EXPLORING BLENDED TRAINING SCHEME TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE TRAINING OUTCOMES: AN ASSESSMENT OF ORIENTATION TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Antwi, E. A., Tampah-Naah C., and Buame J. A.

University for Development Studies, Box TL 1350, Tamale Ghana
Corresponding Author's Email: misseleanorsam@yahoo.com

Abstract

Employee orientation training in the University for Development studies is effective in helping new employees learn about an organisation's philosophy. The spread of the campuses of the University across three regions of Ghana, Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions offers a challenge for an effective orientation with the current training model. For efficiency, organisations must ensure that financial and human resources are allocated to develop the highest impact training strategies at the lowest cost. The problem of study sees as deficient the current orientation training programme for newly recruited staff of the University and therefore less effective in improving learners' outcomes to achieve corporate objectives. A close look at interview reports at the Human Resource Unit and attitude of most staff of the University appears to suggest a lack of knowledge of Conditions of Service, Statutes of the University, Scheme of Work and even Schedule of Duties at the workplace. Some staff are unaware of requirements for their next promotion or when to apply for promotion. The findings revealed the 'face to face' orientation model of the University was not effective in improving learning outcomes. This paper reviewed literature on training and some learning methodologies. Recommendations are made to University management to re-think their current training model and to accept modifications that would improve learners' outcomes and achieve corporate initiatives. A blended learning scheme comprising basic concepts of learning, integrated with method of instruction and technological delivery media is recommended.

Keywords*: Orientation training, blended learning, e-learning, work performance*

Introduction

Human Resources are cherished assets of every nation and a contributory factor to business growth and development. The quality of a country's human resources depends on the education and training offered by institutions mandated to provide skills and training. The government has a critical role in ensuring that people have access to quality education, while employer's role is to identify and provide information on labour market needs. Education should enhance delivery of lifelong employability to ensure that the needs of companies and learners are better served. According to Chen (2010 p3) "…organizations are continuously seeking ways to grow and keep competitive through training. At the same time, giving new employees confidence in their decision-making process for the organization as well as improving their efficiency and effectiveness are key concerns for organizations"

Higher Educational Institutions, such as universities, colleges and polytechnics, are labour intensive organizations and depend on people for the delivery of their services. The quality of the staff in institutions of tertiary education is thus central to their effectiveness, in the same way that it is to all people-centered organizations. A World Bank paper made the following remark that "a high quality and well-motivated staff, a supportive professional culture and training and development opportunities are essential in building excellence" (World Bank, 1994).

Training and development describes the formal, ongoing efforts of organizations to improve the performance and self-fulfilment of their employees through a variety of methods and programmes. In the modern workplace, these efforts have taken on a broad range of applications - from instruction in highly specific job skills to long-term professional development.

Orientation training basics include showing new workers how to perform their jobs safely and efficiently. They become qualified to perform in positions of greater difficulty and responsibility. Training for that matter provides, maintains and intensifies the skills of the employee to perform his/her job. Training involves an expert working with learners to transfer to them certain areas of knowledge or skills to improve their current jobs. Development can be seen as a broad, ongoing multi-faceted set of activities to bring someone or an organisation up to another threshold of performance, often to perform some job or new role in the future.

More importantly, training or learning, is offering learning and developmental experience. Training and learning development includes aspects such as: ethics and morality; attitude and behaviour; leadership and determination, as well as skills and knowledge. Training may broadly be categorized into three types: pre-service training, in-service training and off the job training. Pre-service training is more academic in nature and is offered by formal institutions following definite curricula and syllabuses for a certain duration to offer a formal degree or diploma. In-service training, on the other hand, is offered by the organization from time to time for the development of skills and knowledge of the incumbents. Off the job training involves imparting training outside the real work environment i.e. the principle of learning by acquiring knowledge is adopted. This paper will discuss In-Service training and emphasise orientation of new employees, an aspect of In - Service training.

