

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Ghana's education system hinges on the quality of its teachers, making the effective management of Pre-Service Teacher Education (PSTE) programs crucial. These programs are designed to equip aspiring educators with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to nurture future generations (Kit Kilag et al., 2023). The quality and effectiveness of these programs significantly impact the overall educational outcomes in the country (Hübel et al., 2023). This background chapter provides an in-depth look at matters relating to PSTE management in Ghana, the applicable policies, the current realities of PSTE, and relevant research findings that support or inform this study. Teacher education in Ghana has evolved significantly over the years, reflecting the country's commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning (Baum & McPherson, 2019). This evolution is marked by several key reforms and developments that have shaped the current landscape of Pre-Service Teacher Education (PSTE). The formal training of teachers in Ghana dates back to the colonial period when the first teacher training colleges were established to prepare teachers for the basic education level. These early institutions focused primarily on equipping teachers with the basic skills needed to teach literacy and numeracy.

Following Ghana's independence in 1957, there was a concerted effort to expand and improve teacher education. The government recognized the pivotal role of teachers in national development and initiated several reforms to enhance the quality of teacher training (Teo, 2019). Key developments during this period included the expansion of Teacher Training Colleges: of which the number of teacher training colleges increased significantly to meet the growing demand for teachers at the basic education level. Curricula were updated to include more comprehensive content and pedagogical training, reflecting the evolving needs of Ghanaian society. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, teacher training colleges were upgraded to colleges of education. This change was part of a broader effort to professionalize teaching and improve the quality of teacher preparation. The upgrade involved enhanced curriculum of which colleges of education began offering more advanced coursework, including subjects like educational psychology, curriculum studies, and instructional technology. Diploma Programs were introduced of which diploma programs in education aimed to provide a higher level of training and better prepare teachers for the classroom.

The most recent development in the evolution of teacher education in Ghana is the integration of colleges of education into the tertiary education system. This integration reflects a significant shift towards higher standards and greater professionalism in teacher preparation. Key aspects of this integration include degree programs of which Many colleges of education now offer bachelor's degree programs in education, providing a more comprehensive and rigorous training for prospective teachers. The Affiliation with Universities is another of which Colleges of education are affiliated with universities, ensuring that their programs meet higher education standards and benefit from university resources and expertise. Ghana, located on the West African coast, is known for its rich history, diverse cultures, and vibrant democracy. Bordered by Côte d'Ivoire to the west, Burkina Faso to the north, Togo to the east, and the Gulf of Guinea to the south, Ghana covers an area of approximately 238,533 square kilometers. With a population exceeding 30 million, the country is renowned for its warm hospitality, often earning the nickname "The Gateway to Africa." The education system in Ghana has undergone significant transformations since the country gained independence from British colonial rule in 1957. Education is highly valued in Ghanaian society, and the government has made substantial efforts to enhance access to quality education for all citizens.

The structure of the Ghanaian education system is divided into three main levels: basic education, secondary education, and tertiary education.

Basic Education: This level includes kindergarten, primary school, and junior high school. It is designed to provide nine years of free and compulsory education for children aged 4 to 15. The primary school cycle lasts six years, followed by three years of junior high school. At the end of junior high school, students take the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), which determines their eligibility for secondary education.

Secondary Education: This comprises senior high school (SHS) and technical and vocational education and training (TVET). Senior high school lasts three years and offers a range of academic and technical programs. The curriculum includes core subjects such as English, mathematics, and science, along with elective courses tailored to students' interests and career aspirations. TVET institutions provide specialized training in various trades and skills. Students complete their secondary education by taking the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), a critical determinant for entry into tertiary institutions.

Tertiary Education: Ghana boasts a diverse array of tertiary institutions, including universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. The country has both public and private universities offering undergraduate and postgraduate programs across various fields. Notable universities include the University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), and the University of Cape Coast. Polytechnics and colleges of education focus on practical skills and teacher training, respectively. Despite significant progress in expanding access to education, Ghana faces challenges such as regional disparities, inadequate infrastructure, and the need for continuous professional development for teachers. The government and various stakeholders are actively working to address these issues through policy reforms, investment in educational infrastructure, and initiatives aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning.

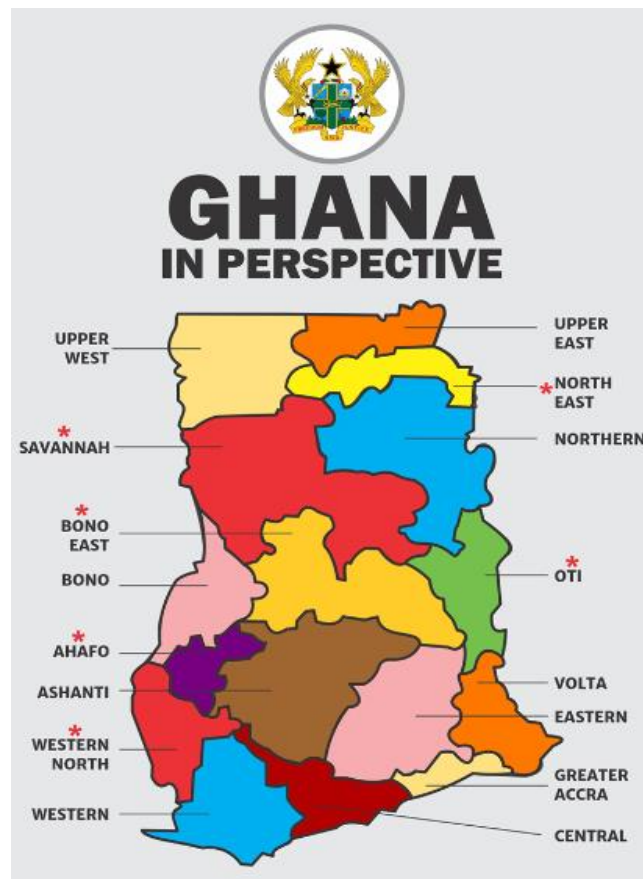


Figure 1. Map of Ghana

The management of teacher education in Ghana is a complex system involving multiple stakeholders at different levels. The chart below outlines the management structure from the Ministry of Education to training institutions.

