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Lessons Learned from a Training of Trainers Model in Africa

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Abstract
The international community has pledged to provide a quality education for all by 2030. School leaders play a key role in improving student learning outcomes yet oftentimes educational leaders do not have opportunities to attend professional development events. The purpose of this study was to examine a Training of Trainers Model (TOT) used to build the capacity of school leaders in five countries in Africa. This qualitative research study used a longitudinal design. Findings revealed that there were both strengths and weaknesses to the TOT model. The authors discuss the significance of these findings for policymakers and practitioners worldwide.
Keywords: Training of Trainers; Africa; Educational Leadership; Training

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Lessons Learned from a Training of Trainers Model in Africa

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), developed by the United Nations in 2015, aim at transforming the world by achieving quality education for all students (United Nations, 2016). Research in educational leadership demonstrates that school leaders play a key role in improving student achievement (Grissom & Harrington, 2010; Leithwood et al., 2004). In order to achieve the SDGs by 2030, building the capacity of school leaders in developing countries is of paramount importance.

To date, few adequate educational leadership trainings are available for school leaders in Africa (Bush & Oduro, 2006). Due to the lack of professional development in leadership, the use of a Training of Trainers (TOT) model appears to be an effective way to build the capacity of large numbers of school leaders. TOT, which use local trainers who understand the culture and speak the languages and dialects of participants, are preferable because they can relate the content of the module to local traditions and habits.

The purpose of this paper is, then, to share the strengths and challenges of a TOT model offered in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Liberia, Rwanda and Ethiopia. The paper offers some recommendations with regard to TOT for practitioners and policy makers in the US and around the world. The first part is a brief literature review on the role of Low-Fee Private Schools in low and middle- income countries. The second section presents the literature review on TOT models and describes the model used for this study. The third part is the methodology. The fourth section presents the results and the fifth part offers some recommendations for practitioners and policy makers. The last part is a succinct conclusion.

Educational Leadership in Africa

Africa is a complex continent because of its geography and socio-political situation coupled with the fact that almost every country is a developing nation. Out of 54 countries, 52 were colonized at some point in history. In recent history these nations suffered from numerous wars, violent civil disputes, massive destruction of their infrastructure, and health crises including ebola, lassa fever and yellow fever viruses, leaving most countries with limited resources and severally impacted education and health systems. Due to the lack of resources, socio-political climates, health crises and the scarcity of infrastructure, school leadership preparation is practically non-existent on the continent (Eacott & Nyanchama Asuga, 2014).

Because Ghana has been safe and stable politically, it has been the hub of West African innovation. Ghana has attracted numerous Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to work in the areas of education and health. In education, despite the help of foreign partners, Oduro, Dachi, and Fertig (2008) posit that the dearth of leadership trainings and subsequent professional development in Africa are fundamental issues. Oftentimes schools in Africa are ruled by authority, seniority, and language, not by who is competent for the challenging tasks at hand (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Bush & Moroosi, 2011).

In a seminal study, Zame, Hope & Regress (2008) surveyed 350 head teachers in public schools in the Greater Accra region of Ghana to assess the level of leadership preparation the principals received, what they consider important leadership skills principals ought to have, and what their duties were as principals of primary schools. Findings from this study suggested that 29% of the principals received some kind of training before taking their positions. This study is significant because principals enact the governmental policies and without appropriate professional

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development for school principals, Ghana will not be able to successfully enact national policies nor achieve quality education for all and meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

The literature has identified financial and logistical problems responsible for the lack of educational leadership programs in Africa. First, leadership programs are costly if they integrate mentorship and reflection time because that means expanding the length of the program. There are also demanding logistical issues to contend with including balancing fieldwork with follow-up coursework and providing ample time for reflection, a key component of training. Mentorship requirements involve additional challenges, training mentors, pairing mentors with mentees, and scheduling mentorship visits (Berkhout, Heystek & Mncube 2010). Another barrier to leadership training is identifying what and how to teach in specific contexts (Bush & Heystek, 2006; Bush, Kiggundu, & Moorosi, 2011).

Because the preparation of new or practicing principals is limited in low and middle income countries, there is few research studies on the topic. Bush et al. (2011) suggest that many principals will retire in the coming years, making the need for quality leadership programs even more urgent. To facilitate the spread of leadership programs, Bush et al. (2011) advised using a "Train the Trainer" program to prepare qualified manpower to answer the leadership needs in education in Africa.

To date, besides some of our work (Brion & Cordeiro, 2018; Cordeiro & Brion, 2018) there is little research conducted in private schools that examines if and how private school principals have access to leadership professional development. For this study, the researchers used a TOT model to build the capacity of school leaders working in Low-Fee Private Schools (LFPSs). This paper is divided into six substantive parts.

