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ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME BY 2013/2014 FINAL YEAR STUDENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA, GHANA

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ABSTRACT

The crucial role of internships in teacher education has made a lot of institutions of higher learning like UEW to adopt internship as an important component of their curricula with the view of providing opportunities to the students to gain theoretical and practical experience for their future careers. This study investigated the perception of 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, on the Student Internship Programme (SIP) they undertook in the first semester of the 2013/2014 academic year. The purposive sampling technique was used to select all 209 students for the study. However, 188 students were used for the study because 21 students did not return their questionnaire. The findings revealed that generally, the students were uncertain as to the kind of support they were given by their partnership schools. However, they generally agreed that they gained adequate instructional skills from their mentors to assist them in the “real world”. Even though the students generally disagreed that they experienced challenges, they specifically indicated their agreement that the one semester SIP was inadequate. There was no significant difference in the views of the students on the instructional skills gained in terms of gender and the type of basic school (public or private) internship was undertaken. Among the suggestions is that adequate orientation should be given to students before they embark on the internship programme. Also, the university should ensure that all headteachers and mentors are regularly trained and oriented for the programme.

Keywords: Assessment, Challenges, Instructional skills, Interns, Student internship programme (SIP), Support.

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Contribution/ Originality

This study is one of very few studies which have investigated the views of final year students of UEW, Ghana, on SIP, especially when the period of internship was reduced from one academic year to one semester in 2012.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is noted by [Feldman \(2002\)](#) that the context within which organizations and professions (including teaching) are managed and administered continues to change, making it gain a lot of attention which according to [Baruch \(2004\)](#) has made careers become repositories of information, knowledge, skills, expertise and relationship networks gained through an evolving sequence of experiences over a period of time ([Pinho et al., 2005](#)). The worldwide notion that education is the major, sure and potent key for the sustainable development of nations makes Ghana put a premium on Teacher Education as one of the most important aspects of education in every country ([Osei-Owusu et al., 2013](#)). Through classroom education, people are provided with specific knowledge and skills that help them in developing their general reasoning and improvement in productivity and income. Teaching is the process of helping people to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, idea, and to appreciate the knowledge gained. Thus, [Owusu-Mensah \(2002\)](#) argues that teaching plays a pivotal role in Ghana's educational system, and so teachers must effect positive changes in their students. Hence, teachers must be properly trained for professional efficiency and effectiveness. A lot of countries have been able to address many of their challenges through effective classroom instruction activities. As a result, such nations see teaching practice as an important component of teacher preparation. In Ghana, a lot of importance is attached to teaching practice in teacher education colleges and universities. The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) is one of the teacher education universities which among other things, seek to train competent professional teachers for all levels of education. Becoming a teacher requires one to be knowledgeable in the subject content and go through a professional preparation to make the prospective teacher become competent in the art of teaching.

Most institutions of higher learning have adopted internship as a major factor in the curricula and have pursued it as a viable procedure for bridging the theoretical world of academia and the practical world of industry ([Chen et al., 2011](#)). Internship has therefore been playing a crucial role in education over the past decade because it has a lot of advantages for students. These include students gaining experience and obtaining career-related direction ([Tackett et al., 2001](#); [Bukaliya, 2012](#)). It must be pointed out that the knowledge and skills gained by student-teachers of UEW in their training to become competent teachers may not be complete if such trainee teachers do not experience particular qualities of life in classrooms, school and communities. Hence, at UEW, trainee teachers go through a Pre-internship Seminar ("On-campus" Teaching Practice) during the second semester of the third year programme. This is a simulated classroom situation where teacher trainees role play as teachers to their classmates under the supervision of lecturers. The

first semester of the fourth year is used for the “Student Internship Programme” (SIP) which is also known as “Off-campus” Teaching Practice. At UEW, the SIP is a requirement for the award of a degree just as the project work. Hence, if a student does not pass the SIP, no degree will be awarded to the student.

One of the key experiences that distinguish professional and non-professional teachers is practice teaching or internship (Osei-Owusu *et al.*, 2013). This clearly shows that quality education does not only lie in the quality of ideas and programmes but rather it depends on the availability of qualified teachers and their preparedness to offer quality teaching (Mensah, 1995). The future of any nation depends on the quality of its teachers, and it also shows the relevant role of teachers and teacher education programmes in the development of a nation. Internship programmes have been acknowledged for integrating classroom education with practical experience which helps graduates to develop not only their professional knowledge, but also their professional skills. Thus, internship experience is very essential in helping students develop self-recognition, positive attitude, and encourage social relationships and practical skills. Through internship, students (including teacher trainees) are well-prepared for the real world of work and the abilities learned through internship are necessary for their future success (Chen *et al.*, 2011).