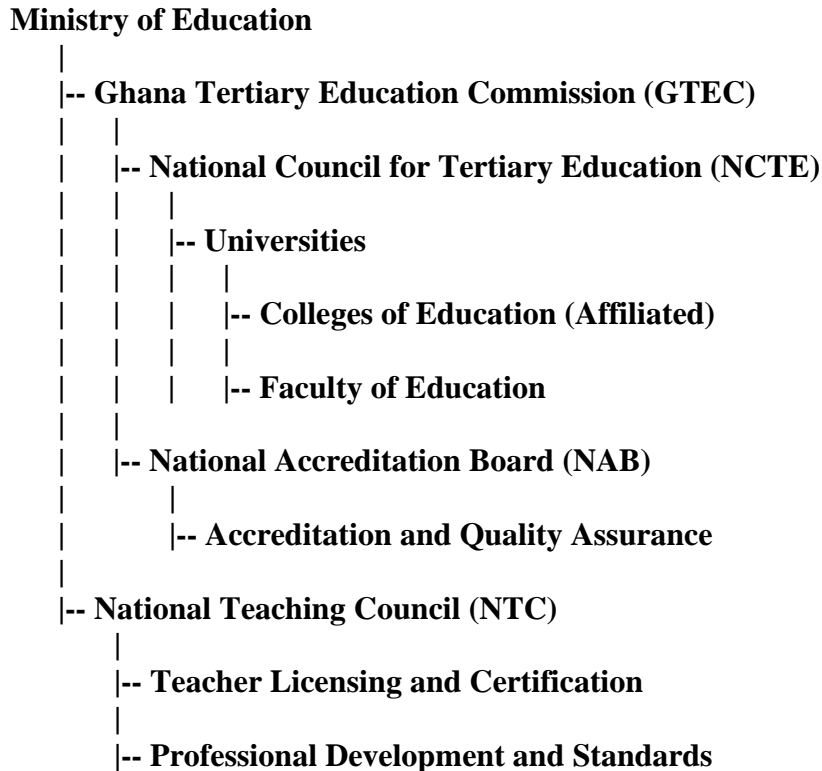


Figure 2. Management structure chart MOD

Ghana's preservice teacher education aims to provide high-quality training, aligning with global standards. The Ministry of Education, universities, and the National Teaching Council ensure programs meet national standards, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This structured approach targets disparities in access and outcomes, providing equitable training that meets global benchmarks. Global organizations like the UN, OECD, and World Bank emphasize quality, inclusive, equitable, and comprehensive education. At the heart of quality education lies the crucial role of teacher quality. Effective teachers, the architects of student learning, are the lifeblood of high-performing education systems. They possess a deep understanding of their subject matter, coupled with pedagogical expertise and a passion for igniting curiosity and fostering intellectual growth (Clarke & Arnab, 2019). Their ability to connect with students on a personal level, creating a stimulating learning environment, is paramount to nurturing well-rounded individuals who are prepared to thrive in a rapidly evolving world (Whitehead et al., 2023). The significance of teacher quality extends beyond the classroom, influencing the broader socioeconomic well-being of nations. (Ogunrinbokun, 2023). A well-educated and skilled workforce, empowered by quality teaching, drives economic growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship (Bardach & Klassen, 2020). It contributes to increased productivity, enhanced

competitiveness, and improved living standards. Moreover, quality education fosters social cohesion, promotes responsible citizenship, and cultivates a culture of tolerance and understanding (Zhanbayev et al., 2023). Widiati & Basthomi (2021) define teacher quality through a model of "pedagogical content knowledge" (PCK). PCK emphasizes the unique blend of subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills, and knowledge of student learning that effective teachers possess (Burroughs et al., 2019). This definition highlights the importance of a teacher's ability to not only know their subject but also effectively teach it in a way that students can understand.

The pursuit of quality education hinges on a multitude of factors, from curriculum design and resource allocation to parental involvement and societal support (M. Martin, 2018). However, amidst this complex interplay of influences, the role of teacher quality stands out as a pivotal determinant of student learning outcomes and overall educational success (Filgona et al., 2020). Effective teachers, armed with pedagogical expertise, subject matter knowledge, and a passion for teaching, transform classrooms into dynamic learning hubs, igniting curiosity, nurturing critical thinking, and fostering a lifelong love of learning. The foundation for this transformative teaching lies in preservice teacher education, the initial training that prepares individuals to enter the teaching profession (Sauve & Schonert-Reichl, 2019). This formative period plays a crucial role in shaping teacher quality by providing aspiring educators with the essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions to navigate the complexities of the classroom and effectively guide students towards their full potential (Annandale et al., 2021). Preservice teacher education programs encompass a range of theoretical and practical components, immersing aspiring teachers in the principles of pedagogy, child development, and subject matter expertise (Schwartz Ed., 2022). They equip them with the tools to design engaging lesson plans, employ effective teaching strategies, and create a supportive and inclusive learning environment (Chang et al., 2021). Beyond pedagogical knowledge, preservice teacher education fosters essential professional dispositions, such as empathy, resilience, and a commitment to lifelong learning, which are fundamental to building strong and lasting relationships with students (D'Emidio-Caston, 2019).