Low-Fee Private Schools in Developing Nations

Low-Fee Private Schools play critical roles in the educational systems of many emerging countries (Day Ashley et al., 2014; Heyneman & Stern, 2014). Historically, numerous faith-based groups and some colonial governments founded private schools in these countries (Beadie & Tolley, 2002; Jones, 2008). Currently, it is estimated that there are more than one million private schools in developing nations today ("The $1-a-Week School," 2015). Regardless of whether leaders of LFPSs are trained educators or not, they rarely have opportunities to attend leadership trainings. The TOT model presented in this study aimed at providing leadership trainings to school leaders while training local facilitators on the content and pedagogies used during these professional development events.

TOT Model

TOT refers to a program or a course where individuals in specific fields receive training in given subjects and instruction on how to train, monitor, and supervise others in the approach (Fiering, 2014). In the literature, TOTs and Train the Trainer (TtTs) are used synonymously; however in this paper we use the term TOT since our work was to train others to become the lead trainers for the training.

TOTs have been used worldwide to educate, impact, and rapidly build the capacity of large amounts of people both in urban and rural communities. Although TOTs have shown promise by informally educating people who otherwise would not have access to formal education, concerns remain about the sustainability, trainers' commitment, and cost of these models (Levine et al., 2007; Pearce et al., 2012). Other challenges include language barriers and cultural differences such as the communication of expectations to trainers (Hudson, Spooner-Lane, & Murray, 2013). The difficulty in changing people's habits, rituals, mindsets and beliefs is another hurdle to the

implementation, follow up, sustainability and evaluation of successful TOTs (Genmaro, Thyangathyanga, Kershbaumer, Thompson, & Faan, 2000).

TOTs have been widely used in the field of health. In Ghana for example, a TOT model was used to educate midwives and nurses on neonatal resuscitation techniques (Enweronu-Lareya. Engmann, Osafo, & Bose, 2009). In Malawi, the TOT model was utilized to educate village women on health promotion and risk reduction in pregnancy, using low literacy techniques (Genmaro et al., 2000). Although the latter study revealed that the TOT model impacted the knowledge of the village women, the authors stipulated the difficulty to measure and evaluate the potentional impact of the program longitudinally and the challenge to change mindsets and beliefs around witchcraft, for example.

In Eastern Africa, the TOT model has helped faculty members from health sciences institutions nationwide to teach human rights to their students (Ewert, Baldwin-Ragaven, & London, 2011). More examples of TOT have been recently seen in Eastern and Southern Africa on the topics of ophthalmology (Corbett, Mathenge, Zondervan, & Atsbury, 2017). In Sri Lanka, rural doctors attended a TOT event to learn resuscitation techniques (Rajapakse, Neeman, & Dawson, 2013). Other organizations in China accelerated their physiotherapy programs with a TOT approach (Chen et al., 2013).

Although TOTs have been used predominantly in the medical field, they have been adopted in other fields as well. For example, in the USA, TOTs were utilized to teach civic engagement to students, staff, and faculty in an American Black College (Peterson & Whisenton, 2014) as well as to teach nutrition in an after-school program (Gustin, Reiboldt, Carson, 2016). Internationally, trainers had recourse to this approach to teach ethics courses in the Dutch military (Baarle. Bosch, Widdershoven, Verweij, Molewijk, 2015) or to teach Malaysian teachers Outcome Based Teaching and Learning (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

To date, the literature has examined the use if TOTs in the medical, educational, and military fields but there are no empirical studies that examine the utilization of a TOT model to build the capacity of educational leaders in LFPSs in Africa. This study seeks to close that gap by providing recommendations for practitioners working in the Global South.

Our TOT Model

TOT Model Stages

Our TOT model was not designed to train dozens of trainers at a time. Rather, it was designed to train thoroughly two or three trainers while facilitating leadership trainings for 30-40 school leaders each time. There were four stages to our TOT model. First, we identified possible observers, either in country by visiting universities and connecting with educators or by our local colleagues who sent us the resumes by email. In Africa, often times, people were referred by friends, connections, and word of mouth.

The second stage was for the retained applicants to become observers and attend one entire two or three-day training depending on the offerings, interests, and qualifications for the topics. The third phase, if the candidates remained interested and were selected, was to invite the observers to co-facilitate for several subsequent trainings. Once observers became co-facilitators, the lead trainer provided oral and written feedback each time the persons co-facilitated. Once a person had co-facilitated on multiple occasions (2-4 training sessions), the lead trainer determined if this person could facilitate without a trainer present. Only those facilitators who had considerable experience, time and expertise were invited to be trainers.

