported by study participants will be discussed. Third, I will move into the issue of external examinations and show that, while the Bachelor of Education degree has brought in new teaching methods and approaches to assessment, the issue of external examinations divides opinion along the vertical axis of comparison (i.e., between participants at different levels within the arena of teacher education) and is deeply intertwined with a view of teaching knowledge conceptualized as academic, objective, propositional knowledge.

The National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework. The development of the B.Ed. began in 2016 with a national consultative process culminating a year later in the National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework (NTECF) (Mensah, 2016; T-TEL, 2017). The National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework document opens with a list of 23 concerns and issues with the teacher education curriculum of the past that the new B.Ed. curriculum aims to remedy. Among the concerns and issues listed are four (quoted below) that are related to themes in the case study data:

- the concerns of today, that is, of the 21st century, are not reflected in the teacher education curriculum—it has not moved with the times;
- incremental reforms of the past have had little impact on children's learning outcomes;
- There is a low level of tutor participation in decision-making (e.g. test-item preparation);

- students' progression depends on success in examinations. This makes the curriculum both theory laden and examination focused, thereby preventing students from developing appropriate pedagogical skills.

(Ministry of Education Ghana, 2017, p. 18)

To address these weaknesses and bring the curriculum for teacher education "into the 21st century" the NTECF specifies four key pillars, five cross-cutting issues, and four "other issues" intended to guide the implementation of the B.Ed. degree. These are detailed in Figure 4 below. Using this framework, the five mentor universities (public universities with established faculties of education) were requested to develop course outlines and teaching manuals for each age level and subject specialty, to train college of education tutors on the new courses and teaching materials, supervise the implementation of the B.Ed. program at their mentee colleges, and provide quality assurance. However, four of the mentor universities chose to work together to develop one set of course materials and UCC developed another set for its mentee colleges, so today there are effectively two versions of the B.Ed. curriculum running among the 48 colleges of education.

Figure 4. *The National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework*

Note. From Ministry of Education Ghana. (2017). National Teacher Education Framework: The Essential Elements of Initial Teacher Education. Ministry of Education Ghana. http://www.t-tel.org, p. 2.

The first batch of students to go through the new B.Ed. degree began their studies in 2018. During the data collection period for this study, which took place between September and December 2022, these students were in their final term and preparing for a final set of external examinations. By that time, all new B.Ed. courses had been taught at least once (though some were modified due to COVID-19) at each of the three participating colleges of education. In the next section, I describe the perspectives of tutors, principals, and faculty at mentor universities on key aspects of the new curriculum—practice teaching, specialization, and modern teaching methods—and the significant changes in the way those who will become teachers are prepared and evaluated.

Practice Teaching. One of the four pillars of the B.Ed. is Supported Teaching in Schools (STS), which aims to reduce the theory-practice divide and address the need to assess students' developing skills and competencies in teaching. The STS program places students in primary and JHS classrooms for 36 weeks over four years, beginning in year one with weekly guided classroom observations and gradually working up to an extended practicum during the final year. Figure 5 shows a guided observation tool for year 1. The STS program is a logistics and resource challenge for colleges, but overall, study participants at all levels agreed that the impact on students' understanding of professional expectations, familiarity with the basic school curriculum and real-world classroom contexts, and multiple opportunities to apply theory to practice were beneficial.

Figure 5. *Supported Teaching in Schools Year One Week Four Guided Observation.*

DO

Use the checklist below to observe a teacher.

Table 7.4.1 Teacher behaviour

Behaviour / attitudes	A teacher who is a good role model:	A teacher who is a poor role model:
Punctuality	• always arrives on time.	• arrives late and is not well organised.
Appearance	• dresses decently and appropriately at all times.	• wears clothes that are indecent.
Tolerance	• accommodates views of others.	• impervious/resistant to others' views.
Enthusiasm	• shows passion for teaching.	• shows no passion for teaching.
Commitment	• shows dedication to pupils' success.	• shows no dedication to pupils' success.
Time and Time Management	• spends extra/quality time with pupils. • ensures that the school timetable guides their classroom and school activities.	• has little time for pupils. • fails to achieve tasks on time.

List and discuss any other professional traits you might have observed with your STS parner.

REFLECT TOGETHER

Your mentor will meet with you to reflect on the following questions:

- What ideas do you have in common regarding the role of positive teacher behaviour?
- How can the teacher be friendly with pupils and maintain discipline without being overly strict?

Note. From Four-Year Bachelor of Education Degree Supported Teaching in Schools (School Placement Handbook—Year 1). (2018). Ministry of Education Ghana. https://t-tel.org/knowledge-hub-old/b-ed-materials-reading-and-resources/, p. 34.

When asked about differences between the final year students who had gone through the B.Ed. compared to those who completed the Diploma, one principal explained: "Now you find the degree hands on… So if you decide to be a rote learner, you will not fit in." Another principal elaborated on the significance of STS:

> I think the most significant one [difference] has to do with how we're doing the practical teaching... With the diploma, the student was in [the college] year one and year two. The third year the student spent one year in the field teaching through the whole year. What we noticed was that when you leave them in the [college] until the third year, when they go, there's a problem. They have not had any exposure. It takes them time to settle in the school, to understand the school environment, and how the teaching goes, and all kinds of psychology in there. Now with the B.Ed. program, they start year one, semester one… That has helped the students that we have now to understand fully where they'll be working and what they are there to do. It's like a hospital. You do not wait until you're about to finish and then they stick you in the hospital.

The National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework emphasizes selecting skilled and experienced mentor teachers for STS and providing them with continuing professional development. Several tutors mentioned carrying out training sessions and ongoing positive interactions with school-based mentor teachers. Although there is overwhelming support for STS at all levels, some concerns with its implementation emerged from tutors and principals. These include the logistics and cost of transporting students, the view that financial resources for professional development and teaching and learning resources (i.e., course manuals, hands-on materials) do not trickle down sufficiently to the classroom teacher level, and the negative influence that lax administration or low professionalism among some teachers at practice schools has on student teachers.

Specialization. Another program level change that participants at all levels felt was a needed improvement was age level and subject specialization. There was general agreement that the teacher education curriculum of the past was overcrowded with disciplinary courses and a

generalist pedagogical approach that covered a wide, nine-year age range. Tutors felt that B.Ed. students in their final year have a better command of the curriculum they are going to teach because, as subject tutors, they employ methods and approaches that are aligned with the basic school curriculum at the level of specialization (early elementary, upper elementary, and junior secondary). A tutor explained:

> Previously, we used to have a whole year where we teach the methods, but this time they spread it across [subject courses], and it also includes supported teaching in school. Every week they go to a sister school and go and observe a lesson with a mentor. They sit down, they watch how the teacher teaches. So, all those things are encouraging them. It's improving them. It is opening their eyes as to how teaching is being done from level hundred [first year] up to level four hundred [final year].

Modern Teaching Methods. During the interviews, tutors spoke with genuine enthusiasm about the new B.Ed. curriculum, the workshops they had participated in, and weekly department-level professional development sessions that were part of the B.Ed. roll out. They spoke about having their students work in groups; connecting the content to the experience of the learner ("teaching from the known to the unknown" was a mantra I heard often from tutors, principals, and mentor faculty); having students do online research and presentations on assigned topics; allowing students to access the internet during class to look up information; having students identify problems in the community, conduct action research, and propose solutions. There was a sense that these changes were necessary to bring Ghana's education system into the 21st century, that tutors had benefited professionally from the implementation process, and therefore, teaching standards within the colleges had improved significantly.

Indeed, during the classroom observations, I observed what was often referred to as modern teaching methods: students were seated in groups, lessons were interactive, in fact, I did not observe any straight lecture. In the science lesson taught by a tutor at Royal Palm, there were periodic checks for understanding and an activity where students answered true or false concept questions in their groups, and responses were discussed at length. In both the faculty lessons and the student macro-teaching sessions (where students deliver lessons to their peers in teams of three), a concerted effort was made to bring in examples from pupils' local context and pupils were asked to share relevant examples from their own experience. One of the macro-teaching teams used a local Twi song to introduce the lesson topic, which was "socialization".

However, a dilemma that I observed was content standards, which were written in lesson notes and on the whiteboard at the beginning of each lesson, were conceptualized as propositional knowledge and didn't take full advantage of student-centered teaching approaches. The content standards come directly from the B.Ed. course manuals developed by faculty at mentor universities (sometimes in collaboration with college of education tutors) and that tutors and students were expected to follow. For example, one of the macro-teaching lessons had the following learning outcomes: "Pupils will state the definition of socialization; they should understand the meaning of key terms related to socialization; they should be able to identify the primary agents of socialization [family, school, peers, etc.]." Teaching approaches, such as small group discussions and presentations, that would have worked well to engage students to think critically about the role of socialization in their lives, the positive and negative aspects of socialization, and to consider how acceptable rules of social behavior can and often do change, are superficial and perfunctory when the learning objectives simply require students to parrot back definitions, key terms, and their meanings. That said, the definitions, key terms, and their

meanings are likely to show up on end of term examinations, both for the trainee teachers and their future pupils, so the social obligation to maintain a view of knowledge as propositional and objective remains strong (Tabulawa, 2013).

One way to conceptualize the disjunction between modern teaching approaches (i.e., 21st century teaching) and traditional learning outcomes is as a process versus product contradiction. In this case, why would pedagogical standards (processes) be more readily embraced than new ways of conceptualizing learning outcomes (products)? Curriculum topics and corresponding learning outcomes for the B.Ed. were developed by mentor universities faculty using The Initial Teacher Education Curriculum Writing Guide, which specifies that the learning outcomes should "set out the key things students [future teachers] will know, understand and be able to do as a result of going through this strand of the curriculum" (NCTE, n.d., p. 23). In the case of the topic socialization, what they should be able "to do" is state the definition of socialization and key terms related to it. It appears that the university faculty who wrote the new curriculum did not consider the need to reconceptualize the learning outcomes to fit new pedagogical approaches and instead, mostly brought existing learning outcomes into the new curriculum documents. In fact, a tutor at Royal Palm College of Education emphasized the point that the learning outcomes for her courses had not changed much from the Diploma days.

A second way to conceptualize the disjunction between modern teaching approaches and traditional learning outcomes is as change processes taking place at different rates. Scott (2014) asserts that cognitive cultural elements of a social institution are more deeply rooted than normative elements, and therefore, more resistant to change. Could it be that the standard setting processes set in motion by the Ministry of Education and T-TEL emphasized changing the way teachers teach—teaching standards—but less so what they teach—a deep-seated

conceptualization of knowledge as propositional and objective? Under the new affiliation system, subject content remains in the hands of mentor university faculty except for a small number of elective courses that colleges of education completely "own." The system of writing and vetting exam questions and moderating and marking exams (described in detail below) has become more collaborative between faculty from mentor universities and tutors from colleges of education compared to the past, however, the B.Ed. curriculum overall is owned by the mentor universities. Mentor university faculty prescribe the topics and for most courses, write (sometimes collaboratively) the learning outcomes and teaching manuals, and still oversee the knowledge that must be assessed and "examined." Thus, in most cases, students' grasp of teacher education content (subject and methods) is assessed in timed, seated examinations that comprise 40% to 60% of their grade in a course. Under this regime, teacher education learning outcomes are likely to continue to be framed in propositional terms.

A third way to conceptualize this disjuncture is as an autonomy versus prescription dilemma. College of education tutors have some autonomy and choice in how they *deliver* the content, as long as they emphasize modern teaching methods. But *learning outcomes* are *prescribed* by course manuals, which are owned by mentor university faculty who oversee curriculum development. Under the system of university affiliation mentor university faculty are considered the knowledge authorities, particularly when it comes to disciplinary (academic subject) content. One wonders if college of education tutors had greater autonomy to develop course syllabi, learning outcomes, and assessments, might they conceptualize learning outcomes in such a way as to offer more utility to modern teaching methods? This is difficult to know.

During the interviews, there was pushback by tutors and principals against university faculty as knowledge authorities. Several tutors and principals made the point that these days, the

degrees held by most tutors at colleges of education are at the same level as those teaching in the traditional public universities. A tutor at Royal Palm stated:

> Our colleagues who are MPhil holders at the university, they are treated differently than those at the college. We have the same degree… When it comes to publication and promotion, we have the same path. So why is it there's a difference?

There was also a view expressed by several tutors that they have more experience with methodology than the faculty from the mentor universities who conduct workshops for them:

> So, when it comes to methodology, we already have our methodology. We've been teaching, teaching, teaching. I can say we went there [to the workshop] to equip ourselves with the content. But with the practical aspect, we do it and do it better.

