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## The Impact of Pre-Service Qualification of Teacher Trainees on Quality Education: A Case Study of the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Education (UTDBE) Program

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### **Abstract:**

*Education has been identified to be the main drive for development and it is an undeniable fact that the role of teachers in providing excellent education to a people is crucial.*

*Ghana like other nations around the world has signed to global treaties on development targets including the provision of education for all. For some time now, the government of Ghana; both past and present have made tremendous efforts to improving access to schooling and gender equity as per the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and now working even harder on sustaining such goals. However, the issue of quality has remained the biggest challenge, in that, reports still point to unsatisfactory performance in our basic schools, with particular reference to reading and writing. Many pupils and students, as the case may be, still struggle to read with grade-level understanding, while others fail to make it to higher levels of education from completing basic education. All of these have mostly been attributed to students acquiring poor grades from the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) being organized by the West African Examination Council (WAEC). One issue education planners and implementers have almost always failed to evaluate intensely is the quality of teachers being recruited into the Education Service. It's been said that good teachers produce good learners. Darling Hammond, (1997) intimates that the highest quality teachers are those most capable of helping their students learn and have deep mastery of both their subject matter and pedagogy. This paper analyses data collected by the National Inspectorate Board (NIB) of the Education ministry of Ghana in 2013 to determine the eligibility of participants recruited on the Untrained Teachers Basic Education (UTDBE) program, a program adopted by the Ghana government and supported by USAID to produce teachers to support deprived areas, where participants themselves originated from. Though the survey showed quite a positive picture, it also indicated quite worrying figures of ineligibility of participants, particularly on the academic dimension of the stated requirements; a reason for this discussion which seeks to identify some implications and the way forward.*

### **1. Overview**

Education has received global recognition as the main engine for development in every society, largely because a nation's human resources emanate from the kind of education her people obtain and for that matter, its quality cannot be compromised. Quality education attracts many differing definitions. Quality can be defined contextually, as contexts contribute to definitions of quality in varying countries. (Adams, 1993).

According to the United Nations Children's' Fund (UNICEF 2000), quality education includes five components including learners, environment, content, process and outcomes; all of which are equally important, and interdependent, thus influencing each other. This paper attempts to discuss pre-service qualification of teachers as an aspect of education process.

It is an undisputable fact that in every production situation where outcomes are major determinants of efficiency and effectiveness management experts prescribe, PROCESS, the means through which inputs are refined or broken down into useful outcomes as very crucial. Educational institutions can also be considered organizations, and they as well, go through production processes, with the teacher being the focal resource needed for the production of educational outcomes.

- UNICEF describes' process' one of their dimensions of quality education as the "process through which trained teachers use child-centered teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skillful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities." p4.

According to the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2005, two principles characterize most attempts to define quality in education: The first identifies learners' cognitive development as the major explicit objective of all education systems. The second

employs education's role in promoting values and attitudes of responsible citizenship and in nurturing creative and emotional development

Process, as described by UNICEF is how teachers and administrators use inputs (curricular, materials equipment etc.) to frame meaningful learning experiences for students. The role of teachers is one key factor in ensuring quality education. Darling Hammond, (1997) intimates that the highest quality teachers are those most capable of helping their students learn and have deep mastery of both their subject matter and pedagogy.

The teacher is therefore an integral part of education, as their inter-woven roles play to produce quality human capital for a nation right from the basic to higher levels. Focus is on the teacher at the basic level particularly due to the fact that learners' foundational processes in all domains are so important and can possibly dictate the pace of a person's learning, barring other factors as environment, sustainability and availability of learning materials. It is believed that quality basic education plays a foundational role in preparing quality students for higher education and for a solid human capital which every nation needs- quality human capital represents the greatest asset of every nation because it is the catalyst for every facet of national development,

Teachers are key to improving learning. They have a powerful impact on the quality of student learning. Quality learning is not only essential for meeting people's basic needs but fundamental in fostering the conditions for global peace and sustainable development.

The United Educational Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2015) however notes that many countries, particularly the developing nations are facing an acute shortage of qualified teachers.....and because of the scant qualifications needed to enter into the teaching profession, they suffer from low social and professional status.