Background Qualifications and Roles

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To become a trainer, candidates had to be fluent in the national language, had a minimum of a Bachelor's degree preferably in education, and a minimum of three years of teaching experience at any level.

Role of Observers

Observers were expected to attend the entire training while actively observing and participating. They were asked to read the Pedagogical Notes that were given to the Observers prior to the training. The Pedagogical Notes was a detailed document outlining the approach used during the trainings and describing the content of the modules. The Pedagogical Notes also provided logistical guidelines such as how to arrange the training room to foster engagement and peer learning. Finally, observers had to attend all debriefing sessions and meetings related to the training and modules.

Role of Facilitators

The Facilitators had to also re-read the Pedagogical Notes prior to each training. Facilitators also co-taught with the trainers or other facilitators during the training days. They were required to attend all debriefing sessions and meetings related to the training modules and they assisted with daily preparations for the training.

Role of Trainers

Lead trainers coordinated with the local Education Program Specialist who had been trained as a facilitator. Lead trainers once again read the Pedagogical Notes prior to the training. They met with the facilitator(s) prior to the training to coordinate activities and arrange who will be the lead facilitator on various parts of the training module. Other responsibilities included supporting or observing during each day of the training and leading all daily debriefing sessions and meetings related to the training. They also assisted with daily preparations and provided feedback letters to facilitators. In addition, lead trainers wrote any necessary letters to facilitators who were not re-hired.

Typical Overview of Training Events

Typically, once observers completed their training, they were invited to become co-facilitators. For a co-facilitator the teaching load was shared as followed: The first time as co-facilitator: the co-facilitator(s) taught approximately1/3 of the module. The second time as co-facilitator: the co-facilitator(s) taught ½-2/3 of the module. The third time as co-facilitator: the co-facilitator(s) taught 100% of the module.

Prior to sessions, the lead trainers met with each co-facilitator to assign and explain the sections s/he will teach on the first day. At the end of each training day there was a debriefing session during which the lead trainer(s) provided peer feedback. One technique we used during the end of the day feedback session is *Three Stars and a Wish*. This is a feedback strategy that allows trainees and trainers alike to give each other two specific examples of what they did well during the training and one wish that aims to describe what a trainee or trainer could have done differently to enhance learning. It was also during the debriefing session that the lead trainers and co-facilitators planned for the next day and divided up who would teach which sections.

After the completion of the training, the lead trainers wrote feedback letters to all co-facilitators. The letters addressed mastery of content knowledge, teaching skills, best practices on how adult learn best, and issues related to the trainees' teaching style. The letters identified areas of strengths as well as areas of improvement (referred to as stretchers). The trainer's job description, different stages of the model as well as sample feedback letters and tips for trainers were all combined in one document called "Training of Trainers Guide" that each trainer received. Up to the present

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time, approximately twenty-five trainers have been prepared with nearly a thousand school leaders in five countries having participated in these trainings.

Context for the TOT Model

The TOTs presented in this research took place in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Rwanda and Ethiopia.

Ghana

Ghana, a country of about 28 million people, is a former British Colony that gained its independence in 1957. The national language is English and the educational system is inspired by the British educational model. Today Ghana holds the 140th position out of 188 on the Human Development Index (HDI), which measures the average capabilities that people have to live long healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, and to have a decent standard of living (HDI, 2016).

Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso, a country of about 19 million people, is a former French Colony that gained its independence in 1960. The national language of Burkina Faso is French and the educational system is inspired by the British educational model. Today Burkina Faso holds position of 183 out of 188 on the HDI.

Liberia

Liberia, a country of about four million people, was founded, established, and controlled by citizens of the United States of America and ex-Caribbean slaves as a colony for former African American slaves and their free black descendants. The national language is English and the educational system is based on the American educational system. Liberia had two devastating civil wars from 1989-1997 and from 1999-2003 and was severally impacted with schools closing for nearly one year during the ebola outbreak in 2014-15. Today the country holds the position of 181 out of 188 on the HDI.

Rwanda

Rwanda, a country of about 11 million people, was colonized by Germany and then Belgium. Rwanda gained its independence in 1962. The national language is Kinyarwanda and both English and French are used in their educational system which was inspired by the French educational model. The Rwanda genocide of 1994 took between over one million lives in 100 days. Today the country holds the position of 158 out of 188 on the HDI.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia, a country of about 102 million people, was never colonized by a European power, but was occupied by Italians in 1936. The national language is Amharic and in the last century the educational system was inspired by the Italian educational model and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Today, Ethiopia holds the position of 174 out of 188 on the HDI.

