PREPARING PEACEKEEPERS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE AFRICAN

CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS, TRAINING, AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

COMMAND AND STAFF OPERATIONAL SKILLS COURSE

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

The United States (U.S.) response to events in Africa in the 1990s—warlords in Somalia, the genocide in Rwanda, the crisis in Burundi, and the destruction of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania—was the development of the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) followed by the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. This study examined the impact of the command and staff operational skills portion of the ACOTA program to determine how well it prepared Ghanaian commanders and staff officers to conduct peace support operations under the auspices of a legitimate mandate. The importance of this program was revealed in its wide acceptance by the African leaders of 24 participating nations, by its ongoing support by the U.S. State Department, and by the budgetary increases it has received from the U.S. Congress over the years. This case study used qualitative methods to capture and analyze the self-reported perceptions of the course participants. Findings discovered that the students perceived the program as effective; team building was a perceived strength; U.S.-Ghanaian cultural differences were not perceived as effecting training; the teaching methodology instilled confidence to perform the mission; and course reference material, books, and CD-ROMs were valued. Results also showed that the time allowed for the course was insufficient; contingency training did not familiarize students with their mission area; students required timely notification to attend the course in order to properly prepare; and the course benefited the junior officers more than the senior officers.

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Dedication

Frederick Tannehill Curry

1 August 1951 - 9 February 2009

Dedicated to Frederick Tannehill Curry, friend of 18 years, teammate for 6 years, ACOTA-NGTS country manager for Ghana, training partner, and colleague. But for Fred's energy, exertions, efforts, and insights, this endeavor would have been but a proposal. He was a quiet man who has earned the appreciation of two great peoples– American and Ghanaian–for his efforts toward achieving peace in Africa. There are few things that I know with certainty, but I do know the sacrifices this former soldier made to achieve the multiple missions thrust upon him. Every effort of his was sterling. Our pained tears over his loss are wiped dry by the joy of his memory. Once a soldier, always a soldier.

We worked together as a team: at times, one subordinate to the other; at times, one superior to the other; but always as peers, and always with respect. In 6 years never so much as an untoward word was expressed. It was an odd pairing, a farm boy from Missouri and a city kid from the streets of Brooklyn. But it worked. Never an awkward moment. Just doing what had to be done.

The echoes of the 21-gun salute served as presage to the greatest of the greatest Peacekeepers above us, that we are sending him a worthy father, husband, colleague, scholar, farmer, and soldier. Salute, my friend, I hope to see you on the high ground!

CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

Chapter 1 presents the background of the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) (See Appendix A for a complete list of acronyms) program, the ACOTA model, and an overview of the study. It also presents the problem and purpose statements, lists the research questions, discusses the methodology, the significance, limitations, and assumptions of the study. A list of terms and definitions that are used in this study are also found in this chapter. The chapter ends with a summary.

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff skills course prepared them for their peace support operations. This study used a qualitative methodology to gather the data. The course, the research, and most peace support operations are conducted in Africa.

The realities involved in situating Africa in the scheme of world affairs are complicated, politically difficult, yet strategically important. But for the complexity of Africa's realities, there would be no ACOTA program. Although it is called the "dark continent," it lures millions every year to tour its vibrant beauty (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008). While it can be a hostile, forbidding, and unforgiving place, Africans derive a strength from their love of their land, their family values, their ethnicity, their traditions, and the gracious friendliness with which they treat visitors (Fall, 1990; Gocking, 2005).

At times, and in places, this troubled continent suffers profound diplomatic,

political, informational, military, economic, and social challenges, yet its elders strive to

put Africa's house in order and solve African problems with African solutions (van

Niekerk, 2009). As a result, and due to its vital importance in the world arena, the U.S.

needs to be engaged on the continent (U.S. Africa Command, 2010). Due to constraints,

it must to do so without deploying its military, so the ACRI and ACOTA programs were

developed (U.S. Africa Command, 2008; Bush, 2002; Shanahan & Francis, 2005).