In the 2002/2003 academic year, UEW adopted a year-long internship model of teacher preparation as part of a larger re conceptualisation and restructuring of the University’s teacher education programme until 2012 when the duration was changed to one semester. The SIP is school-based, and a supervised, clinical field experience that constitutes the final segment of a four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) teacher preparation programme. This practicum seeks to provide the teaching profession with graduates who are more aware of the many roles performed by the practicing teacher, having been exposed to the conditions encountered by these teachers in a supportive, collegial environment. With this model, the practicum is monitored by supervisors from the university, but mentors in the partnership schools are responsible for the practicum (Centre for Teacher Development and Action Research (CETDAR), 2009; Asante, 2011). It is however difficult to say that since 2012, UEW student-teachers who undergo the SIP gain adequate skills and experience within the one semester duration. Thus, one wonders if the SIP is organized in the way it should be, and whether the one semester duration is enough to produce teachers to carry out the duties as expected of them. Again, studies have not been conducted on the quality of professional learning opportunities for UEW interns, especially when the duration was changed from one academic year to one semester. It is based on these that we saw the need to conduct this study to find out the instructional skills gained by the 2013/2014 final year student teachers of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, and the challenges they went through during their SIP.

This study has the potential of contributing to literature and knowledge on mentoring in teacher education and development in the context of Ghana. It is our hope that the findings from the study will be beneficial in identifying the factors that enhance or hinder the support

partnership schools give to student-teachers on internship. Similarly, the instructional skills gained by the interns, and the challenges they face will be identified through the findings of the study. This will help inform any re-conceptualisation and restructuring of the SIP at UEW. Again, we envisage the findings of the study providing a guide to the administration of the partnership schools on the support that they could offer the interns to create and maintain functional relationships that will enhance professional learning and change. Last but not least, we strongly believe that the findings may contribute to knowledge and literature on student internship issues, especially in the context of UEW, Ghana. This may form the basis for further researches in the area of SIP at UEW and other institutions that undertake SIP. The following questions and hypotheses therefore guided this study:

1. To what extent were 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW supported by their partner schools?
 2. To what extent were instructional skills gained by 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW during their SIP?
 3. What challenges were faced by 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW during their SIP?
 4. What suggestions are given by 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW to improve the SIP?
- H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the views of 2013/2014 final year male and female students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW on the instructional skills gained during their SIP.
 - H_{02} : There is no significant difference in the views of 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW on the instructional skills gained during the SIP at public and private basic schools.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Various studies show the mismatch between the quality of graduates (including graduate teachers) produced and market demand, leading to the efforts of educational institutions and employers to close these gaps through the introduction of internship programmes (Bukaliya, 2012). For Chen *et al.* (2011) internship is a process in which students are involved in real work situations to provide opportunities for them to establish career development goals. This makes Dwamena (2010) to intimate that “internship is a bridge for students to connect the academic present and the professional future”. The SIP model of UEW seeks to ensure that quality teachers with the right knowledge, effective pedagogical skills, and the right dispositions towards teaching are produced for schools. The integral components for the achievement of educational goals of UEW’s SIP are preparing and supporting the interns. In this direction, most of the headteachers of schools and colleges have been educated and trained to help in the preparation of the student-teachers through the SIP. Thus, the students undertaking UEW’s SIP are assumed to have the

chance of learning and doing so many things through the help of mentors and headteachers of partnership schools (CETDAR, 2009; Dwamena, 2010). It was found out from a study that the internship programme enabled interns to learn the art of teaching through their mentors. The interns indicated that their mentors helped them to reflect on their own teaching and identified the areas of their professional development and improvement (Dwamena, 2010).

Commenting on the benefits of internship programmes, Lam and Ching (2007) point out that internship is a central part of careers of students and as such they are likely to impact positively on the students. Begs *et al.* (2008) therefore postulate that internships provide learning opportunities through which undergraduates experience professional practice and activities associated with knowledge application (Chen *et al.*, 2011; Bukaliya, 2012). Through internships, students experience real life situations and professional development. Internships help in the understanding of the theories of classroom learning. These outlined benefits ultimately, may pave the way for permanent employment after graduation, and provide an in-depth comprehension of actual work practice, and become reflective teachers (Cook *et al.*, 2004; Dwamena, 2010).

