

Tutor's Comments and Feedback: Value in the Training of Adult Educators at a Distance

Kofi Poku Quan-Baffour

*Department of Adult Basic Education, School of Educational Studies,
University of South Africa, P O Box 392 Pretoria 0003 South Africa
E-mail: quanbkp@unisa.ac.za*

KEYWORDS Relevance. Grade. Teach. Support. Educate. Distance

ABSTRACT The changes taking place in the socio-economic and political environment in Africa have made education a right for all citizens – young, old, disabled and even the incarcerated. The high demand for teachers however makes it impossible for the conventional mode of teacher training to produce enough teachers for all categories of learners. To address the problem of the teacher shortage in Africa, open and distance learning institutions have expanded enrolment for teacher training. The department of Adult Education and Training at University of South Africa for example, employs qualified tutors to provide adult educator- trainees with academic support. This is done through the provision of feedback in the form of comments on the educator- trainees' written assignments. The dialogue through copious comments from tutors is meant to reduce the physical separation between students and lecturers. The tutor's comments or feedback on written assignments forms a decisive site for the academic dialogue between the tutor and the distance educator- trainee. This paper employed the quasi-experimental design to explore and report the extent to which different forms of comments on written assignments communicate, motivate, guide and support adult educators who are being trained at a distance to become teachers of adult learning programmes.