Ghana has had quite a number of policies and programs with regard to Teacher Training since pre- independence days and through successive governments; one of such being the Policy framework -Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management(PTPDM) in Ghana (2012), drawn from the 2008 Education Act. 'The act calls for the establishment of a National Teaching Council (NTC) with the responsibility for setting professional standards and code of practice for professional development, registration and licensing of teachers. According to the PTPDM framework, section 10 of the 2008 Act stipulates that the NTC shall be responsible for establishing: a) The framework for employment of teachers, b) In-service education and training (INSET) c) and the periodic review of professional practice and ethical standards for teachers and teaching.', reiterating that the teacher development and management policy framework defines the areas and principles for achieving these goals of the 2008 Education Act.

The vision of the Pre-tertiary teacher education program in Ghana is to prepare teachers to enable them function effectively in the basic and second cycle schools in Ghana and to develop and nurture them to become reflective and proficient. Practitioners capable of providing quality education for all Ghanaian children.

In October 2012, the World Bank approved the Ghana Partnership for Education Grant (GPEG) of USD 75.5 million to support the priority areas of the Ghana ESP and AESOP. The project was declared effective on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2013. The major objective of the project was to improve the quality of planning, monitoring and delivery of basic education services in deprived districts. The Global Partnership for Education Fund (GPEF) was the primary funding source for the project. The World Bank (WB) was the Supervising Entity while the Ghana Education Service (GES) was the Implementing Agency.

One of the components of the GPEG project was the upgrading of up to 8,000 untrained teachers currently teaching in schools in the identified deprived areas. The number of districts described as "deprived" was 57. The vehicle for this teacher upgrading project was the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) program introduced by the Government in 2004.

In March 2013, during the Bank's supervision mission to the country, the World Bank and the GES sought the assistance of the National Inspectorate Board (NIB) to validate the list of untrained teachers currently enrolled on the UTDBE program under the GPEG project in the participating Colleges of Education. This assignment was predicated on reports emanating from the GES that some of the participants enrolled on the UTDBE program ostensibly did not meet the eligibility requirements for enrolment.

These were the findings of the validation exercise conducted in the participating Colleges of Education in the week of 22 – 26 April 2013. The Colleges of Education involved were:

1. AGOGO College of Education
2. ATEBUBU College of Education
3. MAMPONG Technical College of Education
4. OFINSO College of Education
5. PEKI College of Education
6. ST. MONICA'S College of Education
7. WIAWSO College of Education

## 2. Problem Statement

The role of quality education in national development cannot be overemphasized. It is said that quality teaching prepares the nation's workforce that ensures successful implementation of the economic and social programs of a nation to replenish its ageing human capital, and also enriches its youthful workforce with new, innovative ideas, technologies and skills every dynamic society needs for its economic and social development and survival in a harsh and competitive global market. It is general knowledge that for any educational system to flourish and achieve its goals the role of teachers has to be paramount- the quality of teachers in a nation's education system. It is the reason much focus must be on training (pre-service, and in-service), because of the fact that the quality of training teachers receives and subsequent consistent support for professional growth are the main requirements to guarantee full reap of teachers' potential in contributing to quality education.

According to the Education Management Information System (EMIS 2014/2015) of Ghana's Ministry of Education, 41 percent of teachers at the Crèche & nursery level of public schools are trained, 61.7 percent at the Kindergarten, 75.0 at the Primary and 87 percent at the Junior High school. Although there appears to be an improvement in the number of trained teachers, for instance, an improvement by 23.1 percent observed at the Crèche/nursery, 1.2 percent at the kindergarten, the primary level by 6.8 percent and the Junior High School by 4.0, as against 2013/2014 performance, there are still considerable implications for areas with low numbers of trained teachers. Regionally, we still have serious disparities; for instance, while the Eastern region exhibits the highest percentage of trained teachers (65 %), the Western region records the lowest figure of 44 %. As it may be observed in most African countries as well, there is inadequate supply of trained teachers, resulting in large-scale use of unqualified teachers, particularly at the primary school. Though policy makers and various shareholders have made tremendous effort to improve the situation, how helpful is that if significant numbers of teachers don't seem to possess the needed qualities to be able to teach skillfully in order for us to have the best of products from our education system? It is imperative for us to begin to look at the quality of trainees we admit and recruit into our school system. This research is an attempt to analyze data gathered on some participants on the UTDBE program by the National Inspectorate Board (NIB) of the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Ghana, and the implications on quality education.