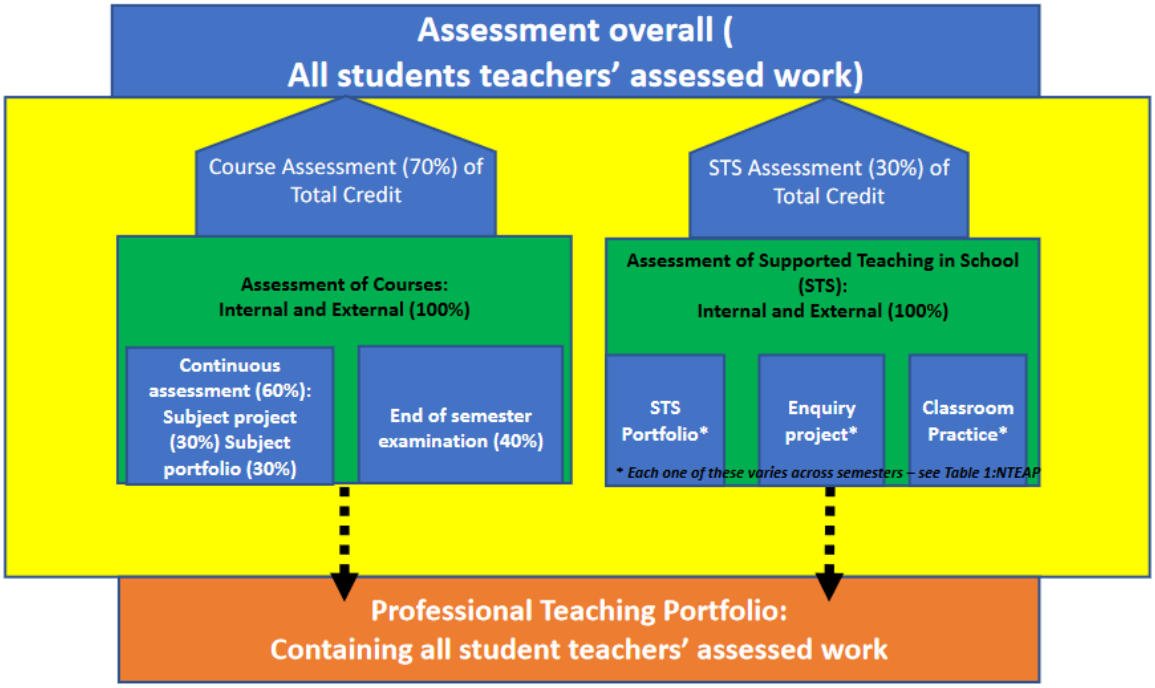
Teaching knowledge was often conceptualized in interviews as composed of content and methodology. The feeling expressed by several tutors was that while university faculty may have greater expertise in disciplinary content, tutors generally have a stronger background in methodology. In part this was attributed to the fact that tutors had more experience as basic school teachers and more experience teaching future teachers, and in part due to the long history of colleges of education: "We've been doing this longer than the universities," stated one principal.

Assessment: What has Changed?

A principal objective of recent reforms is to change assessment practices in teacher education. For several decades, there has been wide recognition among policymakers and researchers that a system of teacher education where students' progression depends on success in examinations "drives a theory laden, examination focused curricula" (Ministry of Education Ghana, 2017, pg. 13) to the detriment of instruction and assessment of teaching practices as well

as developing students' higher order thinking skills (Akyeampong, 2003; Akyeampong et al., 2013). Another concern heard frequently by reformers is that incremental changes of the past have been unsuccessful in shifting "examination culture" (Ministry of Education Ghana, 2017, p.13). To that end, a detailed National Teacher Education Assessment Policy (NTEAP) was drafted to guide colleges of education and mentor universities to implement a new approach to assessment within the Bachelor of Education program. A document on the T-TEL website titled *Operationalizing the National Teacher Education Assessment Policy* (T-TEL, 2020) states, "The NTEAP arguably represents the greatest and most important change required to ensure the achievement of the Teacher Education Reform" (p. 1). The NTEAP aligns assessment in teacher education with three overarching domains specified in Ghana's National Teaching Standards (NTS)—namely professional knowledge, professional values and attitudes, and professional practice. Sources of evidence that those training to become teachers are developing competencies in each domain are to be presented in the form of professional portfolios. From Supported Teaching in Schools, students' portfolios ought to include lesson plans, study notes, assessment records, pupil exercise books, teaching evaluations, action research, and other multimedia elements; from teacher education courses, developmental evidence should include a selection of assignments and continuing assessments, examination results, and other multimedia elements. Both the Initial Teacher Education Curriculum Writing Guide (on p. 31) and the National Teacher Education Assessment Policy (on p. 3) stipulate that assessment within the Bachelor of Education curricula should encompass "assessment *as* learning, assessment *for* learning, and assessment *of* learning." The NTEAP framework is depicted in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6. *National Teacher Education Assessment Policy (NTEAP) Framework*



Note. From Operationalizing the National Teacher Education Assessment Policy, https://t-tel.org/knowledge-hub-old/teacher-education-policy-and-institutional-development/ p. 9

The *Operationalizing the National Teacher Education Assessment Policy* document gives rubrics for evaluation of the different components of the professional portfolio and offers clarification on appropriate work samples, the organization of the portfolio, weightings of the portfolio's various components, and schedules for professional development workshops on how to assess student portfolios for mentor university faculty and college of education tutors, as well as current challenges with implementing the professional portfolio as of 2020. One ongoing challenge is incorporating students' portfolio marks into mentor university student management system software. Under the affiliation system, mentor universities award students' final grades and issue their certificates, therefore all portfolio and course grades must be fed into each mentor

university's student information system software. Tutors and principals commented that this process has not been a smooth one.

During the interviews, participants were asked questions about assessment within the Bachelor of Education program generally, and specifically about assessment within the subject courses that they teach or supervise. Among tutors, two taught mathematics and the six others taught science, language and literacy, Ghanaian language, education methods, agricultural science, and geography, respectively. Among mentor university faculty, one oversaw science courses and the other two were in director-level positions supervising oversight processes among all colleges of education affiliated with the university. When asked about assessment in general terms, tutors, principals, and faculty at mentor universities all commenced their replies with comments on the new formula for calculating students' end of term course grades: 60% continuous assessment and 40% external examination (compared to the old system which was 40% continuous assessment and 60% external examination). Only one tutor discussed the portfolio in relation to student assessment and the same tutor shared a stack of classroom observation reports by first-year students that may become part of their portfolios. One principal also mentioned that keeping portfolios contributed to continuing assessment marks for teacher education students at the college and summarized the new assessment system this way:

> We are using the same assessment policy and it's 60 from the college and then 40 from the affiliate university. And the 60 has been divided into sections: some project work, keeping portfolios, writing mid-semester quizzes, assignment, presentation, and all that adds up to 60. And then the end of semester exam, that one is external and is 40 marks.

Aside from the principal quoted above, all other participants discussed assessment solely within the context of teacher education courses. This may be because study participants were more

directly involved in delivering or overseeing college of education courses rather than the portfolio aspect of the Bachelor of Education. However, it also points to the fact that a formula for continuous assessment and examination remains how most tutors, principals, and university faculty conceptualize the assessment of teacher education knowledge.

Among the eight institutionalized social structures that emerged as themes from this research, the perspectives on assessment and the process of external examination most strongly differentiated principals and tutors embedded within colleges of education on one hand, from faculty positioned at mentor universities on the other. First, I will describe how both continuous assessment and the process of external examination appear to work in practice based on the descriptions of research participants. Second, I will contrast the perspectives of study participants along the vertical axis of comparison—tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty—highlighting their differing views. The comparative analysis shines a light on how the intertwining of external examination with other institutionalized social structures creates dilemmas for those implementing, leading, and overseeing change.

In practice, based on the analysis of interview data, assessment was mostly conceived as a combination of continuous assessments—tasks such as quizzes, midsemester exams, presentations, micro- and macro-teaching, lab activities, and projects[26] were all examples of continuous assessment tasks given by participants—which are awarded marks by course tutors and constitute 60% of student's final grade, and summative assessments, typically examinations generated and marked externally, and which are weighted 40% of student's final grade. There

[26] T-TEL documentation includes the following list of continuous assessment tasks: quizzes, midsemester exams, presentations, projects, practical activities, laboratory work, performances, reflection papers, and essays. Overall, the portfolio should demonstrate student's competencies in the three domains of the NTS (professional knowledge, professional values and attitudes, and professional practice) (Ministry of Education Ghana, 2017).

were two exceptions to this rule. First, the principal of Evergreen College of Education stated that for a small number of courses, such as ICT, both the continuous assessments and end of semester exams were written and marked by college of education tutors. Second, for colleges mentored by UCC, mid-semester exams were written by the mentor university for some subjects. Referring to UCC, a science tutor stated:

> They are responsible for drawing of our course outline, examination scheme, calendar for the year, and then, because we have not been given autonomy, mid-semester exams, which mark at 20%, so that will be 40% for continuous assessment, and the exams [mid-semester and final] take 60%.

Based on the interviews, the assessment process is as follows: for each subject and age-level specialization (e.g., early grade mathematics, upper elementary science, junior secondary home economics, etc.) a mentor university faculty is designated as the subject lead and is responsible for overseeing tutor professional development and quality assurance for the subject and age-level specialization for all affiliated colleges of education. Each semester, the subject lead organizes workshops covering relevant course content, subject and age-level teaching methods, and assessment. The subject lead also oversees summative assessments for the subject and age specialization. Each of the eight tutors interviewed for the study spoke about external examinations as the mode of summative assessment used in the courses that they teach. For example, a mathematics tutor stated:

> At the end of each semester they write exams, [the mentor] grades that, and they are given marks.

When discussing the challenge of integrating teaching methods instruction into disciplinary courses, a languages tutor stated:

> They [mentor faculty] like [us] to teach the content because students are examination-conscious. They want to read, write, and pass their exams. And the exams are also theoretical.

For internal quality assurance, each college of education has a senior tutor in the role of quality assurance officer whose mandate includes ensuring valid and reliable assessment. This involves vetting assessments—typically exam questions—before they are sent to the mentor university and coordinating the logistics and integrity of examinations conducted each term. In some cases, continuous assessments, such as midsemester exams and quizzes, are vetted by heads of department to make sure they stay "within the bounds of the course outline," according to a tutor who is also a head of department. Also, depending on the mentor university and course subject, some quizzes and midsemester exams are written by mentor university faculty and then distributed to the colleges of education to be administered by tutors.

For everyone involved in the enterprise of teacher education, external examinations are an important and time-consuming aspect of the academic schedule and rhythm. Each term, for each course being run, several tutors from different mentee colleges who are teaching the same course are selected to participate in an external exam moderation exercise. Exam moderation is a multi-step process. First, selected tutors construct test questions for subsets of topics and learning outcomes in the course manual. Next, the tutors come together with the subject lead to vet test questions for possible inclusion in the final exam. The subject lead is then responsible for selecting the final set of questions; "finessing" the questions (often necessary according to mentor faculty); formatting and printing the exam so there are "no leaks"; and overseeing the secure delivery of the exam papers to each of the university's affiliated colleges. Once students have written their exams, the exam scripts are transported to a central location for scoring

moderation (a process intended to ensure everyone is scoring in a consistent fashion) and marking. This requires providing accommodation and per diem for the tutors and others involved in the moderation exercise. Tutors do not mark the papers from their own college. After the marking, mentor university staff are responsible for entering exam scores as well as continuous assessment grades into their respective student information system software so college of education students can view their results online (issues around compatibility with student information systems have caused delays on numerous occasions). Exam scripts are stored by the mentor university for seven years; however, students typically never see their marked scripts. A grade report covering all courses for the term is prepared by the mentor university and sent to each principal who presents the results to the college's governing council. The principal may contest the results if they feel there were problems with a particular exam or the way the marking was carried out. Students may also request remarking in certain situations.

The process of assessment within teacher education described above was depicted in similar terms by tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty. In summary, the process conceptualizes evaluating the quality of future teachers as a formula that combines continuing assessment marks and external examination marks; involves an elaborate, collaborative process across multiple institutions of constructing, vetting, and "finessing" exam questions, administering external examinations, and moderating and scoring students' exam scripts; and finally, students viewing their grades online through mentor university computer systems. Even though the process was described similarly, the perspectives on assessment and the appraisal of the external examination system were conspicuously different for tutors and principals on the one hand and mentor university faculty on the other. These differences, elaborated on below,

coalesced around three themes: integrity and comparability; issues of alignment between what is taught and tested; and cost and logistics.

Integrity and Comparability. Although tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty all spoke about external examinations as a process put in place to maintain integrity in student assessment, different "threats" to integrity were emphasized. Tutors held the view that without external examinations as a check, some colleagues may favor their own students, may not give adequate coverage to all prescribed topics, or may develop assessment questions that lack rigor. In their view, without the uniformity of external examinations, students' final grades would not be comparable across institutions, which tutors perceived as unfair. Unfair to students because their performance is measured using different yardsticks and to tutors because "when your students earn low marks it reflects badly on you." Although most of the tutors interviewed expressed the desire to "own" their final assessments, they worried that some of their colleagues may not have the necessary integrity. Comments from tutors at Evergreen College of Education and Royal Palm College of Education illustrate this view:

- It boils down to an issue of integrity. You are likely to get some people who may not be strict on [topics] that have to be done before certification.
- Someone can come, and say 'I've taught this, I've taught that.' He may not be coming to lectures. Maybe he'll teach one lesson, set questions, and pass them for a degree.

Principals likewise expressed concern about favoritism if tutors marked their own students' exams and felt that comparability was an important standard of fairness in assessing students across the colleges of education. The principal of Sapelewood College of Education described the current approach of conference marking:

> [Tutors] all go to one central place, get a hotel, they bring the exam scripts. But if you are in [Sapelewood] you won't mark [Sapelewood]. You mark [Evergreen]. You would never mark your own students.

Faculty at mentor universities were less concerned about exam questions being the same across the colleges and instead viewed inadequate coverage as a primary threat to exam integrity. As one mentor faculty explained, "if questions are written according to the indicators [in the course manual], it doesn't matter who sets the questions." However, the same mentor faculty worried that tutors, left on their own, may not include exam questions that cover all the indicators or that tutor's questions would be too simplistic, "just knowledge and understanding on Bloom's taxonomy" he stated.

Finally, external examinations are a key component of mentor university's quality assurance mandate. One mentor faculty put it this way, "by taking control of developing and administering examinations, others are freed from integrity issues," which was explained as the temptation to share questions with students ahead of exams.

Alignment between what is taught and tested. Every tutor who participated in the study expressed frustration about the issue of alignment between external examination questions and what tutors had covered or emphasized in their courses. Tutors offered several reasons for misalignment. First, they believe misalignment often occurs because indicators in the course manuals are too general and "subtopics and the level of depth is not specified," and therefore, there is "some level of interpretation" by tutors. Second, teaching and learning materials, especially for science subjects that require labs, are not available to adequately teach some prescribed topics. Third, several tutors spoke about the need to teach pedagogy alongside the content. "I feel the theoretical aspect is too much," one tutor said, adding that examinations are

not always the best approach to assessing "the methods." Another tutor summed up this common sentiment:

> Yesterday I was telling my students that they are unfortunate because, at the university level, it is the lecturer who teaches you, who assesses you, and who marks your work. Unlike university, here, one person brings the course outline, then a different person teaches. Somebody goes to mark and will give you the result… [Consequently], you need to teach your students how to go into the mind of the external examiner. It is a challenge.