To effectively impact new employees through orientation and training, one has to teach employees about the "big-picture" organisational issues, such as culture, vision, values, mission, structure, ethics,

policies, confidentiality, schedule of duty and the details of the appointment letter. Starting a new job requires learning new duties, developing an understanding of how the organisation works, clarifying what the expectations are, and developing interpersonal networks. New employees must also learn about their roles and promotion and tenure expectations. A well-planned employee orientation programme will help make this transition as painless as possible and get new employees off on the right foot immediately.

Universities and other institutions of higher education expend huge resources to hire employees, and so facilitating their transition will benefit the institutions as well as the new employees. The nitty gritties of staff orientation is particularly important. The University for Development Studies needs to take a second look at its orientation programmes for new employees and must cut across all categories of staff. According to Washington (2009) one way human resource management can help to facilitate the achievement of this goal, in any organisation, is to employ a more rigorous and all-embracing learning strategy to optimize employee training results.

The University for Development Studies like many other organisations have their assets and employees scattered across large geographic spaces. Under such circumstances, Washington (2009) calls for an effective, efficient, and pragmatic way for the delivery of training. Employee development is very critical in such circumstances, especially for organisations in highly competitive environments. Washington (2009) further explains that the evolution of technology and pedagogy continues to converge and integrate in educational institutions and the hospitality industry.

Statement of the Problem
The problem of study identifies a deficiency with the current orientation training programme for newly recruited staff of the University and therefore making it less effective in improving learners' outcomes to achieve corporate objectives. A close look at interview reports at the Human Resource Unit and

attitude of most staff of the University appear to suggest a lack of knowledge of the Conditions of Service, Statutes of the University, Scheme of Work and even Schedule of Duties at the workplace. Some staff are unaware of requirements for their next promotion or when to apply for promotion. It has therefore become imperative to look at the orientation of new employees at the University for Development Studies.

Methodology

Basically, the paper is a descriptive one, in which relevant documents were analysed. Documents that were considered were: Staff Interview Reports, University Statutes, the Vice-Chancellors' Annual Reports for the various years since the University started. Interviews were also conducted for staff of the Training and Development office. Views of some staff of the University were also collated on how they felt about the orientation programmes organised for staff.

Review of Related Literature

This section provides definition to terms used, particularly training and skills development and goes further to review literature on some topics relating to training and skills development to blended learning and instructional designs.

Training activities mostly comprise skills which are immediately needed and have an immediate benefit, whereas development activities concentrate on new skills and abilities aiming for future job opportunities. Usually Training and Development (T&D) measures comprise three major competence areas:

- methodological competence (teaching, administration, IT- Systems, Finance, Legal know-how, Safety and Security, etc.)
- self-confidence and social competence (personality and soft skills, time management, Work-Life Balance, languages, etc.)
- management competence (Leadership development, project management, etc.)

Another effective T&D tool regards employee orientation or induction where a new employee learns about the organizational values, norms and tasks. The induction of new employees includes activities such as:

- the mentoring by a colleague of the same hierarchy level that cares for the new colleague and is responsible for his/her integration;
- a well defined induction program for the first months of employment; or
- simply, an "employee handbook" to facilitate the orientation.

Furthermore, various individual measures such as on-the-job training, mediation, mentoring, coaching and counselling for organizational units, project groups or individuals are included in T&D actions. While coaching refers to activities where employees are treated as partners in achieving both personal and organizational goals, counselling supports employees to deal with personal problems that could prevent them from achieving these goals (Böckelmann, Reif, Fröhlich 2010; Werner & DeSimone 2012). Orientation is therefore a perfect time to begin soft skills training, and to introduce employees to the company, its products, its culture and policies and even to the competition it faces.

Types of Training
Pre-service Training
Pre-service training is a process through which individuals are made ready to enter into unspecified professional jobs such as agriculture, medicine, or engineering. They have to attend regular classes in a formal institution and need to complete a definite curriculum and courses successfully to receive a formal degree or diploma. According to Van Nuland (2011), prior to entering into a pre-service education programme, most people would have obtained a previous qualification either a general or honours, in a subject of their choice.