The impact of preservice teacher education extends far beyond the individual teacher, influencing the overall quality of education within a society (Johansson et al., 2023). High-quality preservice programs, characterized by rigorous curricula, experienced faculty, and meaningful field placements, contribute to a well-prepared and skilled teaching workforce (Ronfeldt, 2021). This, in turn, translates into improved student learning outcomes, enhanced academic achievement,

and a higher level of engagement in the learning process (Bhattacharyya, 2024). Daccache & Ibrahim (2023) define PSTE as a "preparation for complex practice." This definition highlights the multifaceted nature of teaching and the need for PSTE programs to prepare teachers for the diverse challenges they will encounter in classrooms. It emphasizes the importance of programs that go beyond theoretical knowledge, providing practical skills and developing the ability to think critically and adapt instruction to various situations (Bullough Jr., 2005). Studies have consistently demonstrated a positive correlation between the quality of preservice teacher education and student performance. Recognizing the pivotal role of teacher quality in driving educational excellence, the Government of Ghana has implemented a range of initiatives aimed at enhancing teacher education and strengthening the teaching profession (Roger, 2019). Among them are the 2008 Education Act, this act established the National Teacher Council (NTC) as the main regulatory body for teacher education (Buabeng et al., 2020). The NTC plays a crucial role in setting standards and ensuring program quality, the Colleges of Education Act (2012), this act elevated the status of CoEs, granting them greater autonomy and university affiliation. This aimed to enhance the quality of teacher education and attract higher-caliber faculty and the 2019 PSTE Curriculum Reforms, these reforms aimed to address concerns about the disconnect between theory and practice in PSTE programs (Tias, 2023). The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) which outlines the government's vision and strategic objectives for the education sector, including teacher education. It focuses on improving access to quality education, enhancing teacher professionalism, and strengthening institutional capacities. The Teacher Licensing Policy is another which ensures that only qualified individuals are allowed to teach, this policy mandates that all teachers undergo a licensing examination upon completion of their training. This process is intended to uphold high professional standards and improve the overall quality of education.

The new curriculum emphasizes practical teaching methodologies, student engagement strategies, and technology integration. These efforts are guided by the understanding that well-prepared and effective teachers are the cornerstone of a high-performing education system, capable of nurturing the intellectual, social, and emotional growth of Ghana's future generations. The government's commitment to improving teacher education is evident in a series of comprehensive policies and programs. In 2004, the Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) program was launched, the aim is to Enhance the quality of pre-service teacher training by strengthening the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment practices within Colleges of Education

(CoEs) to prepare future teachers more effectively (T-TEL, n.d.), to Improve the professional development of in-service teachers: T-TEL sought to providing ongoing professional learning opportunities for existing teachers, equipping them with updated knowledge and skills (T-TEL, n.d.) and also to Strengthen institutional capacity of Colleges of Education by supporting CoEs in developing their infrastructure, faculty development programs, and overall management practices (T-TEL, n.d.), marking a significant shift towards competency-based teacher education. This initiative emphasized the development of practical skills and competencies, ensuring that teachers are equipped to address the diverse needs of students and the challenges of the 21st-century classroom (Ghafar et al., 2021). To further enhance the quality of teacher training, the government has expanded the number of teacher training institutions and introduced rigorous admission standards (O'Malley et al., 2018). Additionally, scholarships and incentives have been provided to attract and retain talented individuals to the teaching profession. For instance, A report by the Ghana Education Service (GES) (2021) indicates a 25% increase in the teacher workforce from 2010 to 2021 (Mereku, 2019). These measures have contributed to a more qualified and motivated teaching workforce.

In recognition of the importance of continuous professional development, the government has established a National Teacher Training Institute (NaTTI), which offers a range of in-service training programs for teachers. These programs focus on updating pedagogical skills, deepening subject matter knowledge, and incorporating innovative teaching methodologies (Aldosemani, 2019). The government's efforts to improve teacher education have yielded promising results. A 2017 study by the Ghana Education Service (GES) found that teachers who had undergone T-TEL training demonstrated higher levels of pedagogical competence and student engagement compared to those who had not received the training. Additionally, the percentage of qualified teachers in Ghana has increased from 44% in 2008 to 67% in 2020, indicating a positive impact of the government's initiatives (Donkoh et al., 2021). Despite the Government of Ghana's efforts to enhance teacher education, concerns have arisen regarding the declining quality of education in the country (Chanimbe & Dankwah, 2021). Recent reports, documents, research, and data paint a picture of a system struggling to meet the demands of 21st-century learners, with students exhibiting lower levels of literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking skills. The 2018 edition of the Programme for Analysis of Students' Competencies (PASEC) report, a regional assessment conducted by UNESCO, revealed that only 38% of Ghanaian students in grade 6 achieved

proficiency in reading and only 27% achieved proficiency in mathematics (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). Ghana's own National Education Assessment (NEA) consistently reports low pass rates in both English Language and Mathematics, particularly at the junior high school level (Ghana Education Service, 2023). The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2022-2023 ranked Ghana 114th out of 141 countries on the pillar of "Thinking Skills" (World Economic Forum, 2023). This indicates a perceived weakness in students' critical thinking abilities. A study by Rima et al. (2023) investigated critical thinking skills among Ghanaian pre-service teachers and found that many struggled with higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. This suggests potential problems within the teacher education system that may be impacting students' critical thinking development.