Background

The ACOTA program, managed and funded by the U.S. Department of State, is

designed to enhance African capacities to rapidly respond to crises by providing selected

militaries with the training and equipment required to execute humanitarian or peace

support operations (U.S. Africa Command, 2008). The target population for the ACOTA

program is sub-Saharan African soldiers from partner nations who are scheduled to

participate in a peace support operation or who are designated to be in a standby mode to

do so. The ACOTA program prepares brigades (between 3,000 and 5,000 troops) and

force headquarters (5,000-plus troops) for peace support operations, but the focus is on

preparing battalions (350-850 troops) and sub-units (Bittrick, 2008; Boulama, 2007).

Presently, of the 54 African nations, 24 have agreed to participate as partners in

the ACOTA program, including Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the

Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique,

Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo, Uganda,

and Zambia. As a partner nation, a troop-contributing country is able to receive ACOTA

training and ACOTA funded equipment for its forces if it retains its eligibility. In order to become an ACOTA partner nation, the troop-contributing country must meet the criteria of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act (U.S. House of Representatives Committee on International Relations and U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 2003).

1.   The troop-contributing country must observe the supremacy of democratic governance.

2.   The exercise of civilian control over the military must be firmly rooted.

3.   The military must be prepared to submit to civilian control and transparency.

4.   The country must observe and protect human rights in Africa. (U.S. House of Representatives, 1998)

The sovereign decision to deploy troops on a peace support operation is made by the troop-contributing country based on a request from the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), or a sub-regional organization, normally under the provisions of Chapter 8 - Regional Arrangements, of the UN Charter (United Nations, 1945). Once the decision is made to deploy forces on a peace support operation, the troop contributing country will assign the mission to either an established battalion or form a provisional battalion composed of troops from various sources within its military. In either case, a requirement is then generated to prepare the battalion for its peace support operation.

The decision to provide ACOTA training is political, not military, and is based on a bilateral agreement. The ACOTA program has five main objectives: Train and equip African militaries to respond to peace support and complex humanitarian requirements;

build and enhance sustainable African peace support training capacity; build effective

command and control; promote commonality and interoperability; and enhance

international, regional, and sub-regional peace support capacity in Africa (Shanahan &

Francis, 2005). The ACOTA program of instruction accomplishes these objectives.

The core of the ACOTA program of instruction consists of 12 courses on training,

staff skills, and field skills (see Appendix B – ACOTA Core Courses). The program of

instruction for Training Planning Management Development (TPMD) and Battalion

Commander Mentorship (BCM) focus on implementing a battalion training program,

while Effective Methods of Instruction (EMI) provides partner nation cadre with the

skills necessary to become competent and effective ACOTA instructors under the train-

the-trainer concept. Soldier Field Training trains troops for a peace support operation in

a field environment. The command and staff skills course provides instruction for a

battalion or higher level staff so that they can operate effectively during a peace support

operation. The Command Post Exercise, Computer Assisted Exercise, and the Map

Exercise (MAPEX) are the praxis portions of the command and staff classroom training.

Consistent with program objectives, a decision to provide ACOTA training is

made by the APO in conjunction with the partner nation. When a battalion is scheduled

for training, a performance work statement is issued by the APO under a contractual basis

to either Northrop Grumman's Technical Services International Programs Directorate or

to the MPRI International Group. Each contractor submits a response to the ACOTA

Program Office outlining how it will perform the mission, and while there are differences

in the approach and execution, both achieve the ACOTA end-state. The corporation

awarded the task for a particular ACOTA partner nation will then execute the mission. This research examines the Northrop Grumman Technical Services training approach.

The nations taking part in the ACOTA program join with the expressed intention of providing forces to participate in peace support operations. Under ACOTA, designated military units of the troop-contributing countries are provided with training and equipment to prepare them for peace support operations, normally in sub-Saharan Africa, but anywhere they are needed. To prepare these battalions for their peacekeeping mission, the ACOTA-Northrop Grumman team developed the command and staff operational skills (CSOS) course. The country with the longest involvement with the ACOTA command and staff training is Ghana. A battalion from Ghana participated in the first command and staff training event that occurred in March 1999 under the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), the ACOTA program's forbearer, and the training there is ongoing (Kwiatkowski, 2000).