Various factors may influence the nature and quality of an internship programme. Some studies show that long periods for internship are considered appropriate by interns (Mihail, 2006) because the limited time an internship lasts does not permit the interns to become fully functional employees since there is not so much to take in for them (Bukaliya, 2012). In a study, Dwamena (2010) found out that some of the interns complained that much of the work required of them by their mentors was far more than what they were expected to do. Scandura and Williams (2002) thus argue that mentoring relationships during internship programmes could become dysfunctional in terms of overdependence, resentment, deception or harassment. Supervision of interns is seen as a challenge because there is inadequate supply of qualified staff or mentors to supervise interns. Another challenge faced during internship programmes stems from mentor or mentee work and life demands, costs or simply scheduling problems (Pinho *et al.*, 2005). Most SIPs are career development programmes and as such interns are not paid. The implication is that such interns most of the times bear the cost of their accommodation, feeding, transportation, stationery and other material resources needed to enhance their work. This presents a lot of financial hardships on the interns (Dwamena, 2010).

3. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was used for the study because it seeks to provide accurate descriptions of the characteristics of a situation or phenomenon, look out for cause-and-effect relationships, and describe the existing variables in a given situation and, sometimes, the relationship that exists among those variables (Johnson and Christensen; 2012). All 209 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, for the 2013/2014 academic year were purposively sampled and used for the study to find out their views on the one semester SIP which started in September 2013 and ended in December 2013. The questionnaire used in collecting

data for the study was validated by some professors and senior research fellows of University of Education, Winneba (UEW), Ghana, and their comments helped to improve the items in it. The data collection instrument was pre-tested with 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Social Studies Education, UEW, Ghana, who had also returned from the SIP. The reliability co-efficient obtained from the pretest analysis was 0.83 (standardized item alpha), which falls within the accepted range of more or equal to 0.70 (Dörnyei and Taguchi, 2010). Two hundred and nine (209) questionnaires were distributed, but 188 were correctly filled returned. This indicates a return rate of 89.95% (approximately, 90.0%).

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In coding and analysing the data obtained from the questionnaire, the IBM Version 20 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. Frequency, mean and standard deviation were used in analyzing the research questions while the t-test was used to analyse the hypothesis to determine if there were no significant differences in the views of the male and female respondents on instructional skills gained and challenges faced during the SIP.

4.1. Analysis of Bio-Data

The data in Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents in terms of gender, type of school internship was done, and the level that the interns taught.

Table-1. Distribution of Respondents

Gender/Level Type of school	Primary				Junior High School				Total	
	Male		Female		Male		Female		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Public	25	13.3	20	10.6	78	41.5	22	11.7	145	77.1
Private	9	4.8	16	8.5	16	8.5	2	1.1	43	22.9
Total	34	18.1	36	19.2	94	50.0	24	12.7	188	100.0

Source: Fieldwork (May, 2014)

From the data in the table it is seen that out of the 188 students used for the study, 145 (77.1%) had their SIP in public basic schools while 43 (22.9%) were in private basic schools. Of the number of students who were in public basic schools, 25(13.3%) male and 20 (10.6%) female interns had their SIP in public primary schools while 78 (41.5%) male and 22 (11.7%) female interns had theirs in public junior high schools. Similarly, 9 (4.8%) males and 16 (8.5%) females had their SIP in private primary schools while 16 (8.5%) males and 2 (1.1%) females were in private junior high schools for their SIP. This means that 70 (37.3%) students made up of 34 (18.1%) males and 36 (19.2%) females had their SIP in primary schools. Again, 118 (62.7%) students comprising 94 (50.0%) males and 24 (12.7%) females were in junior high schools for their SIP.

4.2. Analysis of Research Question 1

To what extent were 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW supported by their partner schools?