### 3. Methodology

The principal instrument for the validation exercise was a survey questionnaire (see Appendix 1) designed to elicit the following information on the participants of the program: Full Name; Gender; Age; Educational/Academic Qualification (WAEC or professional examination results, with grades); Employment Status and Evidence of Placement on GES Payroll (School and District where employed as well as Staff ID). The development of the questionnaire was preceded by a request to the GES to furnish the NIB with relevant data and information on all the UTDBE candidates categorized under the College of Education where they are enrolled. The enrolment data furnished by TED/GES to the NIB prior to the commencement of the field work are summarized in Appendix 2. The information received by the NIB from the GES referred only to the untrained teachers enrolled on the UTDBE program in only the 7 Colleges of Education.

Seven separate teams of Lead Inspectors of the NIB travelled to each of the seven Colleges of Education to collect relevant data and information as well as conduct identity verification checks on all the UTDBE candidates. The field exercise also included face-to-face, one-on-one brief interviews with the candidates as well as due diligence discussions with the various college authorities.

### 4. Data Analysis

A total of 7,575 duly completed questionnaires were retrieved from the course participants at the 7 colleges of education. The number distributions of the UTDBE candidates are shown in Table 1. Also shown are the enrolment figures provided by the GES to the NIB prior to the field visits to the colleges.

College	GES/TED	Actual	Variance
AGOGO	1503	1077	-426
ATEBUBU	1460	890	-570
MAMPONGTECH	1428	1336	-92
OFINSO	1726	1466	-260
PEKI	623	916	+293
ST. MONICA'S	1272	1219	-53
WIAWSO	389	671	+282
<b>Total</b>	<b>8401</b>	<b>7575</b>	<b>-826</b>

Table 1: Differences between GES/TED and Actual (College Level) Enrollments, April 2013

Source: GES/TED and NIB Field Data

All the retrieved questionnaires were individually scrutinized and the data pertaining to each candidate entered into an excel spreadsheet in respect of each of the 7 colleges of education. The broadsheets capture the following data and information on each candidate:

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**Name; Gender; Age; Qualification; Staff ID; Region; District; Class Teaching; Eligibility; Remarks**

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From an extensive analysis of these primary data, the number of eligible and ineligible participants on the UTDBE program were disaggregated and categorized under different eligibility headings.

### 5. Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility or otherwise of the candidates was determined on the basis of the requirements for admission into the UTDBE program as stipulated by the Teacher Education Division (TED) of the GES. In brief, the criteria for the selection of untrained teachers for the program were as follows. According to TED/GES, the trainees must:

- Be currently teaching in basic schools under the GES
- Be on GES Payroll

- Be not more than 50 years as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012
- Possess any of the following academic qualifications
  - a. SSSCE (at least a pass in 4 subjects including English Language and Mathematics)
  - b. WASSCE (at least a pass in English Language and Mathematics and any other 2 subjects)
  - c. GCE 'O' Level (at least a pass in English Language and Mathematics and any other 2 subjects)
  - d. GCE 'A' Level
  - e. City and Guilds

## 6. Findings

### 6.1. Total Number of Eligible Trainees

The total number of eligible participants according to a strict application of the eligibility criteria is 3,395. This number does not include the number of trainees who claim that their placement on the GES payroll was being processed, which claim cannot be verified during the screening exercise.

### 6.2. Participants from Deprived Districts

Out of a total number of 6,061 participants from deprived districts, only 2,618 were qualified to be on the UTDBE program. Table 2 shows the detailed statistics on the deprived districts alone. The table provides data for only 56 of the 57 deprived districts; there were no enrolled untrained teachers from Amenfi West (in the Western Region) at the 7 colleges of education where the screening took place. Out of the 3443 ineligible participants from the deprived districts, 769 do not possess the requisite academic qualification, 2660 are not on the payroll, and 14 are over-age. The ineligibility criteria are mutually exclusive. In particular, where participants are noted as not having Staff ID numbers but with no reference to qualification, then such participants (on the face of the information they provided to the NIB) are deemed to possess the required qualification for enrolment.

### 6.3. Distribution by College of Education

The distribution of eligible and ineligible participants by college of education is shown in Table 2 below.