The Ghana Education Sector Plan (GESPlan) 2018-2030 acknowledges challenges in areas like "ensuring quality, equity and access" and "equipping learners with the requisite skills for the 21st century" (Education Sector Analysis 2018). The World Bank report suggests that while Ghana is making strides in educational investments, significant challenges remain. Addressing these challenges through increased funding, focused teacher development, and systematic curriculum enhancement is essential for improving the quality and accessibility of education in Ghana. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results for Ghana in 2018 placed the country below the average for sub-Saharan Africa in reading, mathematics, and science literacy. Specifically, Ghana scored 73 points below the average in reading literacy, 94 points below the average in mathematics literacy, and 95 points below the average in science literacy (OECD, 2019). These results indicate significant challenges in educational quality and outcomes in Ghana, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to improve student performance and enhance educational opportunities. A 2018 study by the Ghana National Assessment of Educational Learning Outcomes (NAEAL) revealed that only 30% of third-graders could read English proficiently and only 20% could solve basic division problems. These findings suggest a pervasive weakness in fundamental skills among Ghanaian students. Furthermore, studies have documented widespread concerns about the quality of teaching in Ghana's schools.

The study by Annan (2020) highlights challenges in teacher education in Ghana, including inadequate resources, outdated curriculum, and limited practical experiences. Stakeholders' perceptions of teacher education quality and preparedness reveal gaps in knowledge, classroom management skills, and technology integration. Research indicates that many teachers lack the

necessary pedagogical skills and subject matter knowledge to effectively engage students and promote deep learning (Kim et al., 2019). Traditional rote memorization and teacher-centered approaches dominate classrooms, stifling creativity and critical thinking. Research by Buabeng et al., (2020) indicate that several factors contribute to the inefficiencies of Ghana's PTE system. Resource constraints, such as limited infrastructure and inadequate funding, hamper the ability of teacher training institutions to provide high-quality training. Additionally, a shortage of qualified faculty and a lack of access to technology impede the delivery of effective instruction and the development of teachers' digital skills. According to Kai et al., (2021), the curriculum and pedagogy of many PTE programs fail to adequately equip graduates with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the demands of 21st-century classrooms. Traditional teaching methods, focused on rote memorization and teacher-centered instruction, dominate the training, limiting the development of critical thinking, creativity, and student engagement. The deficiencies observed in teaching practices can be linked to the shortcomings of preservice teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Despite efforts by the government to enhance teacher training, numerous institutions face challenges due to inadequate resources, infrastructure, and faculty expertise (Kibuku et al., 2020). These limitations hinder the effectiveness of preservice programs in adequately preparing teachers for the complexities of classroom environments (Muluneh & Gedifew, 2018a). Moreover, the curriculum and pedagogy employed in many preservice teacher education programs often fall short in providing graduates with the requisite skills and knowledge for delivering high-quality instruction as contained in a study: Stakeholder Perceptions by Amoako et al. (2023), which reveal concerns among stakeholders about teacher competencies. There is a recognized gap between the theoretical foundations taught in teacher education programs and the practical skills needed for effective classroom management, student engagement, and differentiated instruction (Franklin & Harrington, 2019). As a result, graduates may enter the teaching profession ill-equipped to address the diverse needs of students and navigate the challenges inherent in educational settings (Lotter et al., 2018).

These inadequacies highlight the need for comprehensive reforms in the management of preservice teacher education (Penuel et al., 2020). Addressing resource constraints, improving faculty qualifications, and revising curricular frameworks are essential steps toward enhancing the quality and effectiveness of teacher preparation programs (Hammond et al., 2017). Additionally, integrating practical, hands-on experiences and incorporating evidence-based instructional

strategies into preservice training can better align graduates' skills with the demands of modern classrooms ((Franklin & Harrington, 2019). Weaknesses in program design, implementation, and quality assurance have emerged, hindering the preparation of well-qualified teachers (Okunlola & Hendricks, 2022). These shortcomings require a comprehensive approach to PTE management, emphasizing proper planning, implementation, quality assurance, and quality control (Hammond et al., 2017). Effective management of Pre-Service Teacher Education (PSTE) programs involves several key components that contribute to the quality and effectiveness of teacher preparation (Alrajeh, 2021). The decline in educational quality in Ghana has far-reaching implications for the country's future prosperity and social well-being. A poorly educated workforce hinders economic growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship, limiting Ghana's ability to compete in the globalized world (Jabbouri & Farooq, 2021). Moreover, inadequate education contributes to social inequalities, perpetuates poverty, and undermines the nation's democratic development (Garwe, 2019).. Addressing the decline in educational quality requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses strengthening preservice teacher education, enhancing in-service training, and promoting innovative teaching methodologies (Lander et al., 2020). A renewed focus on teacher quality, with a particular emphasis on fostering pedagogical expertise, subject matter knowledge, and a passion for teaching, is essential to revitalize Ghana's education system and prepare its youth to thrive in the 21st century.