Over the course of one year a team from the University of San Diego developed leadership training materials for Ghana first to launch the TOT model. The modules were later piloted, revised, contextualized and translated for Burkina Faso, Liberia, Rwanda and Ethiopia. We are currently contextualizing and translating the modules for other countries such as Uganda, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic.

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Leadership Training Modules

All leadership modules were evidence-based and used an active pedagogy in which trainees built their own knowledge and the trainer was a facilitator of learning. The role of the facilitator was to orchestrate conversations and provoke critical thinking. The modules were designed for adult learners and utilized learning transfer theory (Broad, 1997; J. K. Ford, 1994; Furman & Sibthorp, 2013; Knowles, Holtan & Swanson, 2005; Macaulay & Cree, 1999; Merriam & Caffarella, 1991; Taylor, 2000; Thomas, 2007).

As Figure 1 demonstrates, one of the leadership trainings included four modules. The aim of this three-day training was to build the conditions for learning in schools. Since the inception of the TOT program, two additional leadership modules have been created and delivered focusing on the best practices in early childhood programs and instructional leadership. For all trainings, the leadership modules were composed of two manuals: One for the participants of the training and one for the facilitators.

The Facilitator Guide included the Pedagogical Notes. As noted, the Pedagogical Notes provided information on the pedagogy used to facilitate the trainings, the way the room should be arranged, the key principles of adult learning, as well as specific strategies to engage participants in dialogue. The Facilitator Guide included the slides for the training as well as a detailed script on how to facilitate each activity. The Guide also offered some background knowledge on particular concepts such as nutrition, and specific frameworks such as Purkey's Invitational Education Framework.

Figure 1. First Leadership Module: The Conditions for Learning

Day 1: Module 1: Title: *Building a Culture of Learning*	Key Topics: • How to write a mission statement. • Invitational school culture. • Parents and families as partners.
Day 2 in the morning: Module 2: Title: *Health and Wellness*	Key Topics: • Nutrition and safety. • Clean water. • Disease prevention. • Working with the community.
Day 2 in the afternoon: Module 3: Title: *Facilities and Safety*	Key Topics: • Sound school construction. • Acoustics. • Lighting. • Kitchen. • Toilets.
Day 3: Module 4: Title: *Teacher Recruitment, Induction and Professional Development*	Key Topics: • Values and dispositions of quality teachers. • How to recognize and hire quality teachers. • Retaining , developing and supporting teachers. • Working with teachers and staff.

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The study reported here examined the TOT model used to build the capacity of school leaders in LFPSs in five sub-Saharan countries.

Methodology

This qualitative case study approach sought to answer the following research questions:What are the strengths of the TOT model? What are its challenges? And what are the differences in the implementation of the model among Ghana, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Rwanda and Ethiopia?

Design

This qualitative study drew on anthropological methods using a longitudinal design that allowed the researchers to follow the trainers for five years. Data collection included formal and informal conversations with trainers, hundreds of hours of observation of their facilitation, various observations while co-teaching, and document analysis.

Participants

Participants were local trainers in the five countries studied. In Ghana and Burkina, there were five trainers, three in Liberia, four in Rwanda and two in Ethiopia for a total of 19 trainers. Participants in Ghana were either professors at either the University of Cape Coast or Winneba University or graduates of their educational programs. In Burkina Faso, trainers were former educators at the Ministry of Education and educators in private schools or other NGOs. In Rwanda, trainers were faculty members from local universities while in Liberia and Ethiopia potential trainers were local school leaders. There were a total of 11 women and 8 men. Trainers' age ranged from about 27 years old to over 60. With the exception of Ghana, all trainers came from the capital cities.

Data Collection

Data were collected over a period of five years. During this time, there were 46 trainings facilitated followed by approximately 140 feedback sessions and more than 65 feedback letters and observations. During each training, future trainers facilitated portions of the materials. Researchers were observing their teaching and/or co-teaching. As a result, data included hundreds of hours of training and co-teaching observations. In addition, researchers kept journals of their experiences for each training and in each country.

Data Analysis

The researchers analyzed documents using two cycles of coding. In Vivo coding relies on the participants' own words. It is useful to understand different cultures and worldviews (Saldaña, 2009). It was used to reveal patterns that emerge from the data. The researchers developed codes for each key point identified in the feedback letters, documents, and journals. We used axial coding in the second cycle. Axial coding aims at determining which codes in the research are dominant and the ones that are less important. During this coding cycle, the codes that surfaced from the first cycle of coding became themes.
We used triangulation and member checking to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the analysis. We obtained triangulation through the different sources of data such as the formal and informal conversations, documents, observations, and the co-facilitations.