College of education principals hear many complaints about misalignment from tutors and students. When particularly egregious, "we have to fight… there is a huge argument." Another principal explained, "There are times the questions asked of students have not been taught and the students feel it is unfair."

However, mentor university faculty brought a different perspective to the alignment issue. They become concerned when students' continuing assessment scores do not align with external examination scores. "I feel they are both cognitive aspects so if the grades don't match up, are they [tutors] doing the right thing?" The inclusion of continuous assessment in the student's overall grade has led to grade inflation, according to another mentor faculty.

Another source of misalignment from the mentor faculty perspective has to do with applying Bloom's taxonomy to exam question construction. Mentor university faculty feel that tutors often struggle to write exam questions at the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy. Mentor faculty must "do a lot of finessing of questions to bring them up to standard." Another stated, "the goals are expanding… and because the tutors have not been trained to assess those new goals [higher order thinking], that is where the mismatch comes in."

In sum, tutors and principals viewed frequent misalignment between external examination questions and what was taught as an issue of fairness, both for them and their students, and contended that they should have the authority to write their own final assessments, in part because some degree of interpretation and choice about emphasis in the curriculum is inevitable. In some cases, tutors expressed the desire to use alternative forms of summative assessment, especially when evaluating students' mastery of teaching methods. A mathematics tutor asserted:

> One would think that, for instance, their final exam should be teaching. Let me observe you and then find out whether you really qualify to go and teach somebody.

Additionally, now that colleges of education have been upgraded to universities, and the minimum qualification to teach is the same at colleges of education and traditional universities, most tutors who participated in the study felt they ought to have the same responsibility for developing student assessments as faculty who teach at traditional universities.

On the other hand, faculty at mentor universities who oversee the system of teacher education felt that external examinations should evaluate students on a predetermined set of cognitively oriented indicators and that misalignment occurs when tutors are unable to adequately cover all the indicators or when they cover them but only at lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy. In essence, tutors are responsible when misalignment on the examination occurs for the students they teach. In addition, mentor faculty expressed concern that some tutors do not have the training to develop good examination questions, especially at the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy.

One mentor university faculty did speak to the challenge of aligning test questions both to the indicators in the course manuals (learning goals) and Bloom's taxonomy:

> But where in the beginning, you didn't apply Bloom's taxonomy [to your teaching], and you just select learning goals, then when it comes to exams, you want to force everything onto Bloom's taxonomy. Then you are forced to set questions on issues that are not part of the learning goals.

Since COVID, many tutors are now writing mid-semester assessments for their courses and several tutors and principals mentioned that this seems an appropriate step to taking ownership of the final assessments as well.

The common practice of selecting past exam questions and "teaching to the test" also creates alignment issues because the curriculum has changed. But the high stakes nature of external examinations motivates this practice. It also motivates some students to try to cheat by intercepting exam questions, according to a mentor faculty. Overall, when the system focuses on summative assessment that is completely or partially externally controlled, it is to the detriment of the developmental orientation of formative assessment.

Cost and Logistics of External Examination. Finally, varying appraisals of the cost and logistics of the external examination system emerged. A word that came up often from tutors was "cumbersome" and tutors and principals questioned whether the process was cost-effective. For example, when tutors come together to moderate examination questions, and again for centralized marking after students write their examination papers, transportation, accommodation, and per diems are necessary for those involved in the process. The process takes tutors away from their campuses and sometimes requires them to miss classes. Tutors who were also heads of their respective departments mentioned that they already vet examination questions internally for courses in their departments and the college's Quality Assurance Officer typically reviews questions before sending them to mentor universities for moderation. Finally, the

logistical and technical challenges of entering college of education students' exam scores and continuing assessment marks with the 60/40 formula into mentor university computer systems have resulted in significant delays in students learning of their results in some cases, according to principals.

Mentor university faculty also described challenges with the process. One mentor faculty explained,

> The timelines for setting and submitting questions, going for moderation, preparing and formatting uniformly for the exams—it takes a lot of time and is a logistics challenge because all of the documents must be kept secure during the process.

Another logistics and cost issue faced by mentor universities is exam paper storage. Presently, mentor universities are expected to store exam papers for their affiliated colleges of education for seven years. At one mentor university visited, boxes and plastic storage bags full of examination papers were stacked along the entire length of the ground floor veranda of the academic building, while a new warehouse was being constructed.

University Affiliation Today

Under Ghana's new system of teacher education, three regulatory mechanisms are intended to provide oversight and quality assurance for colleges of education. First, colleges are to go through reaccreditation by Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) every five years. Second, ongoing oversight and quality assurance are provided through affiliation agreements between colleges of education and one of five public universities with faculties of education. Third, each college of education is to constitute a governing council to assist with developing policies and to oversee operations and academic programs of the college (Colleges of Education Act 847, 2012). In addition to accreditation, affiliation, and the governing council, the

National Teaching Council has begun administering licensure examinations, now required for certification, and the average performance of a college's graduates on these examinations is another measure by which the quality of a college's teacher education program can be assessed.

At the time of this research, colleges of education had yet to undergo reaccreditation and were expecting to hear from GTEC on the process in the upcoming year, which would be the fifth-year colleges had run the new Bachelor of Education degree. The governing councils had been constituted for the three colleges of education that participated in the study, and college principals, finance officers, and other senior administrators had begun reporting to their respective councils[27]. However, the most prominent and active mechanism for oversight and quality assurance since the upgrading of colleges to universities and the implementation of the Bachelor of Education has been the system of university affiliation. In the sections below, the perspectives of tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty on the system of university affiliation will be presented.

What Does it Mean to be a Mentor Institution Under the System of University Affiliation?

In 2022, there were 46 public colleges of education affiliated with one of five public universities: The University of Cape Coast, which was founded with a faculty of education in 1962, The University of Education Winneba, which was founded with a faculty of education in 1992, The University of Ghana, founded in 1948 with its faculty of education established in

[27] Where a college was established by a faith-based institution, the faith-based institution nominates the chairperson of the governing council. Act 847 stipulates the following composition of the council: A chairperson, the principal of the college, one person elected by the academic staff, the president of the student council, one representative from Ghana Education Service, one representative of the National Teaching Council, one person elected by the non-teaching staff, one representative of the mentor institution that the college is affiliated to, and one alumni representative. The vice-principal of the college, the college secretary, and the finance officer are non-voting members. Where a college is established by a faith-based institution, the faith-based institution shall nominate the chairperson. Further, according to the constitution, members of the council are appointed by the president, which means that at least some of those appointed to a college's governing council will change with the election cycle in the country.

2014, and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, founded in 1951 with its faculty of education established as a result of the transfer of the teacher education program at Achimota school to Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in 1952, and the University of Development Studies, founded in 1992 with its faculty of education established in the early 2000s. Each of the three colleges of education selected as sites for this study was affiliated with a different mentor university. One faculty member from each of the affiliated universities participated in the study.

When mentor university faculty were asked what it meant to be a mentor institution under the system of university affiliation, they spoke about three roles: their university's mentorship role, its supervisory role, which was described as "the need to inspect whether government policies are being implemented by colleges of education," and finally, its quality assurance role. Each of these will be discussed below.

Mentorship. From the interviews, the role of mentorship had two dimensions. First, faculty spoke about the need to support colleges of education in their transition from the culture and practices of secondary schools to the culture and practices of tertiary-level institutions. One mentor faculty stated: "we are holding the torch on the path for the colleges to follow," and explained,

> Because of where they are coming from, there's a certain culture that seems not to be in tune with tertiary culture. So we mentor them to embrace that [tertiary] culture and practices, so at a point, they can be on their own."

Another mentor university faculty stated a similar sentiment,

> Previously they were post-secondary institutions, which was under Ghana Education Service, so they're coming from a certain tradition… We have to take them through to ensure that they walk the tertiary path.

The second dimension of mentorship that emerged was the provision of professional development and training. Over the first four years of the B.Ed., faculty from mentor universities organized workshops for tutors in the new curriculum, methods of assessment, and conducting research, among others. Professional development sessions for tutors take place nearly every semester. In addition, mentor universities have organized training for college of education finance officers, quality assurance officers, administrative staff, principals, and others.

Supervision. Mentor universities' role in supervision is done in partnership with Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) and overlaps with the processes of university accreditation. One of the mentor university faculty explained "GTEC is the policy forming body" and mentor universities "assist GTEC in ensuring government policies are carried out." Continuing, "The emphasis of affiliation is on curriculum and academic programs, administratively, we just provide support." Further explaining the reasonability of mentor institutions: "Ours is to make sure that programs run and some of things we do because we are giving them our certificates." In Ghana, affiliation agreements are required as part of any new tertiary institution's initial accreditation. In describing the process recently carried out for a new private college of education, a mentor faculty explained,

> We went to inspect their facilities, we called for the CVs of faculty and some of the staff, we were involved in some interviews and appointing some of the staff. So after everything, we helped them put the [application] package together with our report to GTEC.

Promotion is another area where mentor universities currently support colleges of education. The minimum qualification to teach at the tertiary level in Ghana is a research master's (M.Phil.) and a certain proportion of a university's faculty must have PhDs. Mentor universities, with financial support from T-TEL, supported tutors from affiliated colleges of education to upgrade their credentials to the M.Phil. and in some cases the PhD. Mentor university faculty sit on promotions committees for affiliated colleges of education; however, promotions are approved by GTEC. In their supervisory role, mentor universities can recommend sanctions be applied when a college is not following government policy or meeting expected standards. When the time comes, mentor universities will write letters of support for colleges' reaccreditation and, eventually, letters of support for presidential charters required for full university autonomy.

Quality Assurance. The quality assurance role is a crucial one because the certificates awarded to college of education graduates are under the name and seal of the mentor university, not the college of education. This is an important present-day justification for the system of external examinations. The quality assurance mandate also involves evaluating the overall management of affiliated colleges, and periodically, teams from the mentor university will conduct inspections of college facilities, admissions procedures, surveys of student feedback, etc., and make recommendations.

Although the mentorship, supervision, and quality assurance roles can be quite time consuming, for the most part, according to two mentor university faculty who held director-level positions, finding faculty willing to participate is not difficult: "They are happy to assist, because, even here, if you want to be promoted, there is an aspect of what we do, that is called community service." Although colleges of education pay affiliation fees, mentor university

faculty who were in director roles stated the fees did not cover the full cost of affiliation services their universities provided. “I must say, it is very expensive doing some of the things we do,” one faculty who is also a director stated.

Principal and Tutor Perceptions on University Affiliation

The tutors’ perspectives on affiliation were mixed. Most accepted the need for guidance “crossing the river,” as one tutor put it, from a “post-secondary culture to a tertiary one.” Nearly every tutor felt they had benefited from professional development sessions organized by their mentor university, particularly as new B.Ed. courses were taught for the first time. Several tutors had upgraded their academic credentials with the support of their mentor university and T-TEL. One tutor remarked that the social media platforms set up by the subject leads for their courses and subjects were valuable for knowledge sharing and collaboration, and that “The team leads, those who designed the course, when you have a challenge, you can call them and discuss things.”

Challenges with affiliation, from the perspective of tutors, came up when tutors felt they had greater levels of expertise, particularly in actual classroom teaching and teaching methods, than those running many of the professional development sessions. Now that colleges of education are universities, and tutors are required to have equivalent credentials, tutors questioned the higher status and authority accorded to university faculty and felt conditions of service and academic titles should also be equalized (i.e., tutor, senior tutor versus lecturer, senior lecturer, etc.). Another challenge described by several tutors occurs when mentor university faculty are overloaded, which results in processes moving slowly, such as tutors’ academic promotions and students receiving final grades, and activities being planned at the last minute, such as professional development sessions.

Similar to mentor university faculty and tutors, principals understood affiliation as a kind of apprenticeship: "to be a mentee is to be a learner… with the hope that one day the mentee will be like the mentor or become better than the mentor," said one principal. Principals were unanimous in the view that, while mentorship during the transition period was necessary, and some level of supervision and collaboration ought to continue, colleges of education had the capacity to take over much of the duties of mentor universities internally. Particularly with regard to quality assurance, principals mentioned processes that were in place to support internal professional development, to review assessments and exams at the academic department level, and that quality assurance officers had been trained and were in place to review and oversee the administering of final examinations and to conduct student course evaluations. Rather than a system of external examinations, one principal suggested moving to a system where tutors write their own end of term examinations, and mentor faculty conduct moderation—in other words, vet examination questions and marking schemes and give feedback. Of course, principals were also concerned about the cost of affiliation, part of which gets passed on to their students in the form of examination fees.

University Autonomy for Colleges of Education

Finally, tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty were asked about their views on university autonomy for colleges of education. As stated in Chapter 4, university autonomy refers to the freedom of universities to design and oversee their academic programs and courses, set academic standards and policies, and pursue research agendas. Of course, university autonomy is a matter of degree, and "fully" autonomous universities still undergo accreditation and must comply with government regulations. Under the system of higher education in Ghana, a presidential charter is required for full autonomy and only fully autonomous higher education

institutions are allowed to award their own degrees, with the institution's name and seal on the diplomas given to graduates.

In the present transition from the Diploma in Basic Education to the Bachelor of Education degree, tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty all acknowledged a greater level of autonomy for colleges of education compared to the past, when supervision and quality assurance were overseen by Ghana Education Service and UCC. Tutors shared examples of what they felt represented greater autonomy: developing and submitting examination questions for inclusion on external examinations, collaborating with tutors from other colleges of education to develop new teaching resources, and partnering with mentor university faculty to provide teacher professional development. Tutors also felt that distributing affiliation among five mentor institutions rather than one as in the past, resulted in greater diversity in teacher education programs overall. For example, one tutor mentioned that the children's literature curriculum provided by their mentor university was more African-based and emphasized methods for teaching literature to young children, while another mentor university's curriculum was more foreign-based yet "rich in content."