It could be realized from the data in Table 2 that the respondents agreed that head teachers, mentors and the entire staff of the school received them well and were ready to work with them (WM = 4.57; St. D. = 0.66), and that they were given the recommended number of teaching periods (WM = 4.07; St. D. = 1.20). They also agreed that their mentors were accessible and worked with mentees in a collaborative manner (WM = 4.29; St. D. = 0.94), and mentors showed professional competence and gave constructive feedback after each lesson (WM = 4.25; St. D. = 1.00). The respondents agreed that they were given the opportunity to participate in all co-curricular activities organised by the partnership schools (WM = 4.51; St. D. = 0.84). It is observed from the data in Table 2 that the respondents were uncertain they had adequate orientation to enable them fit well in the school (WM = 3.73; St. D. = 1.23), and always had pre-observation and post-observation discussions with their mentors (WM = 3.89; St. D. = 1.22). The respondents were uncertain their mentors modeled effective teaching techniques and strategies (WM = 3.90; St. D. = 1.03), and gave them the opportunity to express their views on issues during staff meetings (WM = 3.65, St. D. = 1.32).

Table-2. Support Given to Interns by Partnership Schools

Type of Support Given	Response							
	SA	A	U	D	SD	WM	St. D	I
The headteacher, mentor and entire staff received me and were ready to work with me	119	63	3	1	2	4.57	0.66	A
I was given adequate orientation to enable me fit well in the school	53	86	9	25	15	3.73	1.23	U
I was given the recommended number of teaching periods	90	62	6	19	11	4.07	1.20	A
I always had pre-observation and post-observation discussions with my mentor	70	75	10	19	14	3.89	1.22	U
My mentor modeled effective teaching techniques and strategies	51	100	13	16	8	3.90	1.03	U
My mentor was accessible and worked with me in a collaborative manner	93	76	4	10	5	4.29	0.94	A
My mentor gave me constructive feedback after each lesson and showed professional competence	93	72	6	11	6	4.25	1.00	A
The school provided me with adequate TLMs to enhance my teaching	17	46	20	64	41	2.65	1.31	D
I was given the opportunity to express my views on issues during staff meetings	59	71	9	32	17	3.65	1.32	U
I was given the opportunity to participate in all co-curricular activities in the school	123	51	4	7	3	4.51	0.84	A
My concerns were adequately addressed by the headteacher and the entire staff of the school	29	94	30	28	7	3.59	1.04	U

Notes: SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; U = Undecided; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree; WM = Weighted mean; St. D. = Standard deviation; I = Interpretations; 5.0 = Strongly Agree; 4.0-4.9 = Agree; 3.0-3.9 = Undecided; 2.0-2.9 = Disagree; 1.0-1.9 = Strongly Disagree; Mean of Means = 3.92; Overall St. D = 1.07; Source: Fieldwork (May, 2014)

They were also uncertain their concerns were adequately addressed by the head teacher and the entire staff of the school ($WM = 3.59$; $St. D. = 1.04$). It is realized from the table that the respondents disagreed that their partnership schools provided them with adequate Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) to enhance their teaching ($WM = 2.65$; $St. D. = 1.31$). Generally, the 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, were uncertain about the support they were given by their partnership schools (Mean of Means = 3.92; overall $St. D. = 1.07$).

It is good to note from the data in Table 2 that as many as 182 (96.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the administration and staff of their various partnership schools received them and were ready to work with the interns. Again, it is encouraging that 152 (80.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were given the recommended number of teaching periods during their SIP. Similarly, 169 (89.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their mentors were accessible and worked with them in a collaborative manner while 165 (87.8%) strongly agreed or agreed that their mentors showed professionalism and gave constructive feedback to mentees after each lesson. It is also interesting to note that as many as 174 (92.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were offered the opportunity to participate in all co-curricular in the school. These findings tell the importance most headteachers, mentors, and the entire staff of the partnership schools attached to the specialized help needed by interns to succeed in the teaching. It hints of the headteachers' and mentors' understanding of the assertion of [Chen et al. \(2011\)](#) that internship is profession-oriented and seeks to train and prepare students with work-related skills and expertise that concern their future career. It also shows how committed most headteachers and mentors of the partnership schools are in ensuring that the SIP of UEW, Ghana, achieves its desired goals or objectives. The worry however, is that slightly more than half (55.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their partnership schools did not provide them with enough teaching and learning materials to enhance their teaching. Generally, for the 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana to be uncertain about the support given to them by the partnership schools during the SIP probably tells that the expectations of the mentees on the support to be given by the partnership schools were not fully met.

4.3. Analysis of Research Question 2

To what extent were instructional skills gained by 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW during their SIP?