To address these shortcomings and improve the quality of PTE in Ghana, a renewed focus on effective PTE management is crucial (Agyekum et al., 2024). Proper planning, implementation, quality assurance, and quality control are essential components of a robust PTE system that produces well-prepared and effective teachers (Gebretsadik et al., 2023). Recruitment and professional development of faculty members are also essential (Hammond et al., 2017). Faculty members serve as mentors and guides, shaping the professional identities of pre-service teachers (Delgado et al., 2020). Ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty members enhance teaching effectiveness and innovation in PSTE programs(Nelson & Bohanon, 2019). Clinical practice and field experiences offer pre-service teachers' opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings. Effective management ensures clear guidelines, support, and supervision for pre-service teachers and cooperating teachers (Kula & Güler, 2021). Assessment and accountability mechanisms ensure program outcomes meet established standards. Multiple measures of candidate performance provide comprehensive insights into pre-service teachers'

readiness (Hammond et al., 2017). Transparent accountability systems drive program improvement efforts (Smith & Benavot, 2019). Resource allocation, staffing, and infrastructure decisions significantly impact program quality. Adequate funding, facilities, and instructional materials create supportive learning environments (Madani, 2019). Qualified faculty and mentors are crucial for delivering high-quality instruction and mentorship (Abetang et al., 2020). Supervision and mentoring play vital roles in supporting pre-service teachers' development. Regular observations, feedback, and collaborative discussions facilitate reflective practice (J. Fletcher, 2017). Effective management of supervision and mentoring promotes the integration of theory and practice (Toh et al., 2022). Quality assurance ensures program integrity through consistent monitoring of curriculum, faculty expertise, and student outcomes (Garwe, 2019). Quality control identifies areas for improvement and implements strategies to enhance program effectiveness, such as curriculum alignment and faculty development (Kilag & Sasan, 2023).

Integrating technology effectively into curriculum delivery requires careful planning and investment and collaboration with stakeholders, though beneficial, demands communication and coordination efforts (Chima Abimbola Eden et al., 2024). Data-driven decision-making is essential but challenged by data collection and analysis issues. Addressing these challenges and leveraging opportunities, PSTE programs can enhance their quality and effectiveness, ultimately contributing to improved teacher preparation and student outcomes (Padalulu & Malyo, 2024). Regular monitoring and evaluation of institutions, curriculum, and teaching practices are crucial to identify areas for improvement and ensure that programs meet the highest standards (Hwu, 2023). Research by Ahenkan Arthur & Kuranchie (2022) suggests that quality assurance practices in Ghana may prioritize adherence to procedural requirements over a focus on measuring program outcomes and student learning gains. Effective quality control measures ensure that PTE programs consistently produce well-prepared teachers (Annan, 2020). This involves implementing standardized assessments, establishing clear performance expectations, and holding institutions accountable for the quality of their graduates. Studies by Amoako and Asamoah-Gyimah (2020) highlight internal challenges within institutions, such as a lack of strategic planning and limited resources dedicated to quality assurance activities

By adopting a holistic approach, this dissertation can offer a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities for improving teacher quality in Ghana. Shifting the focus from individual components to a systemic perspective offers a fresh angle on PSTE

management. The research can identify potential areas for collaboration and improvement across different stakeholders involved in the PSTE ecosystem in Ghana. This can inform practical recommendations for policymakers and educators. By addressing these aspects holistically, Ghana can strive towards enhancing teacher quality and ultimately improving educational outcomes across the country. This approach requires collaboration and coordination among policymakers, educators, teacher training institutions, and other stakeholders to ensure a cohesive and effective system of teacher education and professional development. In conclusion, Addressing the weaknesses of Ghana's PTE system requires a concerted effort to enhance PTE management practices, emphasizing proper planning, implementation, quality assurance, and quality control. By investing in a well-managed PTE system, Ghana can nurture a generation of highly qualified teachers, capable of transforming classrooms, igniting curiosity, and empowering students to become the driving force of a prosperous and equitable future.

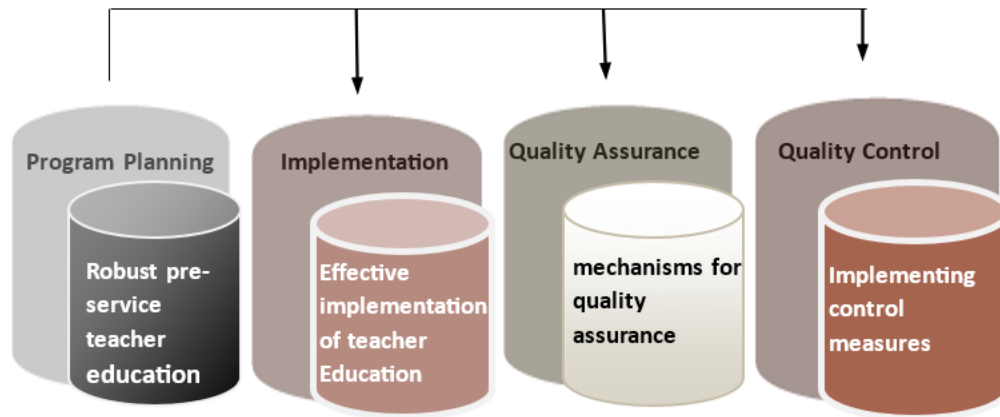


Figure 3 The four Component PSTE management

This conceptual framework presents a systematic approach to managing Preservice Teacher Education (PSTE) programs, emphasizing thorough planning, effective implementation, robust quality assurance, and stringent quality control. It begins with comprehensive program planning, ensuring a well-structured curriculum that meets educational goals. Implementation focuses on delivering this curriculum effectively, equipping teacher candidates with essential skills and knowledge. Quality assurance involves monitoring and evaluating the program through regular assessments and stakeholder feedback to maintain high standards and adapt to changing needs. Quality control includes inspections, audits, and compliance checks to ensure adherence to standards and address deficiencies. By following this framework, educational institutions can

ensure their PSTE programs are comprehensive, effective, and continually improving, ultimately preparing high-quality teachers to meet the demands of the education sector.