Principals spoke about greater autonomy on the management side. One principal stated, "Now we have become more of partners, except one is big and the other partner is small." Similarly, a mentor university faculty who is also a director stated, "We're pushing more and more of the processes back to them."

While acknowledging greater autonomy now than in the past, the issue of whether colleges of education should be granted individual charters and run as fully autonomous higher education institutions, was controversial. The main challenge, from nearly all participants, was around infrastructure and financial resources. According to one principal,

> As to whether we qualify? Yes, we qualify. We have the personnel. The tutors with the requisite skill and qualifications. But I also feel that the infrastructure should be there. We don't even have one science laboratory.

A mentor university faculty stated:

> If they are made autonomous, what is the funding situation going to be like? Can they really run as autonomous? Because currently, they're really under the hammer, financially.

All participants equated university autonomy, to some degree, with modern facilities, such as hostels instead of dormitories, modern ICT and science labs, e-libraries with reliable internet access for students, and more teaching and learning resources. Resources for more tutors to obtain their PhDs were also deemed necessary by most participants. These perspectives align with the transition away from teacher education patterned secondary education and reflect participants' conception of what it means to be a higher education institution in Ghana.

Despite reservations due to facilities and resources, most participants felt gaining full autonomy would have benefits for the colleges and for teacher education students. One principal described the present situation of running the college under three sets of policies:

> I must be obedient to three voices. My council is there, GTEC is there as a regulator, and then [the mentor]. I have to take instructions from all three bosses. But my hope is that one day it will end, I will only have one voice to listen to, which is the council of the university… If we are privileged to become independent, it means we run the college with our own policies, which fit well with GTEC policies, and we are good to go.

A tutor stated:

> We would be able to develop our own courses, what we feel students would need. It would help us tailor our work to the vision of the college.

Another principal felt that full autonomy would allow the college to raise student entry requirements and to better prepare students for the job market of today, "I feel there is too much rigidity here," they said.

Similarly, a mentor university faculty felt that by gaining full autonomy, colleges of education could better take charge of their own improvement, for example in the area of promotion:

> One of the issues that has cropped up is the way promotions are done. Coming from the Ghana Education Service background, after a number of years, then you apply for promotion, you go for your interview. Now to be promoted you must prove that you are promotable. You submit your papers as and when you think you are ready. You go through a process… Currently what is happening is that ownership of the process is not really there.

To conclude, tutors and principals at the three colleges of education that participated in the study, as well as faculty from their mentor universities, all agreed that colleges of education have greater autonomy now than in the past. Through the process of upgrading to universities, key quality assurance processes were put in place, such as trained quality assurance officers, internal vetting of examination questions, and the newly constituted governing councils. Many tutors have been able to upgrade their academic degrees, and some are now working toward their PhDs. However, under the present system of university affiliation, the colleges of education remain constrained in areas such as curriculum and assessment, and student and management policies. Perhaps most significant, traditional public universities and university faculty remain

the locus of authority for the knowledge and expertise to train teachers. Unfortunately, within the curriculum and materials coming from mentor universities, a fixed view of teaching knowledge dominates, and knowledge is still framed around examinations, even if technically examinations are given "less weight." Although much of the teaching observed during data collection adopted student centered pedagogy, the fact that the view of knowledge itself remained mostly fixed and propositional, meant that tutors' efforts were rarely realized in terms of innovative teaching or reaching higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy. Though greater collaboration exists, hierarchical patterns of status and authority between university faculty and college of education tutors remain.

Summing Up

This chapter offers an account of teacher education reform processes that elevated teacher education in Ghana from a post-secondary Diploma to a Bachelor of Education degree, but more significantly, aim to transform a system of teacher education patterned on secondary education to one modeled on Ghana's system of higher education. Together with the historical analysis in Chapter 4, I show how eight institutionalized social structures with roots in Ghana's missionary, colonial, and independence histories interact in multifaceted ways with reform processes today. By attending to how those implementing, leading, and overseeing change experience and make meaning from reforms processes, I found that the tradition of formalistic teaching and the transmission mode of learning is yielding to reforms efforts more readily than a deeply held view of teacher education knowledge as mostly academic, objective, propositional knowledge; many artifacts and symbols of teacher education as secondary education are being transformed under current reforms; teacher education continues to be a socioeconomic steppingstone, but that may change if colleges of education raise admissions standards in an effort to admit students who are

better prepared academically and more committed to the teaching profession, and if colleges of education ask students and families to bear more of the cost of higher education; and finally, external examinations continue to play an important quality assurance role within the system of university affiliation, thus carrying forward the enduring conception of teacher education knowledge as mostly academic, objective, propositional knowledge and positioning mentor university faculty as knowledge authorities within the larger arena of teacher education.

Within these broad strokes are a myriad of dilemmas for those leading, implementing, and overseeing change. First, while numerous improvements to the teacher education curriculum have been implemented, a disjuncture exists between old-style learning outcomes and modern teaching methods. Second, while the assessment of learning is more varied than in the past, the system remains oriented around high stakes external examinations. Third, while greater collaboration exists between mentor university faculty and tutors in constructing and marking of external examinations, the system is cumbersome and concerns remain around issues of integrity and comparability, alignment between what is taught and what is tested, and cost and logistics. Fourth, while colleges of education have greater autonomy than in the past, in the present system of university affiliation, colleges of education remain constrained in areas such as improvement in teaching and learning, admissions standards, and student and management policies. Fifth, while colleges of education are now tertiary-level institutions, with the same requirements for academic credentials, differences in status and authority remain between faculty positioned in universities and tutors positioned in colleges of education. And sixth, while colleges of education are shedding their past as secondary boarding schools, and granting students more choice and independence, this comes with an expectation that students and parents bear more of the financial costs of higher education. Among others. In the next and final chapter of this

dissertation, I consider Ghana's teacher education reforms within the broader landscape of extant scholarship, as well as draw out the lessons learned from and implications of this comparative case study and suggest some avenues for future research.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the latest round of teacher education reforms in Ghana, which aim to improve teacher quality and student learning through upgrading teacher education to higher education, interact with enduring structures and conventions rooted in a system of teacher training established during the period of British colonial administration and deeply intertwined with the missionary enterprise. A review of empirical scholarship in Chapter 2 demonstrates that in many countries in Africa, teacher education reforms of the past have not resulted in significant changes to classroom practices nor improvements in student learning. However, in explaining reform process today, this study took seriously the call of sociocultural scholars such as Tabulawa (2013), Vavrus and Bartlett (2012), and others (Barrett & Tickly, 2010; Klees et al., 2019; Samoff 2012; Tao, 2016) to consider specific colonial and missionary histories and the political and cultural legacies embedded within a country's system of teacher education.

The analytical framework of new institutional theory and the method of comparative case study were used to advance the investigation. Both approaches call for rich, detailed case studies at the level of organizational fields. The organizational field of teacher education in Ghana was conceptualized for this study along three axes of comparison. First, a horizontal axis of comparison comprised reform processes as they unfold within three colleges of education. Second, a vertical axis of comparison encompassed the perspectives of individual and organizational actors positioned at different levels: tutors within colleges of education, principals leading colleges of education, faculty and supervisors embedded within mentor universities, as well as T-TEL, GTEC, denominational churches, and international donors. And third, a temporal

axis of comparison, which sought to cast light on the political and cultural context in which Ghana's system of teacher education was crafted and that has evolved over the last century.

In this final chapter, I commence with a brief summary of the historical antecedents to eight institutionalized social structures that emerged as themes from the empirical data (an in-depth historical account is the subject of Chapter 4). I then proceed to present the study's four key findings, which elucidate how these institutionalized structures interact with teacher education reform processes today. These findings aim to answer the study's three research questions:

1. How are recent reforms upgrading Ghana's system of teacher education to higher education transforming enduring structures and conventions, which historically, have shaped the organizational character of colleges of education?
2. In navigating new regulatory arrangements in teacher education, what practices constitute the range of ways those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education work to create, maintain, or alter conceptions of quality and institutionalized structures of quality evaluation?
3. How do those who teach future teachers, lead colleges of education, and oversee teacher education perceive the opportunity for greater autonomy for colleges of education under Ghana's system of higher education?

Next, implications for practice and policy are enumerated as five lessons learned that will be useful to policymakers in other sub-Saharan African countries considering upgrading their systems of teacher education. Finally, several limitations and areas for further inquiry are identified and the dissertation is brought to a close.

Historical Antecedents in Brief

Chapter 4 traced the historical antecedents of eight institutionalized social structures that teacher education reform processes in Ghana today must contend: (1) a formalistic style of teaching and transmission mode of learning; (2) the system of external examinations; (3) teacher education knowledge conceptualized as mostly academic, objective, propositional knowledge; (4) teacher education as a socioeconomic steppingstone; (5) the locus of authority for teacher education knowledge resides outside the institutions that train teachers; (6) teacher education patterned on secondary education; (7) hierarchical patterns of status and authority between university faculty and college of education tutors; and (8) the system of university affiliation.

The formalistic style of teaching and transmission mode of learning was well established in the Gold Coast when the first government training college opened its doors in 1909. At that time, "college" referred to secondary level education, and students who entered the government training college or mission-run teacher education were trained to deliver an academic and religious school curriculum that emphasized a base of "objective" propositional knowledge over which their pupils would be examined. External examinations served an important credentialing function in the colonial economy, and examinations that were the same for British and African pupils promoted a view of international standards and comparability that opened a pathway to wage employment and, for those with financial resources or sponsorship, further education abroad. Earning a teaching certificate quickly became a socioeconomic steppingstone for "brilliant but needy" pupils who performed well on school examinations and needed to earn a salary while preparing for university entrance exams and further study abroad. At the cusp of independence in 1952, responsibility for many qualifying examinations, including teacher certification, shifted British institutions to the newly established West African Exams Council (WAEC). University and professional education gradually became more accessible in Ghana in

the 1960s and 1970s, but teacher education, which came with a government allowance, remained a steppingstone for many young Ghanaians who could not afford university education or whose examination scores didn't qualify them for university entrance. After 1962, much of the responsibility for overseeing the curriculum of teacher education programs and courses, including developing and administering external examinations, was taken over by the Institute of Education at the University of Cape Coast. Graduates from The University of Cape Coast entered the Ministry of Education, became inspectors for teacher education, and tutors at colleges of education. Thus, UCC faculty became the locus of authority for the knowledge to train teachers and teacher education knowledge continued to be framed in mostly academic, propositional, and examinable terms.

In 1991, preservice teacher training was upgraded to a post-secondary diploma course but remained under the supervision of UCC, and accreditation continued under the Teacher Education Unit of the Ministry of Education; colleges of education continued to be socially organized as secondary boarding schools. With the recent round of reforms upgrading teacher education to university education, accreditation has shifted to the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC), while supervision has been spread among five public universities under the system of university affiliation. Although the social organization of colleges of education is moving away from the secondary boarding school model, hierarchical patterns of status between university faculty and college of education tutors persist, and the locus of authority for the knowledge to train teachers also remains within mentor universities. The new Bachelor of Education curriculum has reduced the weight of external examinations in students' final grades; however, mentor universities continue to rely on the system of external examination to carry out their quality assurance function.

Key Findings

Pedagogical Change

Finding 1: Colleges of education tutors have embraced active learning and student-centered approaches (RQ 2 & RQ 3).

> Teacher education must produce teachers who are equipped with all the 21st century skills in teaching so that they'll be innovative, they'll be committed, and they'll be transformational.
>
> —Principal, Evergreen College of Education.

Teaching practices within colleges of education have changed significantly from the picture painted by the MUSTER and TPA studies conducted in the early 2000s and reviewed in Chapter 2 (Akyeampong, 2003; Akyeampong & Furlong, 2000; Akyeampong & Lewen, 2002; Hedges, 2000; Lewen & Stuart, 2003). Tutors in all three colleges of education that participated in the study had moved away from the formalistic style of teaching and transmission view of learning—"chalk and talk" as they say in Ghana—and had embraced a range of active learning and student-centered approaches, such as classroom arrangements that put students in groups, online research and student presentations, class discussions and debates, hands-on projects, and an emphasis on connecting learning to students' context and experience. Additionally, assessment of learning, as directed by Bachelor of Education policies, has become more varied, and continuous assessment has a greater weight in students' overall grades compared to the past.

Moreover, because the Bachelor of Education curriculum requires teacher education students to choose a disciplinary and age-level specialty, the curriculum encompasses fewer "theory-laden" disciplinary courses of the past. Instead, teaching methods are integrated into courses in the focal area (math, ICT, languages, etc.) and students engage in practice teaching and spend time in schools throughout the four-year program. Tutors and mentor faculty also emphasized that disciplinary and age-level specialization promote better alignment with the

activity-based school curriculum that teacher education students will be expected to deliver when they graduate.

Considering the arena of teacher education as a whole (i.e., the organizational field), multiple institutional change processes—efforts at regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive change—came together to bring about a marked transformation in teaching practices within colleges of education in a relatively short period. At the national level, statutory changes that upgraded teacher education to the undergraduate level—advanced by the Ministry of Education—created the opportunity and impetus to develop a new teacher education curriculum. The global discourse around "21stcentury teaching" as a "remedy" for "the low learning crisis" (World Bank, 2019) meant that teaching practices (i.e., methods) became an important focus of newly developed national teaching standards and the new Bachelor of Education curriculum (i.e., normative change). Cognitive learning frameworks, such as Bloom's taxonomy, were adopted to help tutors incorporate teaching methods better suited to developing students' higher-order cognitive skills, such as critical thinking and problem solving, and in turn, these became recommended methods in course manuals and were emphasized in professional development workshops (i.e., cultural-cognitive change). Importantly, the technical and financial support provided through the Ministry of Education's partnership with T-TEL contributed significantly to building a consensus for change and the implementation of change processes throughout the entire system of teacher education.