A group of predominantly retired U.S. military personnel authored a month-long program of instruction that covers the command and staff operational skills needed to operate successfully in a peace support operation. The instructional design was reinforced with drills in producing military orders, participating in a command post exercise, and executing published orders during a map exercise or a computer assisted exercise. Seven ACOTA personnel assigned to the ACOTA-Northrop Grumman Leavenworth office were designated as course and lesson authors. Of these personnel, both the designated course author and a senior lead analyst had post-graduate degrees from Kansas State University in Adult, Occupational, and Continuing Education, which

prompted them to include, to the extent possible, adult education considerations into the course.

The goal of the command and staff operational skills course is to prepare the commanders and staff officers for their peace support operation by providing an adult education experience that would mirror what they could expect to encounter during their deployment. The instruction was to develop problem solving and critical thinking skills, teamwork, interpersonal communications, and the ability to plan the types of peace support operations the battalion would realistically have to deal with in their mission area. There was also a desire to build on the knowledge the students already had from their prior military training and peace support operation deployments.

Adult Education Considerations

The key considerations of adult education that guided the ACOTA program development are not articulated in any single over-arching source document. However, it is commonly recognized that adult learning is different from other types of learning and that the discipline of teaching adult learners—andragogy—is different from that of pedagogy (Imel, 1995). Malcolm Knowles defined the concept of andragogy as "the art and science of helping adults learn" (1980, p. 43). Knowles described six assumptions underlying his concept of andragogy. According to Knowles (1984), adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it, learning is life-centered, experience anchors learning, adults become ready to learn those things they need to know or to cope effectively with their real-life situations, adults are life-centered (or task/problem centered) in their orientation to learning, and adults have a deep need to be

self-directing. The command and staff operational skills course seeks to provide student peacekeepers with an adult education experience that is consistent with Knowles' assumptions.

Adults differ in the ways that they learn, think, solve problems, and process information. Learning styles differ from one adult to another, so the presentation of the command and staff operational skills course material had to consider this factor (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990). To achieve the learning desired, the learning strategies were varied by providing lectures, slide presentations, small group instruction, discussion groups, role playing, coordination meetings, student workbooks, practical exercises, orders writing, briefings, outside reading assignments, and student-mentor interactions. Learning objectives were developed based on Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956) using the following action, conditions, and standards as the terminal learning objective for the entire course.

- Action: Plan and execute a battalion level Peace Support Operation (PSO).

- Condition: Given a higher headquarters order, map, overlay, standard operating procedures, course reference material, and a battalion command post.

- Standard: Employ command and staff procedures and the military decision making process to write, brief, and execute a battalion operations order in support of a peace support operation.

The development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as the ability to plan, are the focus of the command and staff operational skills course. During

week two, the students are taught a step-by-step decision making process and are expected to develop a contingency plan for a peace support operation, demonstrating creative and critical thinking skills. According to Brookfield (1987), the components of critical thinking are identifying and challenging assumptions, challenging the importance of context, imagining and exploring alternatives, and reflective skepticism. The Military Decision Making Process includes the input and output of the various steps involved in this process (Wade, 2005).

The command and staff operational skills course provides a critical learning experience for the student and it is a key part of the ACOTA model. Critical thinking skills are emphasized during the course through feedback and constructive critique. During small group instruction, the emphasis is placed on discovery learning, on how to think out loud, on how to keep an open mind, on group cooperation, and on non-threatening student-instructor interactions. The command and staff operational skills course consists of two days of lecture, presented to the entire battalion staff, covering topics of concern to the staff as a whole. This is followed by three days of small group instruction in which the students are placed in their respective groups, depending upon which staff section (staff function) they belong to: Administration/Logistics, Military Information/Intelligence, Operations, and Civil-Military Operations, and they receive instruction germane to that particular subject area.

In week two of the command and staff operational skills course, the commander and staff receive instruction on the military decision making process. During this timeframe, the students go through a step-by-step process to develop an operations plan

for a hypothetical peace support operation scenario. The next two weeks are spent

practicing what they learned in the command and staff operational skills course. During

the command post exercise in week three, the commander and staff develop and publish

an operations order which they execute during the week four computer assisted exercise.

ACOTA Model

The ACOTA program is designed to achieve the strategic goal of building the

capacity for peace support operations within African nations and to assist them in

assuming responsibility for maintaining peace on the continent by providing selected

battalions with a tactical peace support operation program of instruction (U.S.

