

SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS IN AFRICA

**POLICIES, PRACTICES,
CHALLENGES AND
FUTURE TRENDS**



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CHAPTER ONE

TEACHER EDUCATION

Overview

This chapter offers a critical perspective on the status of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) by examining teacher education programmes in Africa. The chapter contributes to the growing body of literature on three aspects. Firstly, it contrasts the concept of teacher training against that of teacher education. Secondly, the chapter explores the status of teacher education within the context of policy and practice in Africa with a focus on challenges within teacher education. Thirdly, the chapter discusses how improvements to teacher education can be made. The focus here is not on country-specific details; rather, the intention is to provide a broad overview of teacher education in Africa.

CHAPTER TWO

NEEDS AND CHALLENGES OF NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

Overview

In this chapter, a number of challenges that NQTs face in the conduct of their work are discussed. Effort is made to identify the issues affecting NQTs, and proposes ways and means to overcome these challenges in order for NQTs to overcome any barriers to their march towards professionalism. While some challenges are common to all teachers, there are many other assorted challenges that particularly afflict NQTs in the execution of their duties as teachers at initial deployment and early years of employment. Vast literature points to the conclusion that NQTs have varied challenges for which they are not equipped, and some of them struggle through their first few years. In view of this, teacher educators have advocated that NQTs should be equipped to handle some of the challenges during the pre-service programme (Boakye & Ampiah, 2017; Banja, 2016; Mulenga, 2015). Accordingly, in this chapter challenges are discussed along with what the ideal situation ought to be considering that these challenges often prohibit NQTs from performing their duties as teachers to the best of their abilities

CHAPTER THREE

INDUCTION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

Overview

This chapter examines the different meanings of the concept of induction. The focus of this chapter is to lay the background to the different forms of teacher support for newly qualified teachers. The support systems discussed are orientation, mentor ship and continuous professional development (CPD). These are discussed in chapters 4, 5 and 6 respectively. While the previous chapter has presented challenges that NQTs face settling in school and in the execution of their duties, chapter three suggests deferent support systems that schools can adopt to mitigate and alleviate the challenges that NQTs encounter in the work places to which they have been deployed for the very first time. The discussion in this chapter revolves around induction of NQTs as a process by which they learn and adjust to the dictates and expectations of a new role in a school. This arises out of the realization that the transition from teacher education to actual professional practice could prove to be a frustrating and difficult process with potential to negatively effect the professional development and disposition of newly qualified teachers. In addressing these concerns this chapter explains how the school seeks to transmit to the NQTs the values required of them to ft in and function effectively within the work place. The chapter further discusses many and varied goals of inducting teachers. These goals are all centred on offering professional support to NQTs straight from college/university. It is pointed out that although the individual circumstances of countries, schools and even teachers themselves differ from country to country, a number of common strategies can be employed to better the start of many NQTs' careers. In providing this induction, this chapter advocates the need to move beyond mere orientation to offering systematic support through mentorship and career-long help through CPD. The chapter makes the argument that schools are more likely to conduct orientation for NQTs, mentorship and CPD should equally be provided in recognition of the poor initial teacher education discussed in chapter one and the need brought by constant changes in education and technology respectively. In doing so, the chapter hopes to correct the notion that teachers have learned all they need to know during their initial teacher education.

CHAPTER FOUR

NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHER SUPPORT: ORIENTATION

Overview

This chapter discusses orientation as school-based support for NQTs. The chapter discusses different types and main components of orientation for a newly qualified teacher. The argument is made that where institutions offering teacher education programmes fall short of adequately equipping student teachers with the basic knowledge and skills which would enable them to teach effectively and competently, schools have the mandate and obligation to step in through a wellexecuted orientation process. This chapter discusses the need for a thorough introduction of NQTs to the different segments that affect their practice within and outside the school premises. This chapter opens the discussion of NQT support by examining orientation as one way of offering school-based support to NQTs and responding to their many challenges.

CHAPTER FIVE

NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHER SUPPORT: MENTORSHIP

Overview

This chapter pushes the argument that mentoring is a central activity during NQT induction. It discusses mentorship as one of the ways that can be used to help NQTs to develop the ability to overcome the challenges discussed in chapter 2. Additionally, the chapter presents the agenda for a mentoring policy and programme that should be integrated with other new teacher support policies and programmes. It discusses the need for NQT support beyond orientation. It makes the argument that orientation is an introductory stage in the induction of a newly qualified teacher. Orientation, as discussed in the previous chapter, marks the beginning of an induction process for a NQT to enable them know all that is expected of them as new entrants in the system. Mentoring provides more than orientation. Accordingly, the chapter discusses a long list of benefits associated with mentoring that accrue to different stakeholders such as NQTs themselves, veteran teachers, the pupils and the school as an organisation.

CHAPTER SIX

NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHER SUPPORT: CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Overview

This chapter addresses a very important aspect in the process of education provision within the lifelong learning context. This chapter discusses the role of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in supporting newly qualified teachers. The concept of CPD is discussed from the historical background and how it found itself in education. The chapter combines a treatise of both formal-based CPD (implying continuous formal qualifications) and informal and non-formal based CPD activities. Although CPD in a secondary school may include both new and old academic staff at different levels, the focus in this chapter is on newly qualified teachers. The chapter addresses the need to continue offering support to NQTs beyond pre-service preparation to include the on-going support of teachers throughout their professional lives. In this chapter, the focus is on some of the pertinent issues that need to be addressed when planning for successful implementation of continuous professional development (CPD) activities in a secondary school. This chapter provides information for head teachers and heads of subject department in schools who have the responsibility of planning and running CPD programmes for their teachers and discusses the rationale, benefits and challenges thereof. While the existence of informal CPD is acknowledged (Bernadine, 2019), this chapter focuses on formal CPD.

Citation

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