College	No. Eligible	No. Ineligible	Total
AGOGO	559	518	1077
ATEBUBU	417	473	890
MAMPONG TECH	326	1010	1336
OFINSO	573	893	1466
PEKI	341	575	916
ST. MONICA'S	704	515	1219
WIAWSO	475	196	671
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,395</b>	<b>4,180</b>	<b>7,575</b>

Table 2: Eligible and Ineligible Participants by college of education  
Source: NIB field data

The data reveals that only about 45% of the untrained teachers pursuing the UTDBE program in the 7 colleges of education were qualified to be enrolled. However, it is important to note that among the large number of ineligible participants are those who are not on the GES payroll but claim that their appointment letters are being processed for placement on the payroll. On the whole, the total number of trainees who do not have a Staff ID and therefore are not currently on the GES payroll is 3,193: The GES may have to verify these "being processed" claims. Trainees with genuine cases of delay in the regularization of their appointments could then be added to the list of eligible participants.

### 6.4. Distribution of Ineligible Participants by Selection Criteria

Participants who are ineligible because they are over-age, not on the GES payroll or do not meet the minimum academic requirements are shown in Table 3. Only 16 participants are more than 50 years old, while as many as 3,193 are not currently on the GES payroll and 971 do not meet the academic qualification requirements.

College	Over Age	Not On GES Payroll	By Academic Qualification
Agogo	6	411	101
Atebubu	0	329	144
Mampong Tech.	4	772	234
Offinso	1	746	146
Peki	3	339	233
St. Monica's	2	437	76
Wiawso	0	159	37
Total	16	3193	971

Table 3: Ineligible Participants by Categories  
Source: NIB field data

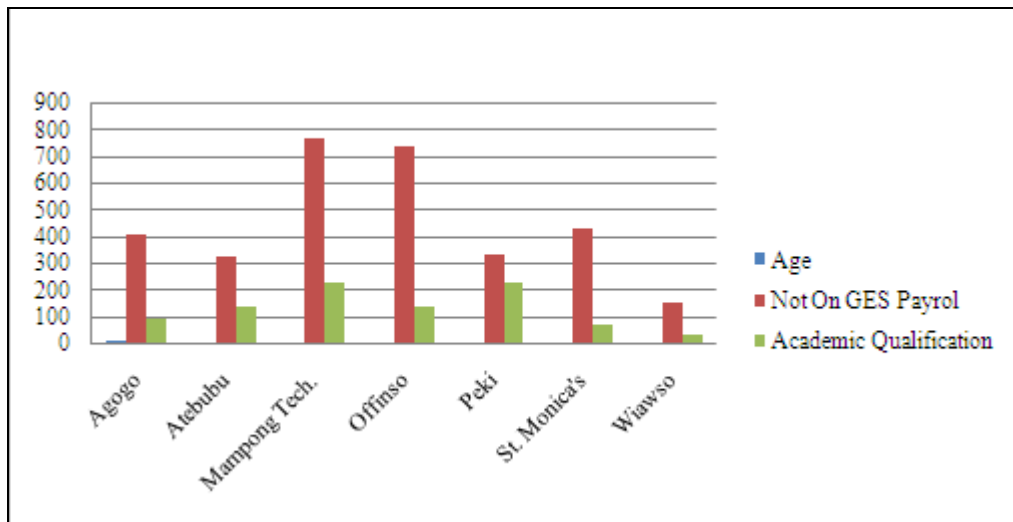


Figure 1: Ineligible Participants by Categories

#### 6.5. Gender Distribution

The gender distribution of the participants is shown in Table 4. Out of the total number of eligible participants, 1,228 are female while 2,119 are male.

College	Male	Female	Total No. of Participants
Agogo	302	257	559
Atebubu	276	141	417
Mampong Tech.	264	62	326
Offinso	366	220	586
Peki	204	137	341
St. Monica's	435	269	704
Wiawso	318	157	475
Total	2165	1243	3408