A look at the data in Table 3 indicates that generally, the respondents agreed that all the instructional skills outlined were gained during their SIP (Mean of means = 4.49; Overall $St. D. = 0.70$). Thus, the respondents agreed that they gained knowledge and skills in lesson planning and subject matter organisation ($WM = 4.38$; $St. D. = 0.66$), setting "SMART" lesson objectives that align with instructional strategies ($WM = 4.43$; $St. D. = 0.77$), relating lessons to pupils' relevant

previous knowledge and life experiences ($WM = 4.58$; $St. D. = 0.75$), using effective questioning techniques to engage pupils in critical thinking and problem solving ($WM = 4.33$; $St. D. = 0.65$), adopting teaching techniques that modify and extend pupils' learning ($WM = 4.33$; $St. D. = 0.68$), and maintaining positive rapport with pupils and respecting diversity among them ($WM = 4.62$; $St. D. = 0.59$). Other instructional skills gained by the respondents during their SIP are knowing each pupil as an individual and maintaining classroom routines effectively ($WM = 4.51$; $St. D. = 0.76$), communicating with confidence and enthusiasm ($WM = 4.70$; $St. D. = 0.55$), using oral/written communication at the pupils' level of understanding ($WM = 4.64$; $St. D. = 0.62$), monitoring pupils' participation and progress through immediate and constructive feedback ($WM = 4.40$; $St. D. = 0.71$), using formal and informal assessment to assess pupils' learning before, during and after instruction ($WM = 4.26$; $St. D. = 0.91$), and basing evaluation on instructional objectives ($WM = 4.60$; $St. D. = 0.71$).

Table-3. Instructional Skills Gained by Interns

Type of Instructional Skills Gained	Response							
	SA	A	U	D	SD	WM	St. D	I
Knowledge and skills in lesson planning and subject matter organisation	84	96	4	3	1	4.38	0.66	A
Setting "SMART" lesson objectives that align with instructional strategies	100	78	5	1	4	4.43	0.77	A
Relating lessons to pupils' relevant previous knowledge and life experiences	127	51	5	2	3	4.58	0.75	A
Using effective questioning techniques to engage pupils in critical thinking and problem solving	92	89	4	2	1	4.43	0.65	A
Adopting teaching techniques that modify and extend pupils' learning	80	93	13	1	1	4.33	0.68	A
Maintaining positive rapport with pupils and respecting diversity among them	124	58	4	2	0	4.62	0.59	A
Knowing each pupil as an individual and maintaining classroom routines effectively	112	69	0	4	3	4.51	0.76	A
Communicating with confidence and enthusiasm	138	46	3	0	1	4.70	0.55	A
Using oral/written communication at the pupils' level of understanding	130	53	2	2	1	4.64	0.62	A
Monitoring pupils' participation and progress through immediate and constructive feedback	93	82	9	3	1	4.40	0.71	A
Using formal and informal assessment to assess pupils' learning before, during and after instruction	84	85	9	3	7	4.26	0.91	A
Basing evaluation on instructional objectives	129	50	4	3	2	4.60	0.71	A

Notes: SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; U = Undecided; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree; WM = Weighted mean; St. D. = Standard deviation; I = Interpretations; 5.0 = Strongly Agree; 4.0-4.9 = Agree; 3.0-3.9 = Undecided; 2.0-2.9 = Disagree; 1.0-1.9 = Strongly Disagree; Mean of Means = 4.49; Overall St. D = 0.70;

Source: Fieldwork (May, 2014)

The inference one can make from this is that 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, had a wide range of knowledge, skills, and experience in teaching during their SIP to propel them to perform very well when they are posted

to various basic schools in Ghana to teach as professionals. This underscores *Begs et al. (2008)* assertion that through internship programmes That is, through internship programmes, students gain the chance to apply knowledge learned in the classroom and gain practical experience of work and society. A study by *Mihail (2006)* showed that internship enables students to develop their interpersonal and communication skills, time management, teamwork, self-confidence, self-motivation, special knowledge, and ability to prioritise tasks. This is why *Chen et al. (2011)* posit that internship is profession-oriented and seeks to train and prepare students with work-related skills and expertise that concerns their future career.

4.4. Analysis of Research Question 3

What challenges were faced by 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW during their SIP?