1.2 Identification of problem

Ghana's education system is currently facing a critical challenge regarding teacher quality (Osseo-Asare, 2021). Despite government initiatives to enhance teacher education, concerns persist about the effectiveness of preservice teacher education (PTE) programs in adequately preparing qualified teachers. Several factors contribute to this issue, including weak graduate preparedness, as studies by Aidoo et al. (2022) suggest that many preservice teachers struggle with higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis, which can negatively impact student learning outcomes. Additionally, reports by the Ghana Education Service (GES) and UNESCO highlight consistently low pass rates in core subjects like English and Mathematics, particularly at the junior high school level (Ghana Education Service, 2023; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). Furthermore, the 2018 PASEC results indicate that only 38% of Ghanaian students in grade 6 achieved proficiency in reading, and just 27% in math, while the Ghana National Assessment of Educational Learning Outcomes (NAEAL) 2018 revealed that only 30% of third-graders could read English proficiently, and only 20% could solve basic division problems (NAEAL, 2018). The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2022-2023 also ranked Ghana 114th out of 141 countries in "Thinking Skills," indicating a perceived weakness in students' critical thinking abilities (World Economic Forum, 2023). Teacher quality concerns are further highlighted by Mensah et al. (2020), who reported that teachers may lack essential pedagogical skills and subject knowledge, with traditional rote memorization and teacher-centered approaches dominating classrooms, ultimately hindering student engagement and critical thinking. Moreover, the 2018 PISA results indicated that Ghana scored significantly lower in reading, mathematics, and science literacy compared to the sub-Saharan African average (OECD, 2019).

The effectiveness of teacher preparation is largely dependent on strategic planning, which is essential for establishing a cohesive and aligned teacher education system (Djoundourian & Shahin, 2022). However, the current planning process in Ghana's PTE landscape suffers from a lack of strategic direction and a clear vision for teacher quality. This has led to fragmented curricular frameworks that fail to address the demands of the 21st-century classroom. Additionally, inconsistent admission standards have resulted in admitting individuals with varying levels of aptitude and motivation for teaching, further compounding the challenge of improving teacher

quality. The gap in planning lies in the absence of a comprehensive, forward-looking approach that aligns PTE programs with national education goals and the evolving needs of the teaching profession. Consequently, without a clear vision for teacher quality, PTE programs lack the direction needed to prepare well-qualified teachers.

The implementation of PTE programs in Ghana often fails to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical teaching competencies (Lanbon et al., 2020). This gap is primarily due to the reliance on traditional teaching methods, rote memorization, and teacher-centered approaches that dominate training, ultimately limiting the development of student engagement, critical thinking, and innovative teaching strategies. As a result, preservice teachers are ill-equipped to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world classroom settings, affecting student learning outcomes. The implementation gap lies in the overemphasis on theoretical knowledge and the lack of practical teaching experiences. Preservice teachers need more opportunities to apply knowledge in authentic classroom settings, collaborate with experienced teachers, and receive constructive feedback. Without this emphasis on practical pedagogy, PTE programs fail to adequately prepare teachers for classroom realities.

Robust quality assurance mechanisms are essential to maintain the quality and consistency of PTE programs (Wilson, 2019). However, the current system in Ghana lacks effective quality assurance frameworks, resulting in inadequate monitoring and evaluation of institutions, curriculum, and teaching practices. This deficiency hinders the identification of areas needing improvement and the enforcement of quality standards, perpetuating inconsistencies in teacher preparation. The gap in quality assurance is the absence of a rigorous, systematic approach to monitoring, evaluating, and providing feedback on PTE programs. Without these mechanisms, institutions are not held accountable for maintaining high standards, leading to inconsistent teacher preparation quality.

Effective quality control measures are also crucial for identifying and rectifying shortcomings in PTE programs (J. B. Hill, 2021). However, the current quality control system in Ghana is fragmented and lacks a comprehensive approach, hindering the continuous improvement of PTE programs and perpetuating teacher quality issues. The gap in quality control lies in the absence of a systematic, data-driven approach to identifying and addressing areas for improvement. Without a robust quality control system, PTE programs lack the guidance needed to enhance their effectiveness continually. In summary, the interconnected inefficiencies in Ghana's

PTE management—planning, implementation, quality assurance, and quality control—collectively contribute to the ongoing challenge of teacher quality. Addressing these shortcomings requires developing a clear, shared vision for teacher quality, aligning PTE programs with national education goals and evolving professional needs, implementing innovative teaching methodologies that foster engagement, critical thinking, creativity, and technology use in classrooms. Additionally, establishing robust quality assurance frameworks, regular monitoring, evaluation, feedback mechanisms, and comprehensive quality control measures is essential for ensuring consistent and high-quality teacher preparation. By addressing these critical aspects, Ghana can transform teacher preparation, empowering educators to become transformative leaders who inspire curiosity, nurture critical thinking, and prepare students to thrive in a rapidly evolving world. Through this revitalized approach, Ghana can ensure its education system empowers citizens to contribute to national development, leading to a brighter and more prosperous future.