Table 4: Eligible Participants by Gender  
Source: NIB field data

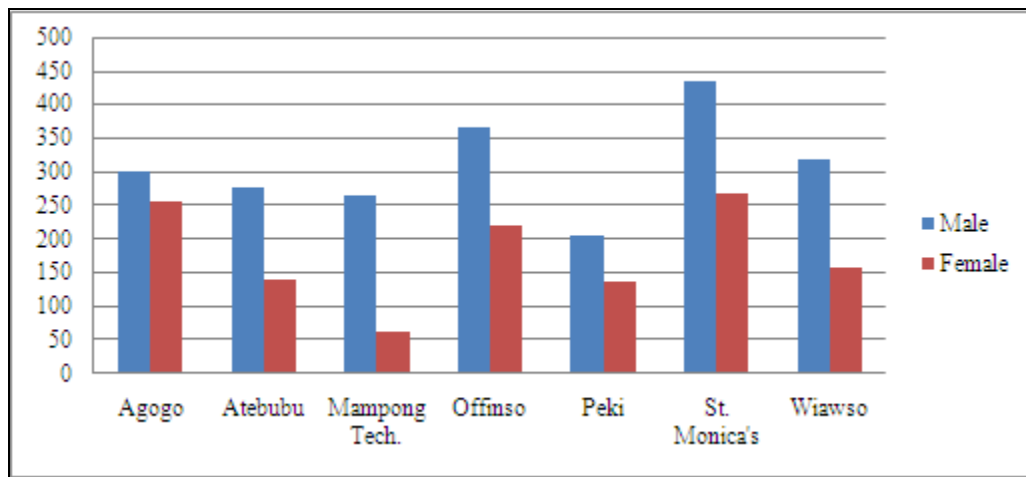


Figure 2: Eligible Participants by Gender

### 7. Conclusion

From the field data collected at the 7 colleges of education and adhering strictly to the selection criteria developed by the TED of GES for enrolment on the UTDBE program, only 45% of the participants currently enrolled at the time of the exercise appeared to satisfy the eligibility criteria. The majority of the participants (6,061) were from 56 of the designated 57 deprived districts in the country (one of the deprived districts – Amenfi West – was not represented in any of the colleges of education involved in the exercise.); the data revealed that only 2, 618 of them (i.e. from the deprived districts) actually qualified to be on the programme.

In terms of the minimum academic qualifications required for enrolment, as many as 971 of the total number of participants were not eligible. On the other hand, 3,193 of the pupil teachers were found not to be on the payroll (no staff ID numbers), although the majority of them did seem to satisfy the academic requirements for enrolment. In the particular case of the deprived districts, it was noted that 2,660 of the participants did not have staff ID numbers while 769 did not appear to possess the required academic qualification and 14 of them were over-age.

### 8. Implications

If the eligibility criteria were to be strictly followed, quite a great number of participants would be disqualified, hence, the likelihood of termination from the program, which could further worsen the pupil-teacher ratios in deprived areas.

Poor quality instruction; i.e. Poor teaching resulting in poor learning due to lack of expertise - having a firm grip on subject matter and quality lesson delivery.

Affects sustainability in terms of mentoring subsequent teachers, just from college

It takes a huge toll on teacher self-confidence and teaching efficacy. It is more pronounced when teachers are seen, and see themselves as 'not equal to the task'.

The worse part of this is the lack of confidence in the system to be able to achieve national and international educational goals. Basic educational requirements as in literacy and numeracy are the worst affected, including the acquisition of basic skills for living, all culminating into a huge liability in human capital, which also depends on the ability of students to be able to rise further on the educational ladder to learn beyond basic skills in order to fit in the job market. "Students' achievement beyond basic skills depends largely on teachers' command of subject matter". Mullens & Willet, 1996).

As a matter of fact, it slows down the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) /Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the area of universalising access to primary schooling and achieving gender equity. Lewin and Caillods (2001), and Lewin and Stuart (2003) maintain that in those countries furthest from achieving these goals, meeting the demand for new teachers is a major constraint on increased access, retention and completion. This is very crucial, owing to the fact that teacher training and deployment must be geared towards meeting the educational needs of the populace and for meeting global targets. Increased access in schooling would then be meaningless without qualified man power to handle the needs of pupils or students.

### 9. The Way Forward

Teacher Preparation Programs must be one of the focal points of governments in their education policy planning. The admission process into a College of Education must be rigorous in order to be able to test the backgrounds and dispositions of prospective trainees. This rigorous exercise must as well make room for re-shaping of trainees whose cultural and academic capital is constrained, through a modulated system to bring them up to the required levels. This portion of the admission or recruitment exercise is very critical so as not to produce teachers who might adversely affect their pupils and students.

The training of pre-service teachers could also include special programs modulated to give support to trainees who may need academic and professional support to meet acceptable standard in the progression of their courses. Some of these lapses may be detected during the regular training /instruction sessions or during the practical exhibition of teaching skills in classrooms as part of the full-time training requirement in the Colleges of Education.