Limitations

Some aspects of this research project presented limitations that should be noted. First, the researchers were at one point in time the lead trainers for the project. To mitigate potential bias, the researchers triangulated the data by collecting rich data. Additionally, two researchers collected

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and analyzed the data, hence themes that arose from each researcher's analysis were discussed. Although findings may not be generalized they may be transferrable to similar countries with similar situations. The findings remain worthy of further investigation.

Results

The themes that emerged during the data analysis revealed that the TOT model possessed five main strengths. The strengths are organized by level of significance.

Strengths

Being Culturally Responsive to Ensure Sustainability

One of the strengths of this TOT model was that the researchers spent many days in schools before developing the training materials. Hence, after numerous visits and many conversations with local school leaders, teachers and potential local trainers, we designed modules based on the local needs. We later contextualized the modules for each country by changing pictures to reflect local schools, adapting the case studies and using local examples, and traditions.

Based on cultural realities, the TOT model has evolved overtime. At the micro level, for example, the researchers modeled good hand-washing practices using local materials (i.e. veronica buckets). We then modified the modules and showed a video instead to better match the participants realities while holding high expectations.

In the early days of the training we brought all printed materials and modules from the US until we realized that some changes at the macro level had to take place in order for the program to be sustainable and more efficient. We decided to hire local education specialists whose role is to organize the trainings, print the materials and modules, provide feedback on the materials and find potential local trainers. They are also trained as trainers and although their role is to support the training logistics, when needed they can be used as backup trainers.

Keeping in Mind How Adults Learn Best

In order for the materials to be relevant to the participants and to enhance the transfer of knowledge, the materials were designed so that trainers do not lecture; instead, trainers become facilitators of learning. As a result, participants were engaged in group discussions, reflections, debates and case studies. Participants were also asked to complete a School Improvement Plan (SIP) at the end of each training day so as to help them implement (transfer) the new knowledge in their schools. This reduces the implementation gap where people have knowledge but cannot apply it. In the same way, when we trained local trainers we had to teach them the concepts of andragogy and how adult learn best.

Often times in Africa, knowledge is delivered through lectures or a 'stand and deliver' approach in which the teacher or the professor speaks, and the students listen. Because trainers were themselves predominately taught through a lecture approach, they tended to teach that way as well. In the beginning of their training with us, they tended to revert to lecturing and asked and answered their own questions. The active pedagogy we used was at first foreign to both the trainees and the training participants. We had to explain, model and practice with the trainers and participants for them to understand the benefits of such active learning practices.

Script, Feedback and Follow up

We learned that not only did we have to teach the content of the materials to the future trainers but we also had to teach them how to deliver the content. As a result, we created scripted Facilitator

Guides. The detailed scripts outlined the time spent on each activity, the page number in the Participant Guide as well as how to approach each activity and what to say. Additional information in the script includes background information for particular concepts. All trainers appreciated the scripted Facilitators Guides particularly at the beginning of their training. They stated that the script "kept them on time," "ensured that [they] said what was important and helped with the fidelity of the content and approach." Local trainers provided us with feedback on the scripts when these materials lacked clarity or details. Since the inception of the TOT program, both the Facilitator and Participant Guides were revised numerous times over a period of 4 years to guarantee their clarity, relevancy and accuracy.

We also gave feedback to the trainers regularly. At the end of each training day, we conducted debriefing session in which we discussed the content, the participants, and each other's training performance. This practice allowed for self-reflection and critique of each other's teaching. The debriefing sessions also strengthened the working relationships and trust among all of us. Building trust was essential to be able to receive and give feedback.

In addition to the debriefing sessions, we wrote feedback letters to all trainers. These letters included positives and areas of improvement. The trainers appeared to enjoy the feedback letters with specifics about their teaching. They enjoyed knowing "where and how they needed to improve for the next time." Trainers were able to email or text us anytime regarding their feedback letters or if they had any questions. By modeling how to give oral and written feedback, the trainers (whether we did the training or others who became lead trainers) were later able to give constructive feedback to their trainees.

Relationships and Trust

Building strong relationships is fundamental to conducting effective work. In our TOT model, we built strong relationships by being culturally aware and competent and adapting to the foreign cultures, by observing and by asking questions and feedback on our materials and our approach. Trainers also had opportunities to build strong relationships with us and with their colleagues by co-teaching and by communicating by text messages regularly or through Skype. The use of mobile technology was an effective way to stay connected and answer questions from the United States of America. As one trainer said: "I know you are one of us, therefore I know I can come to you anytime."