Department of State, 2006). In the standard ACOTA model, three battalions from the

ACOTA partner nation are trained at the same time that cadres of trainers from the

partner nation are also trained. During the first iteration of training, both the battalion

staff and the partner nation cadre trainers, integrated into the battalion as part of the staff,

receive the command and staff training (Karis, 2009). On occasion, ACOTA partner

nations have requested that the standard ACOTA model be modified to meet their

particular needs. Courses listed in Appendix C – Other ACOTA Courses, were developed

to satisfy these kinds of requests.

When the second battalion is trained, the cadre trainers, who were students during

the first battalions training iteration, are now assistant instructors and they present half of

the ACOTA instruction to the second battalion. Finally, for the third battalion, the cadre

trainers are full-fledged instructors and conduct all of the training for that battalion.

Upon completion of the third battalion training iteration, the cadre trainers are considered

ACOTA instructors, they assume total responsibility for the ACOTA program of instruction for follow-on training iterations, and they are awarded a certificate and an ACOTA instructor patch. Typically, all three training iterations in total take about 15 months to complete. The cadre instructors provide a pool of partner nation experts that can sustain the ACOTA program over time, providing future deploying units with instruction in the skills necessary to successfully complete a peace support operation. The ACOTA objective of building and enhancing a sustainable African peace support operation training capacity is met for the particular ACOTA partner nation through these cadres of instructors. They will continue to present the instruction either by themselves or with the assistance of U.S. ACOTA mentors, if requested (Karis, 2009).

Presently, the ACOTA program is one of the U.S. State Department's major peace support operation programs in Africa, and the Congressional funding of the program has consistently increased over the years (Franke, 2007; GlobalSecurity.org, 2005). ACOTA is perceived to meet the needs of the target audience and its graduates have conducted peace support operations in Burundi, the Congo, the Ivory Coast, the Darfur, Guinea-Bissau, Lebanon, Liberia, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone, as well as providing humanitarian relief operations during flooding in Mozambique. The program is well established and over 92,000 African troops have participated in ACOTA, and its precursor ACRI, over the past 10 years (Fisher-Thompson, 2007). As previously mentioned, of the original ACRI partner nations, among the earliest participants in the program was the Republic of Ghana and its Ghana Armed Forces (Karis, 2009).

Overview of the Study

The goal of this study was to determine the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course prepared them for their peace support operations. A qualitative methodology was used to collect and assess this information based on interviews of the participants. Interviews were conducted until theoretical saturation was reached: that is, until an analysis of the data revealed that no new or relevant data seemed to emerge, the category development was dense, all elements were accounted for, and the relationships between the categories were well established (de Marrais, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1980).

At the point of saturation, it was assumed that the key points from the participants' perceptions were identified. Analysis conducted in this manner provided knowledge from the bottom-up, rather than from the top-down, and the knowledge is grounded in the data (Creswell, 2009). A description of the command and staff training of the ACOTA program was constructed based upon participant perceptions. It took shape as the data were collected and the information studied. This approach was designed to generate an assessment of how the participants made sense of the ACOTA program and their involvement in the program in terms of their preparation for peace support operations. Themes that emerged during the study were identified and considered. For example, was there a difference in perception between those senior in rank (major to colonel) in comparison with those junior in rank (lieutenant to captain and regimental sergeant major)? How did experience, defined by military seniority, influence the perception of the participants? Did the program provide the senior personnel with

any benefit? What about the junior personnel? Could anything have been done to enhance the benefits gained by the participants?

The information obtained from the Ghanaian military participants was triangulated by using peer checking and member checking (data triangulation); by using an outside reader (multiple analysis); and by keeping an audit trail of video and audio files, interview worksheets, and transcripts. The purpose of the triangulation was to corroborate the data, resolve perceived differences in perceptions, guard against potential errors, and enrich the evidence. Ethical standards were maintained and the research was conducted in accordance with Kansas State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidance.

Stakeholders in this study included representatives from the U.S. Department of State, the ACOTA partner nations, corporate providers, the academy, and most importantly, the individual peacekeepers and the people they protect. The ACOTA program is a major U.S. Department of State program with a multi-million dollar budget that involves the United States and 24 sub-Saharan African countries. It has existed since 2002, and in conjunction with its predecessor, the ACRI program, it has trained over 92,000 peacekeepers ((Fisher-Thompson, 2007). The intention of this research was to learn the perceptions of the Ghanaian military officers interviewed concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff skills course prepared them for peace support operations.