In-service Training and Staff Development
In-service training is a process of staff development for the purpose of improving the performance of an incumbent holding a position with assigned job

responsibilities. It promotes the professional growth of individuals. In-service training programmes are designed to strengthen the competencies of extension workers while they are on the job. In-service training may broadly be categorized into five different types: (1) induction or orientation training, (2) foundation training, (3) on-the-job training, (4) refresher or maintenance training, and (5) career development training. All of these types of training are needed for the proper development of extension staff throughout their service life.

Induction or Orientation Training.

According to Brown (2018) a well organised orientation programme, whether it lasts one day or six months, will help reduce employee turnover and also result in an increase in employee productivity. Organizations that have good orientation programmes get new people up to speed faster and have better alignment among employees. Staff turnover increases as employees get to feel they are not valued or are put in positions where they are not able to perform on their jobs.

Elmokadem (2018) argues that an employee's act is just as important as what s/he knows. Elmokadem (2018) wants us to understand that soft skills are essential for organisational growth and must be part of the training. This is because they constitute personal attributes that enable employees to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people in the workplace, including co-workers, management, and customers. Studies have actually shown that a gap in basic soft skills among company employees affects company success and increases turnover rates. Soft skills trainings are therefore useful for new and existing employees of all levels and are an extremely effective way to build an efficient, respectful and collaborative culture. Soft skills training cover topics like Communication skills, Presentation skills, Problem-solving skills, Conflict resolution, Leadership skills, Emotional Intelligence, Time management, Ethics, Teamwork and Adaptability (Elmokadem, 2018).

The orientation of new staff of the University is essential in that employees in the organisation, learn as soon as possible what is expected of them, and what to expect from others, in addition to learning about the values and attitudes of the organization (Brown, 2018). When people start to work in an organization for the first time, they are eager to know what sort of outfit they are getting into, what they are supposed to do, and whom they will work with. They are likely to be more attentive and open-minded than experienced employees. In fact, the most favourable time for gaining employees' attention and for moulding good habits among them is when they are new to the job. Let new employees understand each paragraph and why it was included in the appointment letter. In 2017, the University organised an orientation for 151 National Service Personnel posted to the University for the first time. This was however done on the various campuses of the University, where they were posted to do their national service. They were taken through the following topics: Mail Handling; Branding/ Selling of the University, Communication Channels; Confidentiality and Loyalty; Safeguarding information and the good name of the University; and Personal appearance (Vice-Chancellors' Report, 2017).

Foundation Training

This constitutes an in-service training for newly recruited employees. Besides technical competence and routine instruction about the organization, for example the new employee can be asked to pick up a manual containing the Scheme of Work and the Conditions of Service of the University. New employees receive some education on their entitlements to medical services in the university, how to update the personal particulars form when one has a new dependant, requirements for study leave, leave of absence, some enlightenment on the Conditions for Post-Retirement Contract, when to put in one's resignation letter. Some basic education on confirmation of appointment and renewal of contract appointment can also be given. Every staff member needs some professional knowledge about

various rules and regulations of the institution, financial transactions, administrative capability, communication skills, leadership ability, coordination and cooperation among institutions and their linkage mechanism, lines of authority, scalar chain of command and so on.

Maintenance or Refresher Training
This training is offered to update and maintain the specialized subject-matter knowledge of the incumbents. Refresher training keeps the specialists, administrators, subject-matter officers, extension supervisors, and frontline workers updated and enables them to add to the knowledge and skills they already have. Maintenance or refresher training usually deals with new information and new methods, as well as review of older materials. The University for Development studies was able to organise only a few of these training for the various categories of staff; junior, senior, and senior member. For instance in 2008, a workshop in 'Management of Higher Education Institutions Seminars' was arranged for three seniors members including the Vice Chancellor to attend in Israel from 21st January to 1st February, 2008; the Procurement Officers and some management staff had a workshop in Consultants' Services (Vice Chancellor's Report, 2008). In 2009 a refresher workshop was also organised for senior members in Capacity Strengthening, this included topics like 'Academic Leadership' and 'Aims of Higher Education' in broad terms (Vice Chancellors' Report, 2009).