Table-4. Challenges Faced by Interns

Challenges Experienced	Response							
	SA	A	U	D	SD	WM	St. D.	I
Lack of administrative support from partnership schools	11	32	16	73	56	2.30	1.23	D
Poor attitude of partnership schools towards UEW SIP	12	26	18	77	55	2.27	1.21	D
One semester SIP not adequate	125	19	3	22	19	4.11	1.43	A
Teaching more than the recommended periods	37	38	7	69	37	2.84	1.46	D
Poor mentoring skills from mentor	17	17	20	64	70	2.19	1.28	D
Inadequate supervision of my work by mentor	9	32	4	76	67	2.15	1.22	D
Poor working relationship with mentor	6	16	5	77	84	1.85	1.04	SD
Difficulty in getting a trained mentor	17	25	6	56	84	2.12	1.35	D

Notes: SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; U = Undecided; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree; WM = Weighted mean; St. D. = Standard deviation; I = Interpretations; 5.0 = Strongly Agree; 4.0-4.9 = Agree; 3.0-3.9 = Undecided; 2.0-2.9 = Disagree; 1.0-1.9 = Strongly Disagree; Mean of Means = 2.48; Overall St. D. = 1.28; Source: Fieldwork (May, 2014)

The data in Table 4 reveals that the respondents disagreed that lack of administrative support from partnership schools (*WM = 2.30; St. D. = 1.23*), poor attitude of partnership schools towards UEW SIP (*WM = 2.27; St. D. = 1.21*), and teaching more than the recommended number of teaching periods (*WM = 2.84; St. D. = 1.46*) were challenges they faced during their SIP. They also disagreed that they faced challenges such as poor mentoring skills from mentor (*WM = 2.19; St. D. = 1.28*), inadequate supervision by mentor (*WM = 2.15; St. D. = 1.22*), and difficulty in getting a trained mentor (*WM = 2.12; St. D. = 1.35*). The respondents strongly disagreed that they experienced poor working relationship with their mentor (*WM = 1.85; St. D. = 1.04*) but agreed that the one semester SIP currently organized by UEW is inadequate (*WM = 4.11; St. D. = 1.43*). Generally, the respondents disagreed that they experienced challenges during their one

semester SIP. This is seen from a mean of means scores of 2.48 and 1.28 for mean of means and overall standard deviation respectively.

It is refreshing to note that the respondents strongly disagreed that there was a challenge of poor working relationship with their mentors. This is in line with the data in Table 2 which shows that 161 (85.6%) of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that they experienced poor working relationship as a challenge of the SIP. One of the numerous challenges of internship programmes is negative relationships between mentors and their mentees. For these pre-service teachers (mentees or interns) to understand the rudiments of the teaching profession through UEW's SIP, there should be a very good working relationship between them and their mentors. The finding suggests that the personality, gender, the personal style of the mentor and the needs of the mentees might have greatly helped in this good working relationship (Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002). It is also essential to point out that the respondents disagreed that they taught more than the recommended number of teaching periods during their SIP. This corroborates respondents' agreement that as mentees, they were given the required number of teaching periods (See Table 2). It however differs from Dwamena (2010) finding that some of the interns of UEW complained that much of the work required of them by their mentors was far more than what they were expected to do. Perhaps, the reason for this contradiction is that over the years, headteachers and mentors of partnership schools have been given a lot of orientation on the SIP organized by UEW, hence, their understanding of what mentees are required to do.

Another key issue from the data in Table 4 is that as many as 144 (76.6%) of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the one semester UEW SIP is not enough. It could therefore be deduced that 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, are willing to have a longer internship period which will make them learn a lot. This is why some studies have revealed that the limited time for an internship does not provide the opportunity for the interns to become fully functional employees since there is not so much to take in for them (Bukaliya, 2012). Dwamena's (2010) study showed that majority (95%) of the interns expressed interest in the one academic year SIP since it made them gain classroom experiences, lesson planning skills, skills in preparing to teach, instructional time management skills, and questioning and pedagogical skills. What this means is that there is the possibility of the 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, not having adequate time to learn a lot about the science and art of teaching. Other challenges indicated by the interns are poor attendance to school by pupils resulting in frequent remedial lessons, inadequate textbooks for pupils, difficulty in acquiring and preparing adequate teaching and learning materials for effective teaching and learning, poor orientation or induction programme for mentees by partnership schools, and difficulty in securing decent and affordable accommodation. The rest are difficulty in controlling class, and marking of exercises as a result of large class sizes, interns or mentees not allowed to participate in staff meetings, and no or unknown avenue(s) for interns to channel their grievances to CETDAR, UEW.