1.3 Formulation of research questions

Teacher quality is a cornerstone of any successful education system. Ghana, however, faces a persistent challenge in ensuring its preservice teacher education (PSTE) programs adequately prepare future educators (Osseo-Asare, 2021). While initiatives have been undertaken, concerns remain regarding the effectiveness of these programs. Analysis of Ghana's PSTE landscape reveals shortcomings across various aspects:

- **Planning:** A lack of strategic direction and clear vision for teacher quality leads to disjointed curriculum frameworks.
- **Implementation:** Overemphasis on theory and underutilization of practical experiences hinder the development of critical competencies.
- **Quality Assurance:** Inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems fail to identify areas for improvement and enforce quality standards.
- **Quality Control:** Fragmented approaches to quality control limit continuous improvement.
- These interconnected inefficiencies contribute to the overall problem of suboptimal teacher quality in Ghana.

1.4 Research Questions

To address this complex issue, this research investigates specific aspects of Ghana's PSTE programs through the following questions:

1.4.1. What are the key components of the planning process in preservice teacher education programs in Ghana? This question delves into the current planning framework, identifying its strengths and weaknesses in aligning with national education goals and preparing teachers for the 21st century.

1.4.2 What challenges exist in effectively implementing preservice teacher education programs in Ghanaian universities or colleges? This question explores the practical realities of program implementation, identifying obstacles to incorporating innovative teaching methods and fostering practical competencies in preservice teachers.

1.4.3 What barriers hinder the implementation of effective accreditation processes in Ghanaian PSTE institutions? This question examines the current accreditation system, pinpointing areas where it falls short in ensuring consistent and high-quality teacher preparation.

1.4.4 How effectively do the existing licensure and certification in Ghanaian PSTE programs ensure the quality of trained teachers? This question evaluates the effectiveness of current licensure and certification processes in guaranteeing that graduates possess the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful educators.

1.4.5 What comprehensive model can be proposed to improve Preservice Teacher Education (PSTE) management in Ghana?

By investigating these specific questions, this research aims to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges within Ghana's PSTE programs and pave the way for the development of a more comprehensive approach to teacher education. This approach would emphasize strategic planning, practice-oriented pedagogy, robust quality assurance frameworks, and rigorous quality control measures. Ultimately, the goal is to empower Ghana's teacher education system to prepare and equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in the 21st century classroom.

1.5 Research objectives

These objectives collectively contribute to the overarching aim of enhancing pre-service teacher education management in Ghana by examining planning, implementation, quality mechanisms, and control processes. Through these objectives, the study aims to provide recommendations and evidence-based practices that can improve the effectiveness and quality of teacher preparation programs in Ghana.

1.5.1 To explore the key components of the planning process in preservice teacher education programs in Ghana.

1.5.2 To identify the challenges hindering the effective implementation of preservice teacher education programs in Ghanaian universities and colleges.

1.5.3 To identify the barriers hindering the implementation of effective accreditation processes in Ghanaian preservice teacher education (PSTE) institutions.

1.5.4 To evaluate the effectiveness of the existing licensure and certification processes in ensuring the quality of trained teachers in Ghanaian preservice teacher education (PSTE) programs.

1.5.5 To propose a comprehensive module for the effective management of preservice teacher education in Ghana.

1.6 Research Significance

The quality of preservice teacher education (PTE) has a profound impact on the teaching profession and, consequently, on the success of students. Well-prepared teachers possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively educate and inspire their students, laying the foundation for future academic achievement and societal contributions (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019). In Ghana, as in many other countries, there is a growing recognition of the critical role of PTE in addressing educational challenges and advancing national development goals. The proposed study on the analysis of preservice teacher education management in Ghana holds significant value for both the academic and practical spheres. By delving into the intricacies of PTE program planning, implementation, quality assurance mechanisms, and quality control, this study holds a lot of benefits to uncover areas for improvement and contribute to the enhancement of teacher preparation in Ghana. This research delves into the critical issue of teacher quality in Ghana's preservice teacher education (PSTE) programs. While previous studies have explored aspects of teacher education in Ghana (Asamoah et al., 2023), a gap remains in comprehensively examining the interconnected factors influencing program effectiveness. This study addresses this gap by investigating the planning, implementation, quality assurance, and quality control mechanisms within Ghana's PSTE landscape.

This research contributes to the theoretical understanding of effective PSTE program management in a sub-Saharan African context. Limited research exists on the specific challenges and opportunities faced by teacher education programs in Ghana compared to more developed regions. By examining these factors through the lens of established learning theories (constructivism, behaviorism), human capital theory, systems theory, and Total Quality Management (TQM), this study can illuminate new insights into the complex dynamics of teacher

quality development within a specific cultural and educational context. This can contribute to a richer theoretical framework for understanding PSTE program effectiveness in diverse contexts. The findings of this research can inform policy decisions aimed at improving teacher quality in Ghana. By identifying specific challenges within the planning, implementation, quality assurance, and quality control aspects of PSTE programs, this study can provide data-driven recommendations for policymakers. This information can be used to develop and refine policies that emphasize strategic planning aligned with national education goals, promote innovative teaching methodologies, strengthen quality assurance frameworks, and implement rigorous quality control measures. Ultimately, this research can contribute to the formulation of policies that ensure Ghana's PSTE programs produce well-prepared and effective teachers who can meet the demands of the 21st century.