On-the-Job Training (OJT)
OJT is another form of new hire training which includes having the new associate train directly next to an existing associate. Some call this On the Job Training or side-by-side training. This type of employee training allows the new associate to see first-hand the different facets of the position. Again, OJT allows the new hire the opportunity to develop a working relationship with an existing associate. This type of employee training reinforces concepts learned in the initial training and should be used to reinforce and apply those same learned concepts.

Mentoring comes into the University system especially where Senior Members require a lot of technical procedures before obtaining promotion to the rank of Senior Lecturer and equivalent positions. There is the need to assign mentors, or godparents once they assume duty or at the orientation. In this way, right from day one the new comer can interact with the senior and experienced colleagues for ideas and direction and to get acclimatized to the University environment.

Career or Development Training
Career or Development Training is a type of in-service training designed to upgrade the knowledge, skills, and ability of employees to help them assume greater responsibility in higher positions. The training is arranged departmentally for staff, at all levels, for their own continuing education and professional development. In 2010, the Training and Development Unit organised a training workshop for Store-Keepers and another training workshop in project Management for some staff of the Department of Works and Physical Development to enhance their working skills (Vice Chancellors' Report, 2010). In 2017, a refresher course was organised for eighty-four (84) Assistant Transport Officers, Chief Drivers, Senior Drivers including Drivers grade I and II of the University. Topics in this particular workshop included the following: Fire management and Control; Conditions of Service; Road Regulations; Stress Management and other Human Resource issues like work ethics of the University (Vice Chancellors' Report, 2017).

Malone (1984) opined that services that provide the opportunity for all staff to prepare a plan for career training will receive the benefits of having longer tenured and more satisfied employees, which increases both the effectiveness and efficiency of the staff. Malone (1984 p.216) stated that "career development is the act of acquiring information and resources that enables one to plan a programme of lifelong learning related to his or her work life".

The concept of observational learning was introduced by Albert Bandura and his Social Cognitive Theory. Bandura strongly believed that

people learn best by observing others. The theory makes us understand that people must pay attention to those around them first, retain what they have observed, and try to reproduce it. Bandura's theory is implemented in the aspect of on the job training, where the new employees observe first their trainer completing the tasks, before trying to perform the task themselves. Bandura explains that after observing others for some time, naturally, they will copy the action they had observed. The on-the-job training happens in a similar way till the new employee is able to perform the task on their own (Thurlow R., Wilson Joseph A., Olmstead Robert C. T., 2018).

Off the Job Training

This involves imparting training outside the real work environment i.e. the principle of learning by acquiring knowledge is adopted. Employers will often encourage their employees to develop their skills through off-the-job training courses. For example, a trainee may be allowed to attend a day-release course at the local college. This might apply to a wide range of different skills. Some staff of the University are given the opportunity to go outside the work environment for further studies on courses directly related to their work careers.

Adapting Blended Learning Approaches in Organisations

Washington (2009), a strong proponent of blended learning approaches, suggests that in employee orientation training it is reasonable to re-think innovative training models that will improve learner outcomes and achieve corporate initiatives. In line with this, Singh (2003) argues that organizations must utilize in their strategies a blend of learning approaches to get the right content, in the right format to the right people at the right time. It is the combination of these factors rather than the reliance on technology alone to facilitate learning and knowledge transfer (Washington, 2009). Sitzmann (2006) explains that instructional methods rather than delivery media determines learning outcomes. Nevertheless, Sitzmann (2006) submits that the right

delivery media can also enhance cognitive information processing through various interactive multimedia formats. One only needs to perhaps consider how much the Internet and technology has impacted learning in educational institutions to conclude *e*-learning may stay longer (Washington, 2009).