Problem Statement

The problem is that, to date, there is no evidence of any study that speaks to the perceptions of African military commanders and their staffs on how well the ACOTA program prepares them for their deployment on peacekeeping missions.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff skills course prepared them for peace support operations.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the development of this study:

Research question 1. What are the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning the influence of the ACOTA command and staff training in preparing them to serve as peacekeepers?

Research question 2. What influence did the ACOTA command and staff training have on their effectiveness as peacekeepers?

Research question 3. What is the nature of the ACOTA command and staff training experience in regards to the rank and experience of the participants?

Methodology

Qualitative methodology was used to conduct interviews of participants of interest who met the criteria for selection. Five criteria had to be met for an individual to be eligible for inclusion in the sample. The participant must have been

- A Ghanaian commissioned officer or warrant officer;

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- A key member of a battalion staff (i.e., commander, second in command, sergeant major [warrant officer], or staff officer such as personnel, information/intelligence, operations, logistics, or civil-military operations);

- A recipient of the command and staff portion of the ACOTA program;

- A veteran of a United Nations, African Union, or major sub-regional organization sponsored peace support operation; and

- A volunteer who willingly signed the informed consent statement to participate in the study.

Once the interviews commenced, an account of the ACOTA command and staff training was constructed based upon participant perceptions. The account continued to take shape as the data were collected and the information was studied. This approach was designed to generate an assessment of how the participants made sense of the ACOTA program and of their involvement in the program in terms of their preparation for peace support operations. The interviews were transcribed, formatted, and analyzed using the N6 software program developed by QSR International Pty, Ltd. N6 provides a toolkit for qualitative researchers to analyze, study, and code their research data (QSR International Pty Ltd. [QSR], 2002) and is a code-and-retrieve program that was specifically designed for qualitative research such as this study.

Participants were all volunteers who had received an introductory note (Appendix D – Introductory Note to Participants) and they all provided their informed written consent prior to participating in the project (Appendix E – Protection of Human Rights

Release Form). They also completed an interview worksheet (see Appendix F –

Interview Worksheet). The interview data collected from the participants were

inductively analyzed, going from specific, raw information to well considered categories

of information, in order to develop an understanding of its meaning. As the inquiry

proceeded and became more focused, insights emerged that were grounded in the data

obtained (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The information collected during the interviews was

analyzed and assessed as the process progressed, until the research was completed

(Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

To enhance the trustworthiness of the study, the data, the interpretations, and the

analysis were subjected to scrutiny and comment by the participants. Each participant

received a digital video disc that contained an electronic copy of the video and audio

recordings of the individual's interview, an electronic copy of the individual's interview

worksheet, and an electronic copy of the individual's consent form. During the member

checks, the views of the participants concerning the credibility of the findings were

collected. Using this technique sought to further enhance the credibility of the research

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garger, & McCormack-Steinmetz, 1991).

Sample

The target population of the ACOTA program, as a whole, includes sub-Saharan

African soldiers from partner nations who are designated as peacekeepers for current or

anticipated future missions. The target population of this study were Ghanaian military

officers who met the five eligibility criteria mentioned in the methodology discussion.

The plan was to interview 15 participants for approximately 1-1/2 hours each. In fact, 24

participants were ultimately interviewed. Selecting participants on the basis of what they

contribute to an understanding of the experience studied is purposive sampling (Merriam,

2009). This purposive sample consisted of the core leadership of Ghanaian battalions:

commanders, their second-in-command, staff officers, and regimental sergeants major

who have completed the command and staff operational skills training and who have

served on a peace support operations mission. The core leadership of the battalion are the

individuals who have the greatest influence on what the battalion does and how it

accomplishes its mission in a peace support operation environment. A preference for

purposeful sampling in this qualitative study was justified because, based on their

maturity, training, and experience, the participants have the benefit of being able to

provide rich, thick information representative of their class of Ghanaian military officers

participating in peace support operation. They are at the battalion level, doing

comparable duties, with similar responsibilities, having undergone an ACOTA training

experience, and having been deployed on at least one UN, African Union, or ECOWAS

mandated peacekeeping mission (Hanna & Benton, 1998).