To sum up, in the case of the shift away from the entrenched tradition of formalistic teaching and transmission mode of learning in teacher education—a social institution in Ghana that goes back to the training teachers for missionary and colonial schools in the 19th century and that remained the predominant approach until at least 2016 (Akyeampong, 2017)—field

level reforms comprised all three building blocks of Scott's (2014) conception of social institutions: regulatory change (new laws and regulatory agencies), normative change (new teaching standards, accreditation standards and processes for oversight), and cultural-cognitive change (new mental models emerging from the discourse on "21st century teaching", thus new understandings of "good teaching"). Together with significant financial resources, prolonged professional development and capacity building, and other change processes carried out by T-TEL, mentor universities, regulators, college of education leaders, tutors, and many others, a widespread pedagogical transformation is well underway within the field of teacher education in Ghana today. While these positive changes are significant, the next finding shows how some shared conceptions, such as what counts as teacher education knowledge, are more resistant to change.

Pedagogical Disjuncture

> **Finding 2: A disjuncture exists between modern teaching methods and enduring conceptions of teacher education knowledge as mostly objective, propositional knowledge (RQ 2 & RQ 3).**

Although tutors at all three colleges of education used a variety of active learning and student-centered teaching methods, learning outcomes and assessment practices remained oriented around a deeply institutionalized view of teacher education knowledge as mostly propositional knowledge. Within the fields of philosophy and education, *propositional knowledge* refers to "knowledge that" (e.g., knowing that a wrench is a tool that applies a rotational force to tighten and loosen nuts and bolts; knowing that different types of wrenches exist to tighten and loosen nuts and bolts of different sizes and shapes). Two other forms of knowledge are "know-how" (e.g., knowing how to use the correct type of wrench to effectively tighten and loosen nuts and bolts of a specific size and shape) and "knowledge by acquaintance"

(e.g., feeling the weight and shape of the tool in one's hand, recognizing the feel of a secure grip, exerting one's muscles to overcome resistance, etc.). Knowledge by acquaintance feeds into know-how, hence, *expertise* involves a self-constructed integration of all three forms of knowledge (Winch, 2012). According to Winch (2012),

> The concept of expertise applies *both* to knowledge how to do certain kinds of things, such as surgery or navigation, but also to knowledge of particular subject matters such as anatomy or history. Expertise in the latter sense does not only involve knowledge of quantities of propositions, but also of their inferential relationships with each other. The ability to make and understand inferences is, however, a species of knowing how to do something and is manifested in what we can do with it rather than in the presence of an inner mental process. (p. 131).

Classroom observations revealed that when modern teaching methods are employed in service of learning goals and assessments oriented around propositional knowledge, and know-how and knowledge by acquaintance are thus neglected, teacher education students have few opportunities to engage in making, understanding, and employing inferences within and between the subject matters they are learning. Instead, the expectations of tutors, and students' efforts to meet them, remain within the domain of "inner mental processes." Using the language of Bloom's taxonomy, the cognitive demands on students remain mostly at the levels of knowledge and understanding and rarely ascend to the higher levels (apply, analyze, evaluate, and create) when the articulated learning goals—what students are expected to know and be able to do—are conceptualized around "knowing that."

All the lessons observed for this study exposed this disjuncture. One example was a lesson for a course titled Literacy Across the Curriculum taken by future junior high school

(JHS) language and literacy teachers during year three of the Bachelor of Education program. The title of the lesson was Misconceptions of Literacy Across the Curriculum. The primary activities were small group discussions and presentations. The lesson commenced with the tutor asking several students to give a definition of misconceptions ("they are faulty thinking about something"). A list of six misconceptions about literacy across the curriculum was projected on a slide and groups were tasked to discuss three misconceptions and their solutions. There was an engaging hum in the classroom as students discussed among their groups, filled summary sheets, and prepared to present. However, during the third presentation, the tutor complained that the presentations were "becoming monotonous." Groups had treated "misconceptions of literacy across the curriculum" and corresponding "solutions" as a set of propositions, identified from a given list, and elaborated on either from a Google search or textbook. Examples groups gave to illustrate such misconceptions were nearly identical (dual-meaning words in science, for example, the meaning of compound in chemistry versus its meaning in everyday language as an enclosed area). Although students were actively engaged in small group discussions, used learning resources, "synthesized" their findings on summary sheets, and made presentations, learning did not significantly progress beyond the level of knowledge and understanding on Bloom's taxonomy. The learning outcomes stated in the course manual, the tutor's framing of the lesson content and expectations, students' efforts to meet them, and the anticipation of what would be "examined," were all oriented around a view of misconceptions of literacy across the curriculum and their solutions as a set of rules to be followed, fixed and unproblematic (Stutchbury & Biard, 2023). Although the tutor employed active learning and student-centered approaches, and students appeared genuinely engaged, there was little evidence of higher-order learning.

I argue that such misalignments bring to light a contradiction between modern teaching methods aimed at promoting higher-order learning and an institutionalized view of teacher education knowledge as mostly propositional knowledge. In the example above, the tutor's frustration that students' presentations were "monotonous" was a recognition that students were not delving into deeper understandings of the "why" and "how" of misconceptions regarding literacy across the curriculum and their possible solutions. For example, students neglected to consider contextual factors that may make some "solutions" more appropriate or effective than others depending on the context, and they did not practice developing strategies or persuasive arguments in support of literacy across the curriculum in the face of resistance or constraints. A learning goal such as "Students will compare and contrast approaches to implementing literacy across the curriculum given common misconceptions and constraints, develop action plans, and critique the action plans of others," conceptualized around know-how and knowledge by acquaintance, would more likely steer tutor and students' efforts toward higher levels of learning on Bloom's taxonomy (analyze, evaluate, and create). Importantly, a propositional knowledge base would still be necessary for students to make inferences and engage in such an expanded learning goal.

Hargrave and Ven de Ven (2009) argue that individuals engaged in institutional change "exploit gaps between espoused values and actual behavior" and "use the tension between contradictory elements as a source of innovation" (p. 120). The tutor from the example above is using WhatsApp to collaborate with colleagues in other colleges of education to develop a book of lesson ideas and learning resources for language and literacy tutors. Other tutors who participated in the study, particularly heads of department, are actively engaged in internal tutor professional development. The extent to which these efforts are sources of innovation and

change over time depend on whether the contradiction between "old-style" learning goals oriented around propositional knowledge and "modern teaching methods" suitable for higher-order learning is widely recognized and individual tutor's skills, for example, in developing new teaching and learning materials or conducting effective internal professional development.

Finally, an enduring view of teacher education knowledge as mostly propositional knowledge is strongly intertwined with the examination system and the system of university affiliation. The historical analysis in Chapter 4 and comparative case study analysis in Chapter 5 shine a light on examination and affiliation processes as institutional carriers—the primary mechanisms through which patterns and conventions of the past are transmitted to the present and continually reconstructed (Scott, 2014). These processes provide a comprehensible logic for the continued orientation of teacher education knowledge around "examinable" propositional knowledge, and they marshal significant human and material resources to carry out their quality assurance function. The examination and affiliation systems, and their role as institutional carriers, are discussed in the next section.

Processes of Quality Evaluation are Institutional Carriers

> **Finding 3: Processes of quality evaluation are carriers that transport institutional elements across time and space (RQ 2 and RQ 3).**

The examination system and the system of university affiliation are processes for evaluating the quality of teacher education students and teacher education programs, respectively. They provide formal structures for solving problems of coordination and economy in quality evaluation and encompass rules, procedures, and sanctions. Organizational units are granted specific roles and sources of power and authority (e.g., college of education quality assurance officers, institutes for teacher education within mentor universities), and these have

evolved into vested interests over time. External examination and affiliation practices comprise rituals (e.g., exam question moderation and exam invigilation, inspection team visits), symbols (e.g., awarding of grades, graduation certificates awarded in the name of the mentor university, accreditation), and ideologies (assessment of learning conceptualized as a formula of continuous and summative assessment, assessment outcomes have "real" meaning in symbols such as grades and rank, grades and rank are important measures of individual and national competitiveness). External examination and affiliation processes give participants a sense of purpose and shared commitment to "standards," "integrity," and "fairness" in student and program assessment. They are national systems, sustained and reproduced through statutory regulations and budgetary allocations, as well as tacit beliefs about how evaluative processes ought to be carried out and who has the authority to do so. They draw on shared conceptions of school knowledge and the role of teachers and teacher education in society. External examination and affiliation are historically rooted, resilient social structures brought to life in the rhythm of each academic year on every college of education campus in Ghana.

External examination and university affiliation are intertwined with other social structures, which are buoyed along by the strength of their currents. For example, when teacher education knowledge is framed as academic, objective, propositional knowledge, "student quality" is readily assessed through written, standardized exams. Because each mentor university oversees ten to 15 affiliated colleges of education, standardized written examinations may be the only practical means to ensure "academic standards" at that scale. I argue that external examination and university affiliation have been the key mechanisms of transmission for a view of teacher education knowledge as academic, objective, propositional knowledge, and this explains why such a view of knowledge has endured and resisted change for over 100 years.

Unless assessment is allowed to take place at the level of individual colleges of education (rather than across ten to 15 colleges), which in turn requires colleges to have greater autonomy, this view of teacher education knowledge is not likely to change.

Furthermore, external examinations and the system of university affiliation both position the authority for teacher education knowledge within mentor universities, not within colleges of education themselves. Scott (2003) argues that relational systems, which involve direct interactions of individuals with varying power and levels of authority, are particularly crucial in carrying social institutions forward. The status accorded to hierarchical academic credentials has a long history in Ghana and around the world. And with higher status comes greater resources—historically, public universities have garnered significantly more resources than colleges of education (in part because students and families bear more of the cost of higher education compared to teacher education, in part because teacher education was historically patterned on secondary education, among other reasons), and conditions of service for lecturers in universities have been consistently more generous than conditions of service for tutors in colleges of education. In fact, during the period of data collection for this study, tutors across the country went on strike over the issue of differences in conditions of service now that colleges of education have been upgraded to universities. Though some concessions were made, a gap remains and is symbolized by differing academic titles: the tutor system within colleges of education versus the lecturer system within traditional universities. The quality assurance mandate of mentor universities and their role overseeing external examinations ensures that the locus of authority for teacher education knowledge continues to reside within universities. The next section picks up this issue and argues that a shift to colleges of education as the locus of

authority for teacher education knowledge goes hand-in-hand with university autonomy, and such a shift is needed for the aspirations of 21st century teaching to be realized.

A Teacher Education Quality Conundrum

Finding 4: University affiliation presents a quality conundrum for colleges of education in Ghana (RQ1 & RQ3).

University affiliation was part of a suite of accountability and quality assurance measures put in place as part of the process of upgrading colleges of education to universities and the implementation of the Bachelor of Education degree. Taken together, the aim was "to create a teacher education system in which the 46 public [colleges of education] were able to operate as high performing autonomous institutions capable of problem solving and improving learning outcomes without assistance" (Cambridge Education, 2020, p. 9). As discussed in Chapter 4, university affiliation is a familiar accountability and quality assurance mechanism in the higher education arena and reflects the historical arrangement between the University of London and Ghana's first university, The University College of the Gold Coast (now the University of Ghana). The perspective of study participants up and down the vertical axis of comparison was that affiliation was a step along the path to university autonomy, necessary to support colleges of education in the transition from organizational and student cultures patterned on secondary education to cultures and standards aligned with higher education.

Findings from this study suggest that the mentor-mentee relationship has been helpful to the transition in a number of ways, most significantly in capacity building. Mentor universities, sometimes in collaboration with T-TEL, facilitated training for principals and senior management, conducted extensive tutor professional development, and organized workshops for college of education finance officers, quality assurance officers, and other groups. Mentor

universities supported tutors to upgrade their degrees and mentor university faculty have acted as research mentors and as external reviewers for tutors' academic promotion, a process that differs significantly from seniority-oriented promotion under Ghana Education Service. Clearly, the colleges of education in this study are organizationally more robust than they were when the reform process began in 2014.

However, a key question is whether university affiliation encompasses practices that ensure quality *teaching and learning*. And moreover, whether the system of university affiliation, by carrying forward an external examination system that relies on framing teacher education knowledge as mostly propositional knowledge, and by positioning mentor university faculty as authorities over teacher education knowledge, acts in opposition to the continuous improvement in teaching and learning within colleges of education. Brooks (2021) calls this a teacher education "quality conundrum," which she describes as a practice "intended to raise or enhance quality, but has the potential to do the opposite" (p. 19). In the section below, I argue that quality assurance practices under the system of university affiliation emphasize similarity in academic standards and programs (Harvey & Newton, 2007), at the expense of continuous improvement of teaching and learning, and therefore present a quality conundrum for the system of teacher education in Ghana. Because changes to processes of quality evaluation due to the transition to university teacher education are a key focus of this study, the next section interrogates the quality conundrum issue in some detail.