According to Smith and Brame (2019), online courses have at least 80% of their course content delivered online. Indeed, blended, otherwise referred to as hybrid, instruction has between 30 and 80% of its course content delivered online with some face-to-face interaction. Smith and Brame (2019) again, pointed out that blended and online courses have redefined traditional educational roles and provided different opportunities for learning. Palloff and Pratt (2013: 30) claim that "The online classroom is a potentially powerful teaching and learning arena in which new practices and new relationships can make significant contributions to learning. In order to harness the power this creates in education, instructors must be trained not only to use technology but also to shift the ways in which they organize and deliver material. Making this shift can increase the potential for learners to take charge of their own learning process and facilitate the development of a sense of community among them".

Allen & Seaman (2013) demonstrated in a recent survey that more than 2,800 colleges and universities in the US reported that more than 6.7 million students in higher education took at least one online course during the Fall, 2011 term, showing an increase of 570,000 students over the previous year. Again, as many as 32 % of the students of higher education now take at least one course online.

Understanding Blended Learning

Oliver (2005) suggests that blending learning either relies on the idea of dichotomies that are suspect within the context of learning with technology. Oliver (2005) points out the term becomes ineffective as a discriminating concept and is thus without purpose. In this respect Washington (2009) draws attention to the fact that Blended essentially means to combine different methods into an

integrated whole in order to produce a harmonious effect. Therefore, blended learning can be defined as an integrated approach combining instruction of different varieties into an integrated whole delivered through various media to produce a harmonious effect achieving the desired outcomes for both the learner and organization (Washington, 2009).

The 'face-to-face' classroom training as used by UDS appears to be the dominant instructional delivery method used in most organisational training programmes. On the other hand, e-learning which is a technique that involves an electronic delivery method and whose content is delivered via the Internet, intranet, CD-ROM, audio or video technologies offers more learning opportunities. The implication is that blended refers to a combination of two or more delivery modes of instruction viz. webinars in the form of live seminars conducted over the Internet, teleconferencing, video-conferencing or even through e-mail exchanges (Washington, 2009). Instructor-led e-learning solutions are ideal for a geographically dispersed audience and comfortable with technology or work on different time shifts like in the instance of the University for Development Studies with a multi-campus structure located in the three northern regions of Ghana. Videoconferencing allows participants in different locations to view and interact with instructors and other trainees without necessarily being physically together. Learners can indeed collaborate, share information, and ask questions of one another and of the instructor in real time (Alonzo et al., 2005). It has been established that e-learning allows for collaborative and interactive learning as Schutte (1996) and Means et al., (2010) bring to our notice. Reality on the ground seem to suggest that, online instruction appears to be more effective when employees collaborate rather than work independently through synchronous and asynchronous discussions and in small group discussions. Identities are not revealed in online discussions and therefore has the effect of creating a level ground for even the shy students and the marginalized groups or individuals.

In the traditional classroom settings, new employee orientation may help employees to get used to their new learning environment and build upon their previous knowledge and experience. Employing visual, audio, and job aids that closely resemble how the participants will use the information on the job should give an added boost to the learning process. For example, a new employee will learn during orientation how to properly confirm electronic timesheets and complete any corresponding forms using a computer and printer. It is also important to appreciate the fact that a self-study can be facilitated through a computer or a web-based training through the use of CD-ROM or over the Internet and or intranet

The mix training approach should produce the right results and also reduce the training and travel time because of the spatial distribution of some organisations like the University for Development Studies with campuses spread out in different geographical locations, with the farthest about a four hour drive (Wa Campus) and the nearest about a few minute's drive (Tamale Campus) from the Central Administration of the University