Invest in Quality

As noted, typically, we train two to three trainers at once because we believe that this approach yields high quality and effectice trainers. Training two or three trainers at a time over an extended period of time allows us to ensure that the trainers understand and are familiar with the program content as well as the approach. It also allows us to build strong relationships. While this approach is costly initially, we believe that providing in depth training to a few trainers is a worthy investment because these qualified trainers will have then train other participants without us being present. As trainers, we aim to be involved via mobile technology only when our trainers are fully trained to train others.

In order to find experienced trainers, we decided to pay them well. Observers and trainers all receive stipends. Observers receive less than first time co-facilitators who receive less than the trainers. We also realized that most of our trainers work full time at other institutions, so we ensure that we ask their availability for trainings early in the school year.

By outlining all trainings for the year, trainers are able to commit to facilitating sessions. Because we believe that the training is as good as its trainers, we also give the choice to the trainers and ask them to choose what they prefer to teach. As mentioned earlier, we have developed three different

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leadership trainings and trainers are free to opt to teach all three training modules or choose to teach only one or two out of the three depending on their level of comfort with the content as well as their availability and interest.

Challenges

The qualitative analysis of the data indicated four main challenges. They are presented by their level of importance.

Self-reflection is Key

We know that reflection is a key component to adult learning (Mezirow, 2000). We found that in Ghana our trainers seem to have a harder time engaging in deep self-reflection. This could be a cultural issue as we have noticed this particularly among our female trainers who have little exposed to the Western cultures. Our Ghanaian trainers seemed to also have a harder time critiquing their colleagues particularly if the critique had to do with an area of improvement. Again, we found that our seasoned male trainers did not have such difficulties, perhaps due to the fact that they were mostly university professors. In Ghana and Rwanda, we observed that female trainers of any age had a hard time giving feedback to men or to us as foreigners. Ghana, and to a lesser degree, Rwanda remain traditional societies in which men hold most of the positions of power.

In Burkina Faso, Liberia, and Ethiopia the female trainers were able to reflect and give feedback to the males. This may because women trainers in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Liberia were school leaders or very experienced educators. In most countries, including the US, the practice of self-reflection is still challenging for learners (Mezirow, 2000). As a result, in our Pedagogical Notes we wrote an exercise that is designed to invite trainers to reflect after each day of training.

Language

There are always subtleties in language. One of the authors is originally from France whose native tongue is French, English is her second language. The second author of this article is American who also speaks Spanish. Our trainers in Africa not only speak French or English but also one or several local languages, and various dialects. Almost needless to say that in our work, we experienced many moments when communications, verbal or non-verbal were challenging.

Whether it was between us, the two researchers, or between us and our colleagues, we had to learn a common language in order to move forward. The common language was the language used in the leadership modules. We modeled which language to use when giving feedback for example. We also had to learn local words, expressions, and gestures to communicate effectively. Here again, being open to feedback and being culturally proficient is helpful to adapt to the cultures and languages local use. The training modules have been translated in French for Burkina Faso and in Amharic for Ethiopia. In Rwanda, all local trainers speak Kinyarwanda, English and most speak French. During our initial trainings, since one of the authors speaks French, she often used it to clarify concepts and develop rapport with the participants.

Finding Qualified Committed Trainers

Finding quality and committed trainers has been a challenge in all countries. First, in the case of Burkina Faso, there is only one public university in the capital city of Ouagadougou and we have not been able to form connections there. In Liberia, it was challenging to find trainers because until very recently have we had an education specialist in country. Without an education person on site working for the NGO, it is challenging to maintain contacts with people we meet when we are in country because of the poor internet connections.

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In Ghana, although we hired three education specialists for the NGO, they originally had a difficult time finding additional trainers. They reported a that several trainers lacked commitment. Thus, we found it vital to ensure a continuous supply of trainers and it is only recently that we have a sufficient number in the pipeline. Ethiopia has a different model in that the school leaders are already organized in a network. We have two trainers who are expert trainers and who own a school. These two trainers have been designated to be the trainers for the network.

The Clock Is Ticking

There is a joke in Africa about time: "Americans have nice watches but we (African) have the time." The concept of time is an interesting one in Ghana in particular. In Ghana, training participants arrived one to two hours after the start of the training. The heavy traffic could be blamed but it is the case even in smaller cities around the country and with other organizations that offer trainings. This may be another cultural difference or it may be that participants want to see the quality of the training first before committing their time to it. In our experience, once participants knew the trainers and the quality and practicality of the training, the participants tended to arrive closer to the training starting time.