Mentoring should be introduced or developed in Colleges of education for trainees to mentor each other and also among trainees and practicing teachers. This calls for effective collaboration between Colleges of Education and schools through a well-coordinated program with result-driven goals. It could follow the current practice-teaching models but centered on real mentoring, effectively and efficiently supervised by school heads or education officers, and College lecturers for re-enforcement. The Edutopia Team 2008 emphasizes on the importance of teacher-preparation programs, claiming that the best teacher-preparation programs emphasize subject matter mastery and provide many opportunities for student teachers to spend time in real classrooms under the supervision of an experienced mentor. The group intimates that support for beginning teachers is often even and inadequate, and even if well prepared new teachers often are assigned to the most challenging schools and supervisors with little supervision and support. For such little incidents in schools and for the best of outcomes, the group recommends that mentoring and coaching from veteran colleagues is critical to the successful development of a new teacher. They add that, great induction programs create opportunities for novice teachers to learn from best practices and analyze and reflect on their teaching.

As rigorous as the training session of teacher trainees might be, the placement of teachers when they are being assigned in schools is equally very crucial, as the wrong placement of same could be catastrophic. That's why Professional Skills Tests are required in other jurisdictions as guideline for correct placement of teachers, and for designing of special support programs for new teachers.

Research shows that college lecturers are a neglected resource, Lewin (2004). It starts right from the teachers (trainers) of teachers at the various colleges of education which is the basic level of teacher training (Ghana). The quality of teachers at that level is highly crucial for quality production of teachers. Planners must go beyond a Post-Graduate Certificate of Education as minimum requirement for appointment of Teacher Trainers. Prospective tutors/must as well prove to have cutting-edge capabilities not only in their area of specialty but in the area of instruction/facilitation of trainees in prescribed models as pre-requisite for selection. Stuart, Kunje and Lefoka (2002) asserts that few colleges in Africa have clear models of teacher training to guide their work. There must be constant appraisal of teacher trainers already in the system for sustained and further improved expertise.

The teaching profession should be made attractive to young people who want to engage in public service. Currently in Ghana, teachers are one of the least paid groups of workers in the public sector, with less attractive conditions of service, which keeps a lot of young people quite distanced from liking the profession, no matter how passionate they may be about teaching.

Certainly, every professional excellence is predicated by a well-planned policy, effective and result-driven executioners or implementers of policy, and a crop of professionals who desire to improve their skills through constant professional development activities in and outside their immediate jurisdictions, under the expert guidance and direction of excellent managers. Hence, if the education system must produce the desired outcomes, serious attention must be paid to the caliber of trainees we admit into the training system, the continuous development of trainers of trainees, excellent training models and effective collaboration among stakeholders for great results.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

Ministry of Education  
National Inspectorate Board

Data on Participants Enrolled on the UTDBE Programme in Selected Colleges of Education April 2013

Name of College of Education-----

1. Participant’s Full Name (As in UTDBE Program - BLOCK LETTERS please)

First Name -----Middle-----Last-----

2. All Other Names Used to Refer to You.

a. First Name -----Middle-----Last-----

b. First Name -----Middle-----Last-----

c. Phone Nos.: 1. -----2. -----

d. E-mail-----

e. Postal Address -----

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3. Date of Birth: (Day) ----- (Month)----- (Year)----- Age-----

(For interviewers only: MEANS OF VERIFICATION-Please underline the one which applies)

(i) Birth Certificate (ii) National ID Card (iii) NHIS Card (iii) Passport (iv) Driving License (v) Voter ID

4. Educational Background – Schools Attended

a. Primary (Name) -----

b. From ----- To-----

c. Middle/JHS: (Name) -----

d. From----- To-----

e. SHS: (Name) -----

f. From----- To-----



**5. Qualifications**

- g. **WASSCE/SSSCE/GCE Results** (Best Grades and Year Obtained): Eng -----  
 Core Math -----Core Science -----Social Studies-----  
 Electives: (1) ----- (2) ----- (3) -----
- h. **OTHERS:** Specify details of Qualifications/Certificates/Subjects with dates and grades.  
**(Technical/Vocational/City & Guilds/NVTI/Professional Examinations taken)**  
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**6. Employment Details:**

- a. DATE OF EMPLOYMENT BY GES-----
- b. Staff ID No: -----Pay Roll No: -----SSNIT Number-----
- c. PRESENT SCHOOL: -----
- d. CLASS/LEVEL/SUBJECT (S) TAUGHT:-----
- e. EDUCATIONAL DISTRICT/REGION: -----
- f. NAME OF HEAD OF SCHOOL:-----Phone No: -----

NB. Please attach photocopies of all relevant documents to the completed form. Any misrepresentation or false declaration may lead to withdrawal from the program

**5. Participant's Signature**-----Date -----