The participants were selected from different battalions and from battalions that

participated in different peace support operations (such as the Congo, the Ivory Coast,

Lebanon, Liberia, or Sierra Leone) using snowball sampling. This sampling

methodology was feasible in terms of cost-effectiveness, resources available for the

conduct of the study, and the African setting. It provided adequate information for the

research and it was consistent with the methodology for conducting qualitative research

(Creswell, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the end, 24 Ghanaian military officers were

selected and interviewed. When the interviews reached the point of saturation, the point when additional interviews ceased to add information to previous ones, what Lincoln and Guba (1985) call the point of redundancy, one additional interview was conducted just to be certain.

Qualitative Procedures

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews consisting of open-ended questions (See Appendix G – Interview Protocol). Interviews were used to gather information from the participants, in their own words, so that insights were developed into how they viewed the command and staff training of the ACOTA program. Efforts were taken to put the participants at ease, and they were encouraged to talk freely about their points of view, so as to obtain their valued insights (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Cultural issues between the American researcher/interviewer and the Ghanaian interviewees were addressed with the participants in order to overcome any concerns. Recognizing that other people's world view is as legitimate to them as ours is to us is called *relativism*. Recognizing the relative legitimacy of these views is key to communicating across cultural boundaries. The literature suggests there is evidence that interviewing across class, gender, or ethnic barriers can be more effective than matching the backgrounds of the interviewer and the interviewee (Cannon, Higginbotham, & Leung, 1988; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Nothing noted during the conduct of this research disputed this perspective.

The interviews were semi-structured but the questions were open-ended. Interviewing Ghanaian officers presented minor cross-cultural challenges, mainly of a linguistic nature. To forfeit the opportunity to conduct the research due to this fact would fall victim to Merriam's assertion that "To restrict one's understanding of the world to Western science precludes learning and perhaps benefiting from what other perspectives have to offer" (2007, p. 1).

The interview process was undertaken with a few guiding questions as prompts: the research questions previously mentioned, in Appendix G – Interview Protocol. Information provided by the participants were pursued and probed for further illumination in a continually neutral manner, in order to have participants elaborate on their comments. The participants knew that they were there to provide information on the program, but ultimately the depth of the data obtained using a semi-structured interview format falls on the researcher (Hatch, 2002).

Confidentiality was observed throughout the research process. Interview participants selected a pseudonym, or alias, which was used in the project to protect their identities. Transcribers were employed, and as a condition of service, they agreed to the stipulation of confidentiality and signed a statement to the effect that the identity of the participants would be strictly protected. The same restrictions were applied to the peer reviewer and the outside reader. Data pertaining to the identity of the participants will remain in the personal possession of the researcher, stored under lock and key for a period of 3 years from the completion of the study, and then destroyed.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by a number of factors. The positions and responsibilities held by the participants during the peace support operation influenced their perceptions. The data collected offered an ex-post facto view of the process. The researcher was an instrument of the process. Finally, there may be unrecognized cross-cultural effects, for in some regards, the cross-cultural interviewer is like a fish trying to describe the water in which it swims: it cannot see it, and even if it could, it cannot describe it, because it lacks a comparative understanding (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Assessing the effectiveness of military officers who have undergone the ACOTA command and staff training and their perceptions on peace support operations is a difficult task because the researcher was not directly or physically involved in making observations in the actual peace support operation area. As there are no official after action reports submitted to the ACOTA Program Office that address the effectiveness of ACOTA trained Ghanaian officers as peacekeepers, the data had to rely on their self-reported effectiveness in the mission area.

Assumptions of the Study

For the purpose of this study, the following assumptions were made: The participants would provide truthful responses, Knowles' assumptions of adult education apply, and using qualitative methods is justified to achieve the understanding of the command and staff portion of the ACOTA program as it is perceived by Ghanaian military officers.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was that the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff skills course prepared them for peace support operations provided insights and feedback that merit attention in regards to the program's usefulness, whether there was a need for change, and what improvements could be made. As veteran peacekeepers and experienced military officers, the participant perceptions and insights ought to be considered in the training of future peacekeepers.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used in this study:

Africa Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA). A U.S. Department of State program designed to enhance the capacities and capabilities of African partner nations, regional institutions, and the continent's peacekeeping resources as a whole so that they can plan for, train, deploy, and sustain sufficient quantities of professionally competent peacekeepers to meet conflict transformation requirements with minimal non-African assistance (U.S. Department of State, 2009).