In Burkina Faso and Liberia participants arrived early, before the indicated starting time, while it seems that in Rwanda and Ethiopia, participants arrived later than in Burkina but not as late as in Ghana. These cultural differences are important to note as our trainers were asked to be on time and model timely start and end of training days. It is also important as some of our Ghanaian trainers travel to Liberia and Burkina Faso in order to train because of the lack of trainers we currently have in these two countries. We anticipate this will change since we have recently hired education specialists for these nations.

Discussion and Implications

Typically, a TOT model focuses on training large numbers of persons at once. In this research project the TOT model had a different focus due to the urgency of building the leadership capacity of LFPSs school leaders. Our TOT model aimed at training fewer trainers at a time while delivering leadership modules to 30-40 school leaders of LFPSs each time. The findings indicated several strengths and challenges to our TOT model. In this section, we interpret some key findings as they relate to the leadership and Training of Trainers literature.

Quality over Quantity

Finding quality trainers who are committed has been, and remains, a challenge for our program. These findings concur with Levine et al., (2007) and Pearce et al., (2012). Despite the challenge, we believe that spending time and money to train quality trainers will enhance the sustainability of the training program over time. Trainers have told us that one of the reasons they enjoy training and co-facilitating with us is because we take the time to give them one-on-one constructive feedback and spend ample amount of time with them. They often tell us that they learn from observing us.

We also noticed that observational learning was helping us as foreigners to learn more about the local cultures and their languages. In fact, we have done numerous improvements to the modules by merely listening to words local used that we did not use in the materials. In the 1960s, world-renowned psychologist Albert Bandura spoke of observational learning (Bandura, Grusec, & Menlove, 1966).

Observational learning occurs when children and adults learn by observing others' actions and behaviors. Lave and Wenger (1991) recommend creating communities of practice, in which people from the same professions share ideas and learn from each other, with the novice observing the

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most experienced people. Thanks to the collaboration with few local trainers at a time, we were able to create communities of practice and continually learn from each other.

We do not Know What We do not Know

One of the challenges of this particular TOT model came from the fact that currently there is a lack of leadership trainings for school leaders in Africa, hence it is challenging to find local trainers who are familiar with the educational leadership content, and who are willing to learn. This type of problem is what Heifetz (1994) would refer to as an adaptive challenge. The author explains that adaptive challenges require new learning and a behavior or mindset change. In our case, all of us local and foreign trainers faced adaptive challenges. The local trainers had to learn an active approach to teaching and they also had to become reflective about their teaching (Knowles, Holtan & Swanson, 2005; Mezirow, 2000). In addition, the trainers had to learn a new common leadership language and terminology. These findings are in line with Chen et al., (2013).

Our trainers had to adjust to American work expectations in which punctuality matters, for example. Communicating expectations to trainers early is key to program success (Hudson, Spooner-Lane, & Murray, 2013). We were able to communicate these expectations during the hiring stage, the observer stage and when observers became trainers. We, as researchers and trainers also had to adapt and learn about new cultures and well as new ways of communicating and operating. Thanks to our colleagues' patience and feedback, we were able to preserve the quality of the work by contextualizing the modules and by continually seeking to improve our cultural competencies. Working abroad or working with people from different backgrounds presents numerous opportunities to become more culturally aware and competent (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2009). In our work, both local and international teams had to learn together, adapt and understand each other's cultural heritage.

Being Culturally Proficient Means Understanding White Privilege

We focused on building strong relationships based on trust from the start of our training program. Because of that trust, our trainers felt comfortable giving us feedback particularly when it was feedback concerning the content of the modules. Generally, we have observed that it is more challenging for some of our trainers to give us feedback on our teaching, most likely due to the fact that we are White Americans, professors at universities and we come to their countries to help local school leaders. Being culturally proficient means understanding our White privilege and what is means to be White (DiAngelo, 2018).

Unpacking whiteness starts by acknowledging that we all have biases and that we need to identify them to be able to create genuine relationships with people. Being White means having inherent privileges in most places around the world. In the countries where we have worked, being White could mean being viewed as a colonizer and/or as a "savior."

Burkina Faso was colonized by the French, Rwanda by the Belgians and Germans, Ethiopia was occupied by the Italians and Ghana was colonized by the British. Being White has often been an advantage for us but we have to remember not to abuse it, be it consciously or unconsciously. Listening to the local needs, ideas and feedback is key for everyone in all situations but it is particularly important when being White and working in any marginalized communities in the US or around the world.