4.5. Analysis of Research Question 4

What suggestions are given by 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW to improve the SIP?

From the data in Table 5, the respondents agreed that there should be well organized and frequent workshops for all stakeholders (*WM* = 4.02; *St. D.* = 1.31), there must be effective and regular orientation programmes for mentors (*WM* = 4.10; *St. D.* = 1.17), and effective supervision of mentors' and interns' work by headteachers, and officers from CETDAR, UEW, Ghana (*WM* = 4.16; *St. D.* = 0.97). The respondents agreed that supervision of interns by mentors should be effective and regular (*WM* = 4.30; *St. D.* = 0.80), pre and post observation conferences should be effectively used by mentors and mentees (*WM* = 4.20; *St. D.* = 1.03), and collaborative and cordial relationship between mentors and interns should be established (*WM* = 4.43; *St. D.* = 0.80). Also, the respondents agreed that there should be adequate administrative and professional support from partnership schools to interns (*WM* = 4.27; *St. D.* = 1.07), extension of UEW SIP period from one semester to two semesters (*WM* = 4.20; *St. D.* = 1.33), and prompt payment of mentors' allowance should be made (*WM* = 4.03; *St. D.* = 1.40).

Table-5. Suggestions by Interns

Suggestions	Response							
	SA	A	U	D	SD	WM	St. D	I
Well organized and frequent workshops on UEW SIP for all stakeholders	97	48	8	20	15	4.02	1.31	A
Effective and regular orientation programmes for mentors	93	56	12	18	9	4.10	1.17	A
Effective supervision of mentors' and interns' work by headteachers, and officers from CETDAR, UEW	82	74	16	12	4	4.16	0.97	A
Effective and regular supervision of interns by mentors	83	90	7	5	3	4.30	0.80	A
Effective use of pre and post observation conferences by mentors and mentees	86	79	6	8	9	4.20	1.03	A
Establishment of collaborative and cordial relationship between mentors and interns	103	73	4	5	3	4.43	0.80	A
Adequate administrative and professional support from partnership schools to interns	100	61	9	9	9	4.24	1.07	A
Extension of UEW SIP period from one semester to two semesters	124	24	11	12	17	4.20	1.33	A
Adequate and prompt payment of mentors' allowance	108	32	16	9	23	4.03	1.40	A

Notes: SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; U = Undecided; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree; WM = Weighted mean; St. D. = Standard deviation; I = Interpretations; 5.0 = Strongly Agree; 4.0-4.9 = Agree; 3.0-3.9 = Undecided; 2.0-2.9 = Disagree; 1.0-1.9 = Strongly Disagree; Mean of Means = 4.19; Overall St. D = 1.10; Source: Fieldwork (May, 2014)

The desire of to extend the UEW SIP to two semesters confirms Dwamena (2010) findings that majority of interns from the Winneba campus of UEW, Ghana, preferred a year-long

internship programme. Other key suggestions given by respondents are adequate orientation for mentees by CETDAR of UEW, Ghana, before the SIP, improvement in orientation given to mentees by partnership schools to enable mentees know a lot about their rights and responsibilities in the schools, provision of adequate and relevant TLMs by partnership schools used by interns to promote effective teaching and learning, and collaboration between CETDAR of UEW and partnership schools to secure decent but affordable accommodation for mentees. The rest are opportunities for mentees to be part of staff meetings organised by partnership schools to enable them learn administrative skills, training of all headteachers and mentors of partnership schools and regular orientation of for all stakeholders of SIP organised by UEW, regular visit to partnership schools by CETDAR of UEW to observe and verify some of the challenges mentees face during SIP, and allowances for mentees during the SIP.

4.6. Analysis of First Hypothesis (H₀₁)

The first hypothesis sought to find out if there was any significant difference in the responses given by 2013/2014 final year male and female students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW on the instructional skills gained during their SIP. Table 6 helps in the analysis of the first hypothesis.