Training Versus Professional Education. Ghana's reform upgrading colleges of education to universities is part of a global trend over the past century from teacher preparation conceptualized as "training" to teacher preparation conceptualized as professional education (Paine & Zeichner, 2012; Sanyal, 2013, 2016). *Teacher training*, the argument goes, is

associated with teaching as a technical skill, and teachers' primary role as "delivering the curriculum" by employing a prescribed set of procedures and behaviors acquired during training (Sanyal, 2013). This matches the pattern of teacher preparation described in the MUSTER and TPA studies of teacher education in five African countries at the turn of the 20th century, including Ghana, reviewed in Chapter 2. These studies describe newly qualified teachers' vision of good teaching as the successful delivery of a set of "correct" procedures with little attention to individual student learning or contextual issues, such as large classes, multi-lingual cohorts, or the changing learning needs of their students (Akyeampong, 2013, p.277; Zeichner, 2008). In contrast, *university teacher education* elevates teaching to a professional occupation, and hence, preparation goes beyond the technical conception of "training." As professionals, teachers are expected to be *reflective practitioners*, "able to act with integrity, autonomy and to make situational judgements" (Brooks, 2021, p. 2). University professional education, in fields such as engineering, medicine, law, and education, encompass a base of technical knowledge and analytical tools, but equally emphasize giving students "experience and guidance in using such analytical tools to engage in deliberation about action" (Sullivan, 2010, p. 14). Sullivan calls such deliberation "practical reasoning," which he defines as:

> [T]he back-and-forth between general knowledge and the challenges and responsibilities that come with particular situations, an ongoing process of reflection whose end is the formation of habits of critical judgement for action. (Sullivan, 2010, p. 16)

Pedagogical practices in service of practical reasoning, according to Sullivan, include case study; simulation; engagement with historical biography or memoir that explore professional character and response to challenge; and reflection on participation in practice (Sullivan, 2010, p. 16). These professional pedagogies are intended to go beyond opportunities for students to apply their

growing knowledge base, instead, the aim is an integrative one: supporting students' developing "know-how" through concrete experience—*knowing how* to make some bit of knowledge relevant, *knowing why* some decision is right, and *knowing when* some intervention is appropriate (Sulivan, 2010, p. 16). To achieve this aim, those who teach future professionals, and provide guidance in developing their practical reasoning, ought themselves to be *reflective university educators*, engaged in translational or practitioner research, helping to bridge the research and practice divide within relevant professional, community, and cultural contexts.

Such a notion of university teacher education cannot flourish under Ghana's current system of university affiliation. One reason is that the professional development of teacher educators is hampered when they are seen as mainly "delivering" a propositional knowledge base "owned" by disciplinary specialists located in mentor universities. Supervision and quality assurance under this "teacher training" model rewards tutors for the primary activity of "covering" a set of prescribed topics and examinable learning outcomes. In interviews, Supported Teaching in Schools (the teaching practicum within the new B. Ed.) was mostly viewed by tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty as an activity to familiarize students with their future workplace and an opportunity to "apply what was given to them in the college," an oft-repeated phrase by tutors. In contrast, the experiential component of professional education has a transformational intent. In the case of teacher education, transforming those who cannot teach into those who use their subject and methods knowledge base to employ effective "instructional judgement" among the uncertain conditions of real classrooms (i.e., Sullivan's practical reasoning, the habits of critical judgement for action) (Sullivan, 2010; see also Brooks, 2021; Harvey & Newton, 2007).

When tutors and principals were asked about the struggles newly qualified teachers face when beginning their careers as classroom teachers, a typical response was “unfortunately, they do not apply what was given to them in the college.” This points to a second reason for the affiliation system quality conundrum. When the locus of authority for teacher education knowledge is external to colleges of education and tutors view their primary role as “delivering” a prescriptive teacher education curriculum, it is easy to externalize responsibility when graduates fall short in their teaching practices. Tutors offered various reasons graduates from their institutions struggle as classroom teachers: “a corruption of values caused by the culture of schools;” shortcomings of and misalignments between the teacher education curriculum, teaching and learning materials, and assessment of learning; assessment practices of which tutors have little control; admissions policies over which colleges have little control; or insufficient resources, such as well-resourced science laboratories, modern libraries, better internet access, conditions of service, etc. While these factors certainly play a role in a multi-faceted and complex problem, they sidestep a measure of accountability that comes from a sense of ownership of improvement. What is needed going forward is ownership of improvement in teaching and learning within each college of education, tied to the professional performance of graduates, which can only take place if the locus of authority for teacher education knowledge shifts to colleges of education tutors.

Curriculum Reform and Normalization Process Theory. Greater autonomy for colleges of education, ownership of initiatives to improve teaching and learning, and tutors’ sense of authority over teacher education knowledge go hand-in-hand for several reasons. The first has to do with the individual and collective “work” (cognitive and material) needed for new teaching and learning practices (in other words curriculum reform) to become embedded and

integrated "into the work" of colleges of education. In their Normalization Process Theory framework, May and Finch (2009) describe four mechanisms that promote the integration and embedding of new practices within organizational contexts, and each mechanism draws upon a type of investment by participants engaged in carrying out new practices within their specific social and organizational sphere. The first mechanism is *coherence*, in which participants differentiate new practices from existing practices, *investing meaning* in new practices and in understanding their use and utility within their specific social and organizational context. In the language of new institutional theory, coherence is a process aimed at cultural cognitive change, which requires intentionality and effort and the questioning of taken-for-granted routines and assumptions (Lawrence, 2009, Scott, 2008). For tutors implementing curriculum reforms, coherence is a significant meaning-making activity in which they must delve into understanding new teaching and learning approaches within the context of the subjects and courses that they teach, and how new approaches epistemologically and materially differ from existing teaching and learning practices (Vavrus & Bartlet, 2012). Stutchbury and Biard (2023), in their study of the implementation of new pedagogies using open educational resources within teacher education programs in nine sub-Saharan African countries, found that the process of establishing coherence is promoted when:

> [T]he individuals concerned *have authority but remain active in daily business of teaching students*… Where the uptake of new ideas and new resources has not been achieved, lack of coherence means that actors have not collectively invested meaning in the new practice in their context." (p. 4, emphasis added)

In the context of university teacher education in Ghana, the source of new teaching and learning practices could be national policy, global discourses, national or international research, or most

advantageously, from new knowledge generated through translational research conducted by college of education tutors themselves. In sum, coherence involves participants examining ideas, values, and beliefs that underlie proposed practices alongside existing ideas, values, and beliefs, institutional structures and processes, and existing material/economic contexts (Stutchbury & Baird, 2023, Vavrus & Bartlet, 2012). Quinn and Fullan (2017), based on their studies of education systems change, emphasize that coherence is subjective and educational change is more likely to persist when such subjectivity is shared across individuals and groups; furthermore, they argue that coherence is cumulative and ongoing.

The second mechanism in the Normalization Process Theory framework is *cognitive participation*, in which participants engage with new practices and identify ways in which new practices can become operationalized. Cognitive participation is facilitated when participants with the *necessary power and authority* "buy in" and lend legitimacy to new practices. According to May and Finch (2009), cognitive participation is an *investment in commitment* to new practices at different levels—for example, when principals, heads of departments, or quality assurance officers agree to timetable changes or new space arrangements, or put forth new student policies, evaluation processes, or new funding allocations in service of the new curriculum. In their study of the implementation of teaching and learning practices using open education resources, Stutchbury and Baird (2023) found that cognitive participation was enhanced when teacher educators engaged in modelling new teaching and learning practices rather than simply talking about them, and when there was a shift away from "the notion that knowledge about teaching is fixed" to a view that "learning to teach is about exploring possibilities rather than learning a set of rules" (p. 5).

The third mechanism that promotes the embedding and integration of new practices is *collective action*, in which participants *invest effort* toward an agreed-upon goal. Collective action is the intellectual and physical work that takes place to operationalize new practices. Collective action depends on relationships, skills, and resources to successfully integrate new practices into existing social and organizational structures. A good example of collective action observed in this study was the efforts by college of education tutors, particularly heads of department, to continue to facilitate structured, weekly professional development sessions initially implemented as part of the new Bachelor of Education curriculum. Supported Teaching in Schools is another example of collective action in which collaboration between colleges of education and partner schools and district offices is ongoing.

The final mechanism, which feeds back into coherence, cognitive participation, and collective action, is *reflexive monitoring*, in which implementors evaluate patterns of collective action and make judgements about the usefulness and effectiveness of new practices. Here, there is an *investment in understandings gained through concrete experience with new practices* (May & Finch, 2009). Reflexive monitoring encompasses formal and informal appraisal and may lead to modifications and or reconfigurations. According to Stutchbury and Baird (2023), "there is a danger at this stage, if there is not a shared understanding of the practice, that implementation as intended may fail" (p.2). For the arena of teacher education as a whole, the present time is a pivotal period of reflexive monitoring. The first batch of teacher education graduates have now come through the new curriculum and have been awarded university degrees. What aspects of reform implementation were initially emphasized? What has worked well? What aspects of reform need to be brought to the fore and examined more deeply?

Although the four mechanisms of Normalization Process Theory—coherence, cognitive participation, collective action, and reflexive monitoring—are presented in sequence, May and Finch (2009) emphasize that "institutional change" within organizational settings is a dynamic and fluid process. In complex organizational settings, such as health care and education, where quality in the 21st century depends on an ethos of continuous improvement and adaptation to change, processes of implementation, embedding, and integration of new practices are ongoing. When implementors within such settings do not have sufficient authority and power, and the base of professional knowledge is viewed as fixed and static, the mechanisms of coherence, cognitive participation, collection action, and reflexive monitoring are hindered. I contend that the disjuncture observed between teaching methods promoted by reforms and learning goals articulated within course manuals and discussed in finding 2, is mostly due to issues of coherence and cognitive participation—coherence because the epistemological gap is not understood and a "teacher training" view of knowledge still predominates, and cognitive participation because those most directly engaged in teaching future teachers do not have sufficient power and authority over key aspects of curriculum and assessment decisions. On the other hand, collective action appears quite strong among all those who participated in this study, while reflexive monitoring is yet in its early stages. However, as Stutchbury and Baird warn, it is at the point of reflexive monitoring, when participants make tacit judgements about the outcomes and utility of reforms, that lack of coherence can lead to modifications, and in this case modifications that shift practices away from the desired outcomes university teacher education as professional education and instead toward the familiar direction of "teacher training."

Students' Professional Transformation. Although the system of university affiliation has been useful for capacity building, supporting colleges of education in the transition to

university status, and in implementing the new Bachelor of Education degree and curriculum, as a system of quality evaluation for teaching and learning, university affiliation presents a quality conundrum. Supervision and quality assurance under university affiliation aim to replicate standardized academic programs, insisting that colleges of education comply with prescribed curricula, including examinable learning goals, assessment formulae, admissions policies, etc. Under university affiliation, excellence is a kind of mentee-wide uniformity premised on the view that when all mentee colleges of education comply with specific input requirements and process standards modeled after those of the more established mentor university, and when student learning is measured uniformly among mentee universities on external examinations, competent graduates will be the inevitable outcome (Harvey & Newton, 2007). Presently, quality assurance measures under university affiliation encompass inputs, facilities, processes, and some outcome measures, such as graduation rates and examination results, but not those directly related to students' transformation—from would-be-teachers to novice teachers with an emerging disciplinary and methods knowledge base and an emerging facility for practical reasoning, both of which are necessary to become accomplished professional teachers who use their subject and methods knowledge to employ effective "instructional judgement" within the context of their real classrooms. Harvey and Newton (2007) argue that compliance and control over aspects of quality assurance are important for value for money and fitness for purpose reasons. However, they become problematic when they inhibit the key teaching and learning functions of teacher education, which, they contend ought to be about improving the student experience and students' professional transformation. The quality conundrum arises because university affiliation inhibits the shift in authority for teacher education knowledge to colleges of education tutors and thus the autonomy needed for colleges of education to own their own

improvement—specifically, the continuous improvement of teaching and learning tied to the student experience and students' professional transformation.

The interview data revealed a tension among principals and tutors between a desire for greater control over curriculum as assessment (hence teaching and learning) at the college level and concerns about issues of integrity and comparability that would arise without mentor universities overseeing a system of external examination. At the same time, the perspective of mentor university faculty seemed to be grounded in a level of "distrust" and notion of "universality" in teacher education. Notably, neither group's perspective on quality assurance seemed to take account of the significant work of student transformation that underlies teacher education as professional education.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Against a vast topography of comparative and international education literature and scholarship that examines the "low learning crisis" in sub-Saharan Africa, contoured by researchers' varied interests and ideological commitments, this study makes a unique contribution by interrogating how a suite of recent teacher education reforms aimed at improving classroom teaching and learning in Ghana interact with historically produced social institutions that participants in reform must "work in tandem with and/or in response to" as they implement new practices and policies (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016). Using new institutional theory and bringing to the fore historical understandings, this study draws several lessons from the comparative case study of Ghana's large-scale, ambitious teacher education reforms. These are summarized below:

1. System-wide change is possible when reforms encompass multiple institutional change processes, addressing regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements, and are implemented with technical and financial support.
2. Teaching methods yield to reform efforts more readily than conceptions of teacher education knowledge.
3. Processes of quality evaluation are institutional carriers for conceptions of knowledge and relational systems, and thus, act as forces that resist change in teacher education.
4. Aspirations of modern teaching methods and ownership of improvement in teaching and learning are hindered when teacher educators do not have authority over teacher education knowledge and institutions that train teachers are accorded low autonomy.

These lessons bring to light a constellation of forces interacting to shape the character of Ghana's ambitious teacher education reforms as they unfold—forces such as enduring practices and conventions of the past, flows of ideas and resources, systems of power and authority, and individual and collective actions taken by those implementing change. I believe the analytical concept of social institutions and processual and critical orientation of comparative case methodology have proved fruitful in examining the interactions and entanglements of these forces and offer generative insights useful for policymakers and practitioners in Ghana and in other countries, particularly sub-Saharan African countries, considering reforms to their systems of teacher education. These insights are enumerated as five policy implications below.

A Multifaceted, Historically Informed Approach

> **Implication 1: A multifaceted, historically informed approach to large-scale ambitious teacher education reform is more likely to result in sustainable change.**

In designing large-scale ambitious teacher education reform, policymakers and reform leaders should endeavor to understand the historical antecedents of practices that are the targets of reforms. It is important to understand why enduring practices are highly valued and to identify the institutionalized structures that carry them forward through time. Change processes should encompass the regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements that underlie conventional practices that are the target of reforms, as well as the institutional structures and carriers intertwined with them. Policymakers and reform leaders may find the framework of Normalization Process Theory (coherence, cognitive participation, collective action, and reflective monitoring) helpful when reforms target long-standing practices and tacit assumptions regarding teaching and learning. Particular attention should be paid to meaning-making activities that help those engaged in daily teaching differentiate new practices from existing practices and bring them to life for the specific subjects and courses that they teach (i.e., coherence). Additionally, those within organizations who are tasked with leading change should also engage in meaning-making activities so that they can take actions to operationalize new practices (e.g., cognitive participation). Making space for those at all levels to question taken-for-granted assumptions opens up the possibility for sustainable change. And finally, change processes require adequate financial and technical support, capacity building, and benefit from broad-based implementation spread over several years.