The practical implications of this research are significant for teacher educators, program administrators, and stakeholders involved in Ghana's PSTE system. The research findings can provide valuable insights into areas for improvement within program design, delivery, and assessment. This can inform the development of practical strategies for integrating innovative teaching methodologies that foster critical thinking and practical competencies in preservice teachers, strengthening quality assurance mechanisms through robust monitoring and evaluation practices and implementing data-driven quality control measures for continuous program improvement. This research addresses a critical issue in Ghanaian education with far-reaching social implications. Teacher quality is a pivotal factor in ensuring equitable access to quality education, a cornerstone of social development and economic prosperity. By investigating the factors influencing teacher quality, this research aims to contribute to a broader social discourse on improving educational opportunities for all Ghanaian children. The findings can empower educators, policymakers, and stakeholders to take concrete actions towards strengthening the PSTE system and fostering a generation of well-equipped teachers who can nurture future generations of engaged and successful learners.

From an academic standpoint, this study offers a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge on PTE and its management in Ghana. The findings will inform researchers, teacher educators, and policymakers about the strengths and weaknesses of the current PTE system, providing insights into areas that require further exploration and refinement. The study will also contribute to the development of theoretical frameworks and models for effective PTE

management, fostering a more robust understanding of factors that influence teacher quality. The study's significance extends to the broader field of teacher education, providing insights that can inform PTE practices beyond the Ghanaian context. The findings will contribute to the development of transferable knowledge and replicable strategies for enhancing PTE management in other countries, particularly those with similar educational systems and challenges. Ultimately, the study's significance lies in its potential to contribute to the improvement of teacher quality in Ghana. By addressing the shortcomings of the current PTE system and fostering a culture of continuous improvement, the study aims to ensure that future teachers are adequately prepared to face the challenges and opportunities of the 21st-century teaching profession. This, in turn, will lead to improved student learning outcomes, enhanced educational quality, and a more prosperous future for Ghana's youth. In conclusion, this research on teacher quality in Ghana's PSTE programs holds significance across theoretical, policy, practice, issue, and social action domains. By contributing to a deeper understanding of program effectiveness and providing actionable recommendations, this study aims to play a role in empowering Ghana to prepare future educators who can inspire and empower students to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

1.7 Organization of the Research

This dissertation is structured to comprehensively analyze preservice teacher education management in Ghana by exploring the factors influencing teacher quality in Ghana's preservice teacher education (PSTE) programs. The chapters build upon each other, weaving a cohesive narrative that explores the problem, investigates its roots, and proposes solutions.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem Statement

2. **Context:** This chapter sets the stage by introducing Ghana's PSTE system, outlining its structure and key components. It emphasizes the critical role of quality PSTE in national development and student success.
3. **Problem Identification:** Here, the chapter delves into the core issue – the persistent challenge of suboptimal teacher quality in Ghana. It highlights specific weaknesses within the planning, implementation, quality assurance, and quality control aspects of PSTE programs.
4. **Significance of the Study:** This section articulates the importance of the research. It explains how the study contributes to theoretical knowledge, informs policy decisions, and empowers practitioners to improve PSTE program effectiveness.

5. **Research Questions and Objectives:** The chapter concludes by outlining the specific research questions that guide the investigation and the overall objectives the study aims to achieve.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

1. **Theoretical Foundations:** This chapter establishes the theoretical underpinnings of the study. It explores key concepts and theories related to PSTE program management, drawing on learning theories (constructivism, behaviorism), human capital theory, systems theory, and Total Quality Management (TQM).
2. **Existing Research:** The chapter provides a comprehensive review of existing literature on PSTE program management. It examines relevant research on planning, implementation, quality assurance, and quality control mechanisms within PSTE programs. This section identifies knowledge gaps and areas where the current study can contribute new insights.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

1. **Research Design:** This chapter justifies the chosen research methodology, explaining why a qualitative case study approach is best suited for investigating PSTE program management in Ghana.
2. **Data Collection:** This section details the specific methods used for data collection, such as interviews with stakeholders, document analysis of program materials, and classroom observations. The chapter clarifies the sampling strategy and participant selection process.
3. **Data Analysis:** Here, the chapter outlines the techniques used to analyze the collected data. This may include thematic analysis for interview transcripts and document review findings.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

1. **Presentation of Findings:** This chapter presents the key findings of the study, organized thematically based on the research questions and objectives. It provides a detailed account of the data analysis results, including qualitative data (e.g., interview excerpts) and quantitative data (if applicable).
2. **Interpretation and Integration with Literature:** This section delves deeper into the meaning of the findings. It interprets the results in light of the existing literature reviewed in Chapter 2, drawing connections and identifying areas of convergence or divergence.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

1. **Summary of Findings:** This chapter begins by summarizing the key takeaways from the research, reiterating the most significant aspects of the study's results.
2. **Implications for PSTE Management:** The chapter then explores the implications of the findings for PSTE program management in Ghana. It discusses how the research can inform improvements in planning, implementation, quality assurance, and quality control practices. This section draws upon the theoretical framework established in Chapter 2 to strengthen the discussion.
3. **Limitations and Future Research:** The chapter acknowledges the limitations of the study, such as the scope of the research or potential biases. It concludes by outlining recommendations for future research endeavors that can build upon the findings of this study and continue to explore the multifaceted issue of teacher quality in Ghana's PSTE system.
4. **The final chapter** provides a concluding overview of the entire dissertation. It restates the problem statement, summarizes the key findings and their significance, and reiterates the study's contribution to knowledge and practice. This chapter offers a final reflection on the importance of improving teacher quality in Ghana and the potential impact this research can have on achieving that goal.

References

1. This section provides a complete list of all the references cited throughout the dissertation, ensuring proper academic credit is given to the sources used. This structure ensures a logical flow of information, guiding the reader from understanding the context and problem to exploring potential solutions and future considerations. Each chapter builds upon the previous one, culminating in a comprehensive analysis of teacher quality in Ghana's PSTE programs.