Table-6. T-Test Results for Instructional Skills Gained by Male and Female Interns

	Sex	Mean (St. D)		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
Instructional Skills Gained	Male(128)	4.490 (0.467)	Equal variances assumed	0.238	0.626	0.009	186	0.993
	Female (60)	4.489 (0.604)	Equal variances not assumed			0.008	93.328	0.994

Source: Fieldwork (May, 2014)

The data in Table 6 shows a summary of the independent-sample *t*-test analysis conducted to find out the significant difference in the views of 2013/2014 final year male and female students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, on the instructional skills gained during their SIP. The result shows that there was no significant difference in the responses of male students (Mean = 4.490, Standard Deviation = 0.467) and female students (Mean = 4.489, Standard Deviation = 0.604); $t(186) = 0.009$, $p = 0.993$ (2-tailed). Since $p > 0.05$, it could be said that there was no significant difference in the views of 2013/2014 final year male and female students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, on the instructional skills gained during their SIP. Hence, we failed to reject the hypothesis.

4.7. Analysis of Second Hypothesis (H₀₂)

The second hypothesis aimed at finding out if any significant difference existed in the views of 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW on the instructional skills gained during the SIP at public and private basic schools in Ghana. The data in Table 7 helps in addressing the second hypothesis.

Table-7. T-Test Results for Instructional Skills Gained by Interns in Public and Private Basic Schools

	Type of School	Mean (St. D)		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
Instructional Skills Gained	Public (145)	4.485 (0.513)	Equal variances assumed	0.482	0.488	-0.239	186	0.812
	Private (43)	4.506 (0.519)	Equal variances not assumed			-0.237	68.190	0.813

Source: Fieldwork (May, 2014)

From Table 7, the summary of the result of the independent-sample *t*-test analysis conducted shows that there was no significant difference in the responses of interns at public basic schools (Mean = 4.485, St. Deviation = 0.513) and private basic schools (Mean = 4.506, St. Deviation = 0.519); $t(186) = -0.239$, $p = 0.812$ (2-tailed). It is realised from the analysis that $p > 0.05$, hence, there was no significant difference in the views of 2013/2014 final year students of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, on the instructional skills gained during their SIP at public and private basic schools in Ghana. Thus, we failed to reject the hypothesis.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings from the study show that the SIP organised by CETDAR of UEW, Ghana, is very crucial in providing useful learning experience for interns because they gain a lot of practical skills in the teaching profession, and as such they are fully equipped to work in the real world with confidence and enthusiasm. It is clear from the study that the 2013/2014 interns of the Department of Basic Education, UEW, Ghana, experienced and gained a lot of skills in the teaching profession through the support and guidance of a mentor. Generally, the interns did not experience serious challenges during their SIP, and that the issues and challenges they faced were insignificant to condemn the overall concept of SIP of the University. It could thus, be concluded that the SIP of UEW, Ghana, is important and meets the criteria in the training and development of qualified and experienced teachers for pre-tertiary education in Ghana.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are made:

- CETDAR of UEW, Ghana, should regularly train and re-train mentors in the partnership schools to enable them become abreast with modern trends in mentoring so that they could effectively support and guide interns to acquire the required knowledge and experience in the teaching profession in order for the interns to fit very well in the teaching profession after graduation.
- Orientation organised by CETDAR of UEW, Ghana, for prospective interns should be intensified and made regular to enable the students understand all issues about the SIP. This will enable the students to clarify a lot of issues and erase all doubts before they embark on the programme.

- Open forum should be organised by CETDAR of UEW, Ghana, at the end of every internship year to enable all stakeholders discuss issues affecting the SIP. This will go a long way to deepen knowledge and expertise about the programme, and also address the challenges identified in the design, planning and implementation of the SIP.
- CETDAR of UEW, Ghana, should regularly visit partnership schools and intensify monitoring the activities of mentors and interns to ensure improvements that will help train and develop effective teachers for schools in Ghana.
- CETDAR of UEW, Ghana, and the partnership schools should collaborate and secure decent but affordable accommodation for interns. This will eliminate or reduce the troubles the interns go through in securing accommodation.
- Headteachers and staff of partnership schools of SIP of UEW, Ghana, should involve interns in staff meetings and other administrative duties to enable them learn administrative issues in schools. Regular orientation programmes should also be organised by headteachers and mentors for interns to enable them become fully aware of their responsibilities in the school.
- Headteachers of partnership schools of SIP of UEW, Ghana, should provide an avenue to support interns to procure and prepare adequate TLMs for effective teaching and learning. This is because majority of the interns from UEW are financially handicapped because they are not on study leave with pay. As a result of this, they find it difficult procuring materials to prepare TLMs to enhance their teaching.
- The Management of UEW, Ghana, should re-consider extending the internship period from one semester to two semesters since limited time for internship programmes does not allow interns to be fully functional since there is not so much to take in for them.

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