Conclusion
New employee orientation (NEO) becomes the umbrella programme for other programmes that include performance reviews and training. The quality of employees and their development through blended training and education are major factors in determining long-term productivity of the institution. If one hires and keeps good employees, it is a good policy to invest in the development of their skills, so they can increase their productivity. Providing a well-developed blended orientation training programme for new employees protects the investments of the hiring process, eases new employees' anxieties, and enhances their work. E-learning from the discussions involves an electronic delivery method whose content is delivered via the Internet, intranet, CD-ROM, audio or video technologies and as such offers more learning opportunities. Again, online instruction appears to be more effective, indeed when employees collaborate rather than work independently through synchronous and asynchronous discussions and in

small group discussions. The blended learning method is more engaging and appealing to learners as compared to the traditional classroom-based delivery because it provides more ways of measuring learning effectiveness and training impact. Hunt (2018) argues that blended learning is another achievement of modern time to improve the learning process, ease the routine tasks, save time, money, and help society enjoy learning. This however does not suggest that the methodology is flawless and the design perfect. For sure, this scheme still requires significant work of an instructor and collaboration from all participants. Nevertheless, it creates more opportunities and makes learning a more flexible process available at any time, from any place.

Recommendation for a Blended Orientation Training Scheme for new employees of University for Development Studies

The blended orientation training which combines two or more delivery methods of instruction in the form of live seminars conducted over the Internet, teleconferencing, video-conferencing or even through e-mail exchanges are considered more effective than the traditional face to face training programme (Washington, 2009). The traditional method has been used by UDS for a long time now and has not proven very effective considering the cost involved and its multi- campus nature. In the current era of information technology (IT), e-learning which is delivered through the Internet, intranet, CD-ROM, audio or video technologies offers more blended orientation learning opportunities for UDS multi-campus structure (Oliver,2005)

The importance for a blended orientation training scheme for the University cannot be overemphasized in the light of the University's multi-campus nature, the different staff categories (junior, senior and senior members) and more so because of the different job descriptions. This paper advocates a blended learning programme for employee orientation. The adaption of a blended methodology will allow the weakness of any one method to be offset by the other. One big benefit of the learner's use of computer-

based technologies is that the learner is at the centre of the training process where he/she experiences the meaning, participation and control of the learning. The reason is that there is a wide range of constructivism (learner building a knowledge base) through social interaction with others in the learning process. It is therefore recommended that participants of training programmes must be actively involved in making inputs to the design of training programmes.

A classroom-type training programme limits access to those who can participate at a certain time and at a set geographic location. For organisations which have spread out across large geographic areas as in the case of UDS with a multi campus structure. The University must explore alternatives to widen the reach of training options by adding, at least, technological delivery media and instructional methods to the traditional training method. Apart from being a cost-effective alternative, the e-learning methods offer solutions which facilitate knowledge transfer that supports learning theory propositions that different people learn in different ways. Though theories do not provide us with solutions they are crucial in finding solutions. The use of technological platforms allows flexibility and interactivity in content delivery. The University can therefore employ e-learning, video-conferencing, CD-ROM, and computer-based training in its training programmes to improve the effectiveness of their orientation training programmes because they are cost-effective and reduce time spent. Technology should however not be seen as a means to an end but one that collaborates with other instructional methodologies to achieve the desired outcomes.

A well-designed and implemented blended orientation programme gives the learner the opportunity to probe, using an array of 'hi-tech' tools, to confirm or challenge any knowledge he/she has received. Management of the University must fully understand that the reasons for employee training range from introducing a new concept to a workgroup, to a new employee training about the operation of the institution. Therefore, the ultimate goal of any such orientation is to provide the new

employees with the concise and accurate information which will make them more confident on the job. The new employee has more thorough grounding if he/she understands the organisation's mission, goals and philosophy, personnel practices, health and safety rules. Where an individual employee does not properly understand the company's philosophy through learning, that philosophy could be impeded. It is also recommended that orientation is given to all new employees consistently through the use of an orientation checklist, employee handbook and orientation programmes.