Ownership of Improvement in Teaching and Learning

> **Implication 2: University autonomy in conjunction with an accreditation system for quality assurance makes room for colleges of education to own their own improvement in teaching and learning and brings into focus an agenda for teacher educator research.**

Accreditation requires universities to adhere to national policies and demonstrate that they meet specific standards set by the government yet leaves room for universities to own their own improvement in teaching and learning. Ownership of improvement in teaching and learning is important because it sets the stage for cognitive engagement in the meaning of quality by those engaged in the daily activities of teaching. In the context of teacher education as a form of *university professional education*, cognitive engagement in the meaning of quality brings into focus an agenda for research for teacher educators that emphasizes: (a) the scholarship of teaching and learning; (b) the professional transformation of those who cannot teach into those who exercise effective instructional judgement; and (c) scholarship into classroom practices within relevant local contexts. As scholar practitioners, teacher educators can collaborate with partner schools and mentor teachers in research where systematic inquiry provides the basis for improved professional practice in teaching. Such research can also include the sociological foundations of schooling, the role of teachers and teacher education in society, and address present-day challenges, such as climate change and educational inequality (Sullivan, 2010). In sum, ownership of improvement requires a shift from externally imposed procedures to internally generated, research informed, reflective and creative processes that are at the heart of teaching, learning, and knowledge creation within university professional education.

An Ecosystem Model of University Professional Education

> **Implications 3: Adopting an accreditation system for quality assurance rather than a system of university affiliation can support a shift from a standardized teacher training model to an ecosystem model of university professional education.**

University affiliation is a conservative process of social reproduction that leads to a high degree of similarity in teacher education. On the other hand, an accreditation system that allows a greater degree of autonomy, in areas such as program specialization, (for example, offering

unique minors, such as teaching children with autism spectrum disorders, multilingual reading instruction, project-based learning, Ghanaian arts and culture, social and emotional health education, etc.), student assessment, and student policies, can make room for diverse strengths and areas of specialization to emerge among institutions, hence a more resilient ecosystem model of university teacher education. Such a shift would also allow teacher education programs to address specific community contexts in the region in which they are located and to focus on their own students' professional transformation. An ecosystem model is common within university professional education (i.e., engineering, medicine, law) because it allows students to pursue a niche within the profession that aligns with their interests and because university programs can more quickly adapt to industry changes and new technologies. However, such a view runs counter to widely held notions of universality and comparability in curriculum and assessment within the education sector in many parts of the world. Thus, a shift toward greater autonomy for teacher education institutions, and greater differentiation among teacher education programs, ought to be viewed as a years-long process—one that includes opportunities for those overseeing, leading, and implementing change to examine ideas, values, and beliefs about these issues, engage in dialogue and consensus building activities, and individually and collectively find ways to operationalize and appraise differentiated programs and practices.

Decolonize Processes of Quality Evaluation

> **Implication 4: Countries considering upgrading their systems of teacher education should reflect on whether processes of quality evaluation within their systems of higher education involve practices that support desired pedagogical change, or instead, reproduce structures that stem from colonial era practices.**

University affiliation is a common approach to quality evaluation in higher education, particularly in countries whose systems of higher education were founded with oversight from

British universities. The affiliation system legitimates two enduring conventions of the colonial era: the logic of a uniform system of external examination that frames knowledge as mostly disciplinary propositional knowledge, and a relational system that positions faculty at "established" public universities as knowledge authorities. Furthermore, in the case of teacher education in Ghana, the system of university affiliation appropriated the role of institutional carrier for these colonial-era structures.

Because these practices have been maintained as part of Ghana's current reforms, two areas of misalignment continue to work in opposition to pedagogical change. First, students and tutors are frequently faced with misalignments between what was taught or emphasized by tutors and what is assessed on externally written examinations. Students, tutors, and principals view this as unfair, and the situation also calls into question the validity of the exams. Second, a misalignment exists between widely adopted active and student-centered teaching methods on the one hand and learning outcomes and examination questions developed externally and oriented around propositional knowledge on the other. A common view of pedagogy is that "it can be seen as an expression of both the context in which teaching and learning takes place and the decisions that frame both" (Brooks, 2021). In the case of Ghana's teacher education reforms, the external examination system frames tutors' pedagogical decision-making in ways that hinder incorporating more content and instruction focused on know-how and knowledge-by-acquaintance and hinder assessments that would be more relevant for evaluating future teachers' higher-order thinking skills (higher levels on Bloom's taxonomy) and developing instructional judgement. Therefore, countries considering upgrading their systems of teacher education should consider whether conventions of oversight and quality assurance within their systems of higher

education involve practices that support desired pedagogical change, or instead, reproduce practices that are likely to promote the status quo.

Oversight and Quality Assurance can Enable and Empower

> **Implication 5: Alternative modes of university oversight and quality assurance exist and ought to be considered, particularly modes that are developmental and set in motions cycles of reflection, knowledge generation, and individual and organizational learning.**

Although the concept of regulation can conjure up visions of control and constraint, many systems of educational oversight and quality assurance can enable and empower individuals and groups (Scott, 2014, p. 60). For example, accreditation structures can incentivize modes of goal setting and decision-making; strategic planning; calculated risk-taking; the development of internal evaluation processes and measures; and even a regular process of acknowledging and learning from failures. These forms of oversight and quality assurance are developmental and have the potential to set in motion cycles of reflection, knowledge generation, and individual and organizational learning that can significantly raise the human resource capacity within educational institutions over time. In the case of teacher education in Ghana, this sort of oversight and quality assurance, and the opportunity for continuous improvement in teaching and learning that it represents, could, over time, lead to sustained pedagogical change.

However, in situations where regulatory changes *do* grant greater autonomy to organizations and individuals, care must be taken to address cultural-cognitive logics that support the status quo. Within the framework of new institutional theory, cognitive-cultural foundations of social institutions—the cognitive frames and cultural assumptions on which social institutions rest—are presumed to exert stronger pressures for individual and collective action than regulatory structures (Scott, 2014). This view was borne out by the findings of this study.

For example, an important logic that those embedded within colleges of education gave for the system of external examinations was around integrity and fairness in student assessment. There was a belief among tutors and principals that external examinations are an accountability check on colleagues who may favor their own students, who may not give adequate coverage to prescribed topics, or who may develop assessment questions that lack rigor. Tutors and principals also felt that when students from different institutions sit for the same examinations, there is an element of fairness due to the perceived comparability of grades and rank. With this understanding in mind, it is incumbent upon those leading teacher education reform to ensure such integrity and fairness concerns are addressed by internal supervision and quality assurance processes. Internal processes are needed that can identify potential favoritism, assess adequate coverage of learning goals and course topics as stated in approved course syllabi, and evaluate whether continuous and summative assessments meet rigorous academic standards. Student course evaluations; peer moderation of course syllabi, summative assessments, and marking schemes; tracking of grade distributions; periodic external review of courses and programs; student exit surveys; and surveys of school heads and others who employ teacher education graduates, are examples of internal quality assurance processes common in higher education (some of these processes are already in place within Ghana's colleges of education). Perhaps most important in addressing integrity concerns—and the success and sustainability of large-scale teacher education reform in general—is the role of university leaders—principals in the case of Ghana's colleges of education. University leaders provide the vision for a culture of integrity within the institutions that they lead, and their daily actions either strengthen or erode a commitment to integrity among those that they lead.

Limitations and Areas for Further Research

The study has several limitations stemming from its design, implementation, and methodological approach. In terms of design and implementation, the three colleges of education selected for the study were all located in the southern part of Ghana and are historic teacher training institutions, established between 60 and over 100 years ago. Many of the agencies overseeing the implementation of reforms—T-TEL, GTEC, and the Ministry of Education—as well as the three mentor universities, were also located in the southern part of the country. Therefore, due to proximity, it is possible that the three participating colleges of education engaged in more professional development and capacity building, had greater access to resources for upgrading their campus infrastructure, and experienced greater levels of mentorship and supervision, and were, therefore, farther along the "tertiary path" than colleges of education in the central or northern parts of the country. Additionally, if more recently established colleges of education had been selected, a different picture of teaching and learning may have emerged.

The interview data was confined to college of education tutors, principals, and mentor university faculty. Significantly, the perspectives of teacher education students and recent graduates of the new Bachelor of Education degree program did not inform the analysis of the case study data. An important study that motivated this research was the comparative study of initial teacher preparation in six sub-Saharan African countries (including Ghana) in the early 2000s undertaken by Akyeampong et al. (2013). A key finding of that study was that the teacher training experience had a significant impact on teachers' classroom practices. Further, teacher training led to a view of "standardized 'correct' approaches to teaching," while conspicuously missing were "attention to children's understanding and the processes that they were using in learning" and strategies that "tracked pupils' understanding and progress" (p. 276). In other words, teacher education in sub-Saharan Africa in the early 2000s was mostly conceived of as a

training course intended to impart a fixed knowledge base and prescribed procedures required for new teachers to "deliver the curriculum." University-level teacher education, on the other hand, conceptualizes teaching as a profession, and as such, university teacher education is intended to support those learning to teach to become reflective practitioners who "act with integrity, autonomy, and make situational judgements" (Brooks, 2021, p.2). A fascinating follow-up study would be to delve into the experiences of newly qualified Ghanaian teachers who completed the Bachelor of Education program, to understand the impact of the new curriculum on their classroom practices, and the extent to which the university teacher education experience has supported their development of instructional judgement.

Additionally, the perspectives of policymakers and reform implementors at the national level are missing from the case study data (i.e., those working within GTEC and the Ministry of Education). Views of national-level policymakers, particularly on processes of quality evaluation and issues of autonomy for colleges of education, would help shine a light on whether the systems of external examination and affiliation are likely to continue as institutional carriers into the foreseeable future. It would be worthwhile to understand if national-level policymakers view the upgrading of colleges of education to higher education as part of a larger effort to professionalize teaching and how this might impact teacher education's historical role as a socioeconomic steppingstone.

Finally, as the historical analysis in Chapter 4 reveals, social processes can take a long time to unfold. The three-month period of data collection for this study took place four years after the Bachelor of Education program was implemented, when the first batch of students were in their final term, preparing for final exams, and pending graduation. On the one hand, this timing was beneficial—namely, participants had direct experience with reform processes and

offered insightful comparisons between the old Diploma in Basic Education and the new Bachelor of Education degree. On the other hand, it may have been too early for some reform processes to take hold or reform outcomes to be visible within colleges of education. It is certainly too early to assess the impact of reforms on the quality of teaching and learning in Ghanaian classrooms and how much Ghanaian children learn in school.

Finally, from a methodological perspective, the scope of this study was large-scale teacher education reform in a single country. If other sub-Saharan African countries follow the trend and upgrade their systems of teacher education, additional single-country or multi-country studies could paint a more nuanced picture and body of evidence around the potential impact of university teacher education given diverse socio-cultural, historical, and material contexts across the continent.

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Appendix A: Interview for Tutors

Interview for Lecturers

Introduction

1. Introduce myself and give a brief outline of the research project
2. Explain the consent, and ask them for consent if not already obtained
3. Explain the format of the interview, and ask their permission for my tape recording of the interview

Thank you for agreeing to speak to me.

I believe your input will be valuable for a better understanding of recent changes to teacher education in Ghana, such as the new Bachelor of Education degree, new affiliation arrangements, accreditation under GTEC, and so forth. I believe policymakers in other countries could learn a lot from Ghana's experience trying to improve classroom teaching and learning by upgrading teacher education.

Participating in these interviews may also be valuable to you as a way to reflect on the important work you do preparing the next generation of teachers for Ghana.

To protect your confidentiality, I have a consent form for you to read and complete if you agree. Your responses will remain anonymous in the data and reports. Colleges will be referred to with pseudonyms and you would simply be quoted as **Lecturer A at Green Valley College of Education**.

This interview is the first of three, between now and December, each taking about an hour. If you feel comfortable, I'd like to record the interviews, so I don't have to write extensive notes while we're talking. However, if you don't feel comfortable, I don't need to record. After transcribing the interview, I will dispose of the recording. I can also share the transcriptions with you if you would like.

If you agree, I would also like to conduct one or two classroom observations. The classroom observation is to learn and appreciate how regulatory changes filter down to the classroom. I want to understand your feelings and opinions on these changes and their bearing on your role as an instructor at the college.

Biographical Information

1. Current job title:
2. How long have you been at your current job?
    a. How long have you been working within the college of education system?
    b. How old are you now?
3. Please describe what you do in your current job.
4. What is your primary or secondary teaching experience?
    a. What subjects/grades did you teach?
    b. For how many years?
5. Before the new Bachelor's of Education came on board, were you involved in any way in developing the new National Teaching Standards or the new curriculum or how the program was implemented here at your college?

6. Reflect on your past and tell me what pushed you into the teaching profession?
    a. When/why you decided to enter teaching?
    b. How come [mathematics, social studied, etc.] specifically?
    c. How interesting has it been so far?
    d. What have been the challenges?

Conceptions of Quality

1. If you were an inspector and had one day to spend on a college of education campus, what would you look for to determine if the college was running a quality program?
2. Reflecting on your own teaching, what sources of knowledge and experience most guide your content and approach?
3. In your view,
    a. What are the three most important things new graduates from teacher training should ***know and be able to do?***
    b. How should the leadership of this institution or those from GTEC assess the degree to which graduates have gained these knowledge and skills?
    c. Teacher education has historically relied on external examination to measure whether or not teacher trainees meet certain standards. Should this approach continue or be changed?
4. In your opinion, what processes and procedures here at XYZ college of education help you and your colleagues improve the quality of your classroom instruction?
    a. What about improvements to the teacher education program as a whole?
5. Is there anything else about teacher education quality that you would like to share with me?