For our African colleagues, being culturally proficient also meant understanding their biases. It also meant understanding our White values, work ethic and expectations to collaboratively work together as experts in our common line of work. Based on longitudinal observations of our local colleagues, we have seen that this TOT model gave opportunities to a small group of trainers to

gain confidence and different kinds of knowledge. Our trainers gained factual knowledge with the learning of the content of the materials, they gained procedural knowledge on how to teach a group of adults so that they later implement the new knowledge to their schools, and they received contextual knowledge by working with White American women. Although it is arduous to change habits and beliefs (Heifetz,1994; Genmaro et al., 2000) both the local trainers and us were able to change some of our beliefs based on our improved cultural competencies.

Recommendations for Practitioners and Policy Makers

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers offer six recommendations that shall be applicable to all TOT models worldwide: First, to sustain training investments in marginalized communities in the US and worldwide, it is crucial to create robust relationships among all stakeholders. Locals are experts in their areas and contexts, we must trust them, listen, observe and learn from them before making any recommendations for change. Being culturally aware and proficient is paramount no matter where one lives or work. Countless misunderstandings and violent interactions are the result of not being aware or interested in learning about each other's cultural differences.

Second, the United States is unique in that in a training event, there could be participants from diverse race, ethnic backgrounds and other social identities. Because learning is a social process, it is essential that trainers foster positive training climates among all trainers and trainees. Positive training climates include relationships that are based on trust and respect, the creation of materials that are culturally relevant and based on trainees' needs as well as the understanding that adults learn differently in that the new learnings need to be applicable to their work and/or personal lives (Knowles, Holtan & Swanson, 2005).

Third, to become culturally proficient, trainers also need to understand what it means to be White and understand the inherent privileges Whites have when working in diverse communities. Trainers need to be aware of their implicit biases so that they do not unconsciously treat anyone differently when training. Trainers need to model culturally sensitive language and behaviors so that their trainees also become culturally aware and proficient. As trainers reflect, they need to interrogate their own discomfort.

Fourth, because success of the program often depends on sustainability, it is crucial to have local teams to help drive and maintain the efforts (Chen et al, 2013). In our case it was essential to have local teams to follow up with schools post-training to ensure the transfer of the knowledge to the schools. It is also essential to have everything in writing. We recommend that TOT Guidelines be written and shared and include the trainers' expectations, pedagogical tools and tips as well as examples of feedback letters.

Fifth, because it is costly to run TOT models over extensive periods of time, it is wise to consider using mobile technology to follow up with the trainers. In our case, we use WhatsApp as it is readily used in the countries in which we work. WhatsApp is also economical in that all one needs is to buy are local credits to have access to the Wifi. WhatsApp is a valuable tool to use to support local teams, answer questions, receive feedback and maintain strong relationships.

Sixth, WhatsApp would be beneficial to use before, during and after trainings held in the United States as well. WhatsApp or any other platform could be systematically used to follow-up with trainees and trainers. The use of such application would allow trainers and trainees to stay in contact with each other throughout the learning process and beyond.

Seventh, it is important to constantly review and evaluate what is being done and how it is being done to sustain the quality of trainers and trainings over time.

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Eight, it is important to realize that the quality of the trainers determine the quality of the training. Hence, it is advisable to train fewer trainers at a time and take the time and resources needed to train them well.

Finally, it is essential for trainers to become culturally proficient in order to impact learning. In other words, trainers must be able to demonstrate a willingness to learn about other cultures, listen, and adapt the training materials to fit the local needs and culture.

Conclusion

The findings of this research study indicated that our TOT model had both strengths and weaknesses. The strengths were in the area of cultural proficiency, understanding how adults learn best, the use of a scripted manual for facilitators in training, the available follow up with its feedback, the strong relationships based on trust and the importance of investing in quality. We also identified some weaknesses such as the lack of self-reflection on the part of the facilitators, the language barriers due to many languages and dialects being used, and the difficulty to find qualified and committed trainers. Another challenge was the different understandings of the notion of time.

This study is significant because billions of dollars are spent yearly on trainings worldwide. The TOT model is one approach that allows NGOs to invest in local people, using local knowledge, and training local trainers who are culturally proficient and who are able to facilitate trainings and follow up regularly wherever they are located in the world. TOT models have the potential to train a large number of school leaders overtime. If we are to reach the SDGs by 2030 and provide a quality education for all, we must remember that school leaders play a key role in improving student learning outcomes and as such, leaders, no matter who they are or where they are located, also need to attend culturally, evidence-based trainings that are practical.

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