It is recommended that skills training and development is done on departmental bases and once a while as an in service training (workshop or seminar) eg, how to draft a memo, meaning of acronyms, letter writing, computer skills, and education on an administrative subject like "confidentiality at the workplace" etc.

Orientation and training programmes are ad hoc in nature in UDS and therefore they are not able to achieve the desired results. It is true that such programmes involve huge financial outlay but this could be considered more seriously and organised at least once for each staff category in a year, for high staff productivity. To this effect, Garn's (2017) recommendation for a blended orientation programmes is most appropriate for the University because it saves time for both learners and trainers while delivering a more focused training with less time and money. Blended orientation training programmes also make better use of evidence-based approaches to deliver more effective training which also offers better ways to track and measure training (Garn, 2017).

It is recommended that as part of the orientation for new employees, facilitators go through the appointment letter given to the employee thoroughly, point by point, item by item. In this way the new employee will understand and appreciate the reason why management cared to put that point there. Other areas to consider are job schedule, requirements for promotion, available opportunities for further studies, facilities available for physical use. Taking the individual round the various offices is equally important and it will surprise one to know that, a number of staff around do not know where some offices are located.

In dealing with senior members, who would require some technical procedures before attaining promotion, there is the need to assign them mentors, or godparents. In this way, right from day one, the new employee can interact with senior peers and other significant fellows for ideas and direction and to be acclimatized to the University environment. It is important to reduce the stress of starting a new job by pairing new employees with a buddy (a more senior or experienced team member) that can help coach them through the first few weeks on the job.

It is recommended also that handouts of orientation training programmes be given to new employees as a guide. In addition, copies of the Scheme of Service, Conditions of Service, Schedules of duty, Organogram of the organisation, Statutes of the University etc, should be made available to new employees for quick reference as and when it becomes necessary.

It is recommended that new employees are provided briefing on training processes and opportunities. There should be an ongoing process, refresher course, in service training etc, but should be done timely or consistently.

Staff rotation should be done on regular basis within a section, reschedule duties / reassign, so that each person will have an idea of what is entailed in the other person's schedule

References

"Blend," (2009). In Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Retrieved April 19, 2009, from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/blend.

"Learning", (2009). In Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Retrieved April 19, 2009, from http://www.merriam webster.com/dictionary/learning.

Allen, E. & Seaman, J. (2013). Changing Course: Ten Years of Tracking Online Education in the United States. Wellesley, MA: Babson College. Available at:

https://wp0.vanderbilt.edu/cft/guides-sub-pages/blended-and-online-learning/ (Downloaded: February, 2019)

Böckelmann, C.; Reif, L.; Fröhlich, M. (2010) Human Resources Management. In: *Higher Education Management and Development. Compendium for Managers*. Münster: Waxmann. S.159-173

Bruner, J. (1985). Models of the learner. *Educational Researcher*, 14(6): 5 -8.

Chen, X. (2010). Suggestions on Effective Corporate New Employee Programme for Human Resource Specialist. *Online Journal of Workforce Education and Development*. 4 (3): 1 - 11.

Fielden, J. (1998). Higher Education Staff Development: A Continuing Mission. Commonwealth Higher Education, Management Service (CHEMS), Paris. Available at: http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/wche/principal/mission.html

Garn, K. (2017). Blended Learning- 3 Easy ways to add blended learning to employee onboarding. eLearning Industry: Corporate Learning. Available at: https://elearningindustry.com/benefits-of-blended-learning-6-major (Downloaded: February, 2019).

Hunt, V. (2018) Blended Learning – 6 Benefits of learning. eLearning Industry: Corporate Learning. Available at: https://elearningindustry.com/benefits-of-blended-learning-6-major (Downloaded: February, 2019).

International Labour Organization (2011) Employee empowerment through skill training delights the employee in working. Human Resources Development Recommendation International Labour Standards Department (NORMES).