Closing the First Interview

- Schedule the classroom observation and next interview date and time
- What is the best way to communicate, in case something happens, and we need to reschedule?
- Would you like to review a transcription of this interview once it is complete?

Following a Teaching Observation

In our last interview you share with me… [summarize main points from the first interview]

In today's conversation, I'm interested in learning more about how the new Bachelor of Education impacts tutor's day-to-day teaching activities.

Let's begin.

1. Please reflect on how you prepared to teach today's lesson.
    a. What resources did you use?
    b. Did those resources guide the content for today or your pedagogical choices or both?
    c. Were you satisfied with how the lesson went today?
    d. Would you say your approach to planning for today is typical for you? What are some other ways that you sometimes prepare?
2. How would you describe your approach classroom management?

3. How will the students get evaluated or assessed on what you taught today?
4. How do you believe today's lesson develops your students' pedagogical skills?
5. Reflecting you this course, where is there room for flexibility and choice on the part of the tutor? (With regard to content, pedagogy, assessment, etc.?)
6. How do you feel about the room for flexibility and choice on the part of college of education tutors? Are you satisfied?
7. In terms of your lesson planning and delivery, what are the differences between what you do here teaching the Bachelor of Ed and what you used to do when you taught the Diploma (or as a secondary school teacher)?

Affiliation

8. What does affiliation mean to you?
9. Presently, what do you find helpful about the affiliation arrangement with your mentor institution?
    a. What are main challenges with the affiliation?
10. What has changed about the mentor/mentee relationship under the new system with Winneba?
11. What sort of feedback have you (or your department) received from the mentor institution?
    a. Would you say that the feedback is helpful to you?
12. Tell me how examinations work under your mentor institution.
    a. How do you feel about this?
    b. How do you prepare students for examinations in the courses that you teach?
    c. Is this different from how you prepared students in the past?
    d. Can standards be maintained without a system of external examination?
13. Bachelor of Ed requires research and publication. What are your research areas of interest?
14. How does faculty engaged in research support the goal of educating future teachers?
15. What is the role of your mentor institution when it comes to research?
16. Do you believe research in colleges of education should be primarily disciplinary or rather research in the scholarship of teaching and learning?
17. In general, how would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Bachelor of Education program?

Low Learning Crisis

In Ghana, school progression and government-administered assessments of academic achievement, such as early grade reading and math, continue to be discouraging. You sometimes hear terms such as "the low-learning crisis" or "schooling without learning" applied to the situation where pupils attend school for years, but do not acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills.

1. Although this is a multi-faced and complex issue, in your view, how has teacher education contributed to this problem in the past?
2. Do feel the new Bachelor of Education will better prepare new teachers to ensure a higher level of actual learning when they go out into their first postings?
3. In your view, what changes are still needed to teacher education to improve how much actual learning takes place in schools in Ghana?

Closing the Second Interview

- Schedule the final interview date and time

Autonomy

Thank you for the valuable insights you have shared with me thus far. In this final interview, I'm interested in your feelings and opinions on the level of autonomy colleges of education have today under the new system compared to oversight by GES and affiliation with UCC under the old system.

NOTE: SHOULD BE THE SAME QUESTIONS FOR PRINCIPALS and TUTORS!

1. In your role as a lecturer, what decisions related to teaching and learning are you able to take now that you were not able to take before?
    a. In terms of designing the courses that you teach?
    b. Textbooks?
    c. Teaching pedagogy?
    d. Teaching and learning activities?
    e. Assessments?
    f. Input into the teacher education program at this college?
2. MOE documents indicate that colleges of education should be on a pathway to becoming autonomous tertiary institutions.
    a. What is your view on this?
    b. When do you think this change should take place? Why?
3. If XYZ college of education received its charter and became autonomous, the institution itself would have much more responsibility for quality assurance and would have to take charge of improvement. Is this something you would look forward to?
    a. Are there risks?
    b. How would quality assurance change, if at all, when the institution became autonomous?
4. Are there any other points you would like to make about changes to teacher education brought about by the Bachelor of Education, new affiliation arrangements, or accreditation under GTEC?
5. Reflect on quality assurance process at XYZ college before and after the implementation of the B.Ed. degree. What has changed ***for you***, and what has stayed the same?
    a. Are there QA processes or deliverables that no longer exist?
    b. Are there new QA processes or deliverables that have come on board?
    c. In terms of QA processes or deliverables, what has remained the same?

Closing the Final Interview

Thank you for your time and support of my dissertation research.

- Would you like to review a transcript of this interview?
- Do you mind if I contact you for any follow-up questions or clarifications?
- Would you like to receive an electronic copy of the final research report?

Appendix B: Interview for Principals

Biographical Information

1. How long have you been Principal of xyz College of Education?
    a. What was the path that brought you to becoming a principal?
2. How old are you now?
3. Have you ever been a primary or secondary school teacher?
    a. What subjects/grades did you teach?
    b. For how many years
4. Were you involved in developing the curriculum or other aspects of the new Bachelor of Education program?
    a. What about the National Teacher's Standards?
5. Reflect on your past. What pushed you into the teaching profession?
    a. When/Why you decided to enter teaching?
    b. How come [mathematics, social studied, etc.] specifically?
    c. How interesting has your career as an educator been so far?
    d. What have been the challenges?

Accreditation

1. When was the last time your institution went through accreditation?
    a. What was the process like?
    b. Were you satisfied with the process?
    c. Were you satisfied with the outcome?
    d. What was your reaction to the accreditation report?
    e. Do you believe the feedback and recommendations from the accreditation report helped your institution improve in terms of quality?
    f. Do you believe your institution was measured according to the appropriate standards?
    g. If you were at the help of GTEC, what might you do differently with regard to the process of accreditation for colleges of education?
2. What has changed with regard to accreditation under GTEC and the new Bachelor of Education as compared to the Diploma and NIB?
3. Reflecting on your role as a principal, what sources of knowledge and experience most guide your work?
4. What about the new National Teachers' Standards? How have the standards impacted what you do at the college?

Low Learning Crisis

In Ghana, school progression and government-administered assessments of academic achievement, such as early grade reading and math, continue to be discouraging. You sometimes hear terms such as "the low-learning crisis" or "schooling without learning" applied to the situation where pupils attend school for years, but do not acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills.

4. Although this is a multi-faced and complex issue, in your view, what is the role of teacher education in the low-learning crisis in Ghana?
5. To what extent has the new Bachelor of Education addressed this issue?
6. What are the primary changes at your institution brought on by the upgrading of teacher education to tertiary and the new Bachelor of Education program?
7. In your view, what changes are still needed to teacher education to improve education quality and student learning in Ghana?

Affiliation

1. What does affiliation mean to you?
2. What does it mean to be a mentee institution?
3. How are the processes of accreditation and affiliation similar and different?
4. What has changed about the mentor/mentee relationship under the new system?
5. How does the process of affiliation help your students become more effective teachers?

Examination

1. What is your opinion about the way examinations work under your mentor institution?
    a. Does the examination system as it is currently run, help or hinder the quality of your program at xyz college of education, in your view?
    b. Would you say the benefits of external examination outweigh the costs, both financial and in term of time?
2. One criticism I have heard from tutors at several institutions is that exam questions are of variable quality and sometimes are not well aligned the content the tutor actually covered. Is this a valid concern for you?
3. Would you trust tutors at this institution to write and administer their own examinations?
4. Is there anything that you, as principal, have advocated for or negotiated for with your mentor institution? For example, at Ashesi we negotiated with UCC to allow final projects and research papers to be accepted as final assessments for some courses, instead of final exams. The university leadership were very involved in these negotiations. I wonder if you have tried to advocate for something that you feel is important for your school?

Autonomy

1. I'm interested in whether you feel your college has greater autonomy under new affiliations arrangements then under the old system.
2. Do tutors have greater autonomy in making decisions about content or pedagogy?
3. What about you as the principal, what decisions or actions can you take independently now, where previously you would need to consult with your mentor or NIB?
4. MOE documents indicate that colleges of education should be on a pathway to becoming autonomous tertiary institutions.
    a. What is your view on this?
    b. Is your college ready for full autonomy? Why? When?
5. What do you as the greatest obstacles in xyz becoming autonomous?
6. What would you work to preserve if Xyz became autonomous?

    a. What would be something you would want to change rather quickly if xyz became autonomous?
7. If XYZ college of education received its charter and became autonomous, the institution would have more responsibility for quality assurance and would have to take charge of improvement. Is this something you would look forward to?
8. When you imagine colleges of education as autonomous tertiary institutions, it's very likely that individual colleges will gradually become less similar in terms of their curricular programs and policies. Is this a good thing in your view or do you see it as a risk?
9. Teacher education in Ghana has historically emphasized propositional knowledge—knowledge presented as facts that can be recalled orally or in an examination. Why do you believe this is the case?
    a. Why, in your view, has such an approach been so resistant to change?
    b. Should it change?
    c. How?

Closing

1. Finally, is there anything else you would like to share with me about the relationship between autonomy and quality in teacher education in Ghana?

Appendix C: Interview Protocol for Mentor Faculty

Biographical Information

1. What is your role at XYZ?
    a. What was the path that brought you here?
    b. What courses do you teach here at XYZ?
    c. What are your research areas of interest?
    d. What is your oversight role with regard to Colleges of Education?
2. How old are you now?
3. Have you ever been a primary or secondary school teacher?
    a. What subjects/grades did you teach?
    b. For how many years
4. Were you involved in developing the curriculum or other aspects of the new Bachelor of Education program?

Affiliation

6. What are the key processes that XYZ undertakes with its affiliate colleges of education?
7. What processes have you been involved in personally?
8. From your engagement with colleges of education, what would you say are their strengths? What would you say are their weaknesses?
    - Have you had a chance to observe classroom teaching? What did you think?
    - How would you say teaching at learning at colleges of education compares to your experiences of teaching and learning here at XYZ?
9. Where have you seen concrete improvement within the colleges you have personally engaged with?
    - From your experience, what works with regard to professional development for college of education faculty?
10. How many faculty and staff at XYZ are involved in affiliation activities with colleges of education?
11. Do you find it challenging fitting in mentor responsibilities with your teaching and research responsibilities?

Examination

5. What is your opinion about the way examinations currently work under the affiliation system?
    a. Would you say the benefits of external examination outweigh the costs, both financial and in terms of time?
    b. If you had to improve the examination system, what would you change?
6. One criticism I have heard from tutors at several institutions is that exam questions are of variable quality and sometimes are not well aligned the content the tutor actually teaches. Is this a valid concern for you?
7. If you put yourself in the shoes of the student, the examination system can seem opaque. Students don't typically get to see their scripts and how question were marked. What is your view on this?
8. Would you trust tutors at mentee institutions to write and administer their own examinations and other forms of assessments?
    a. What would it take for you to feel they are ready?

9. Teacher education in Ghana has historically emphasized propositional knowledge—knowledge presented as a fixed set of topics that need to be "learned" and recalled in an examination. Why do you believe this is the case?
    a. Why, in your view, has such an approach been so resistant to change?
    b. Should it change? How?

Low Learning Crisis

In Ghana, school progression and government-administered assessments of academic achievement, such as early grade reading and math, continue to be discouraging. You sometimes hear terms such as "the low-learning crisis" or "schooling without learning" applied to the situation where pupils attend school for years, but do not acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills.

8. Although this is a multi-faceted and complex issue, in your view, what role has the whole system of teacher education played in the low-learning crisis in Ghana?
9. In your view, to what extent is the new Bachelor of Education and upgrading to tertiary addressing the low-learning crisis?
10. In your view, what changes are still needed to teacher education to improve education quality and student learning in Ghana?

Autonomy

10. If you had to make a recommendation today, would you encourage the Ministry of Education to proceed with autonomy for colleges of education? All or some?
11. From the colleges you have personally worked with, what are the key challenge they face in meeting the standards necessary to gain autonomy?
    a. Administrative capacity?
    b. What about the pedagogical and content knowledge of tutors in colleges of education?
    c. Capacity for research?
12. In my discussions with tutors and principals of colleges of education, some have expressed the view that the mentor/mentee relationship has, over the years, hampered their professional growth. What is your view on this?
13. In my discussions with tutors regarding the new requirements for research, I was surprised they were mostly thinking about research in their disciplines rather than research in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Do you have a perspective on the role research can play in improving teacher education in Ghana?
14. If a college of education received its charter and became autonomous, it would have more responsibility for quality assurance and would have to take charge of improvement. Is this something you would look forward to?
15. When you imagine colleges of education as autonomous tertiary institutions, it's very likely that individual colleges will gradually become less similar in terms of their curricular programs and policies. Is this a good thing in your view or do you see it as a risk?
16. Churches have traditionally had an important role to play in the college of education system. Do you expect the role of churches to change if colleges of education become autonomous?

Closing

1. Finally, is there anything else you think I should know about the affiliation system or about colleges of education becoming autonomous?

Appendix D: Classroom Observation Protocol

Purpose

The purpose of the classroom observation is to understand how actions related to instructional processes—such as lesson planning, shaping classroom culture, actual teaching, and assessment activities—are mediated by conceptions of teacher quality and teacher education quality, which may (or may not) be influenced by new teacher's standards, the new Bachelor of Ed framework, affiliation, etc.

Date:
Time:
Location:
Tutor:
Course name:
Level:
Describe:

- Classroom's physical condition and layout
- Number of students and seating arrangements
- Lesson topic
- Lesson segments and timing
- Questions posed by the teacher
- Students' response
- Teacher's response (evaluation, conceptual, stimulates further questions/discussion, supportive)
- Student tasks
- Student /teacher affect
- Materials/technology present or used

Observation Notes