Kearsley, G., & Shneiderman, B. (1994). Engagement theory. Retrieved May, 10, 2009, from http://home.sprynet.com/~gkearsley/engage.htm

Kristinsdóttir, S. (2001). Constructivist theories. Retrieved April, 19, 2009, from http://starfsfolk.khi.is/solrunb/construc.htm

Kruse, K. (2009). Gagne's nine event of instruction: An introduction Retrieved April, 19, 2009, from http://www.e-learningguru.com/articles/art3_3.htm

Means, B., Toyama, Y., Murphy, R., Bakia, M., and Jones, K. (2010). *Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies*. US Department of Education. Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development. Policy and Program Studies Service. ED-04-CO-0040.

Oliver, M., & Trigwell, K. (2005). Can blended learning be redeemed? *E-Learning*, 2(1): 17-26.

Palloff, R. M. & Pratt, K. (2013). Lessons from the Virtual Classroom (2nd Ed). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Available at: https://wp0.vanderbilt.edu/cft/guides-sub-pages/blended-and-online-learning/ (Downloaded: February, 2019)

Savery, J. R., & Duffy, T. M. (1995). Problem based learning: An instructional model and its constructivist framework (CRLT Technical Report No. 35). The Center for Research on Learning and Technology: Educational Technology Publications. (Problem-Based Learning). Bloomington, IN: Center for Research on Learning and Technology

Schutte, J. (1996). Virtual teaching in higher education. Retrieved from http://media.sabda.org/alkitab-1/Pdfs/Schutte-VirtualTeachinginHigherEd.pdf

Sigala, M. (2002). The Evolution of Internet Pedagogy: Benefits for Tourism and Hospitality Education. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 1(2); 29-45.

Singh, H. (2003). Building effective blended learning programs. Retrieved March 18, 2009, from http://asianvu.com/bookstoread/framework/blended-learning.pdf

Sitzmann, T., Kraiger, K., Stewart, D., & Wisher, R. (2006). The comparative effectiveness of web-based and classroom instruction: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, 59(3); 623-664.

Skolnick, K., & McNally, D. (2006). The impact of technology on the role of training. Retrieved April 5, 2009, from http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/news_print.php?sid=20687.

Smith, B. and Brame, C. (2019). Blended and Online Learning. Vanderbilt University. Center for Learning. Available at: https://wp0.vanderbilt.edu/cft/guides-sub-pages/blended-and-online-learning/ (Downloaded: February, 2019).

Thurlow, R., Wilson, J. A., & Olmstead, R. C. T. (2018). On-the-Job Training and Social Learning Theory: J A Literature Review" *(PDF)*. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pre-service_teacher_education *(Downloaded: 11-02-19)*

UNESCO (1997). Recommendation concerning Higher Education Teaching Personnel. Passed at the 29th Session, November 1997. Paris.

Van Nuland, S. (2011). Teacher education in Canada. *Journal of Education for Teaching*. *37 (4): 409–421.*

University for Development Studies (2008). *Vice Chancellors' Report, 2008*. Tamale: University for Development Studies.

University for Development Studies (2009). *Vice Chancellors' Report, 2009*. Tamale: University for Development Studies.

University for Development Studies (2010). *Vice Chancellors' Report, 2010*. Tamale: University for Development Studies.

University for Development Studies (2017). *Vice Chancellors' Report, 2017*. Tamale: University for Development Studies.

Washington P. (2009). Employee orientation; Exploring blended learning strategies to improve learner outcomes and meet organisational goals. Las Vegas: UNLV University Libraries. University of Nevada.

Werner, J.M. and DeSimone, R.L. (2012). *Human resource development* Mason, OH: South-Western Cengage.

Wilson, D. & Smilanich, E., (2005). The other blended-learning: A classroom-centered. Available at: https://int.search.tb.ask.com/search/GGmain.jhtml? (Downloaded June, 2018)

World Bank (1994). Higher Education: The Lessons of Experience. Washington DC. Available at: https://wwwjstor.org/stable/3447664