African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI). The Clinton administration's training initiative intended to enhance the capacity of selected African countries to respond quickly and effectively to peacekeeping and humanitarian relief contingencies on the African continent (Kwiatkowski, 2000).

Battalion. "A unit consisting of two or more company-, battery-, or troop-sized units and a headquarters" (Department of the Army, 2004, p. 1-19). A battalion for a peace support operation normally has a manning level of 350 to 850 personnel.

Chapter VI, UN Charter. Refers to authorized peace keeping operations (PKOs) that are limited in scope, permissive in that all parties to the conflict agree to the insertion of peacekeepers, and the peacekeepers expect to operate in a benign, non-hostile environment (United Nations, 1945).

Chapter VII, UN Charter. Refers to peace enforcement operations authorized and limited in scope by Chapter VII of the UN Charter (United Nations, 1945).

Combat arms. "Units and soldiers who close with the enemy and destroy enemy forces or provide firepower and destructive capabilities on the battlefield" (Department of the Army, 2004, p. 1-34). Typically they include infantry, armor, cavalry, or artillery units.

Combat service support. "Combat service support encompasses those activities at all levels of war that produce sustainment to all operating forces on the battlefield" (Department of the Army, 2004, p. 1-36). Military units that provide combat service support to other military units include quartermaster, transportation, ordnance, and medical units.

Combat support. "Critical combat functions provided by units and soldiers in conjunction with combat arms units and soldiers to secure victory" (Department of the Army, 2004, p. 1-36). Military units that typically provide combat support include military police, combat engineers, military intelligence, and communications units.

Command and staff operational skills (CSOS) training. A phase of ACOTA training consisting of two days of common staff skills instruction and three days of focused training in administration, logistics, operations, intelligence, and civil-military operations, followed by a week of military decision making process training, then a weeklong command post exercise, and a weeklong computer assisted exercise.

Command post exercise (CPX). The weeklong exercise which takes place after the command and staff operational skills instruction and which consists of an orders writing exercise and is followed by a map exercise (MAPEX) or a computer-assisted exercise.

Commander's discussion. The after-action review conducted by the battalion commander, assisted by his staff, to study the lessons learned during the ACOTA staff training.

Computer assisted exercise. A military exercise, without troops, in which a computer simulation is used to replicate actual operations.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). A community of West African nations established by a treaty in 1975, created primarily for economic cooperation and development (Schiavone, 1993).

Field Grade Officer. A military commissioned officer in the grade of colonel, lieutenant colonel, or major.

Interagency Working Group (IWG). The U.S. Department of State (DoS) element that managed the ACRI program (Kwiatkowski, 2000).

Janus Simulation. The computer program used by Northrop Grumman as the simulation of choice for the conduct of ACRI and ACOTA computer assisted exercises.

Military decision making process (MDMP). A step-by-step process in which the commander and staff analyze their mission, develop and analyze courses of action, and select a course of action that is then developed into an operations plan or order (Wade, 2005).

Mentor/observer-trainer (OT). An individual who interfaces with the training unit, observing, mentoring, and reporting in a specific functional area, such as administration-logistics, intelligence, operations, and civil-military operations.

Peace building. Complex political, economic, social, and security activities conducted by the international community in the aftermath of active hostilities, after a peace accord has been achieved, to help the parties recover from violent conflict and put a permanent end to hostilities (Lute, 2007).

Peace enforcement. Operations conducted under the provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter in which the international community uses active, forceful measures to compel warring parties to observe the terms of a standing peace agreement (Lute, 2007).

Peacekeeping. A hybrid politico-military activity aimed at conflict control, which involves a United Nations presence in the field (usually involving military and civilian personnel), with the consent of the parties, to implement or monitor the implementation of arrangements relating to the control of conflicts (cease-fires, separation of forces, etc.), and their resolution (partial or comprehensive settlements), and/or to protect the delivery of humanitarian relief (Pollard, 2000).

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Peacemaking. Diplomatic process of brokering an end to conflict, principally through mediation and negotiation, as foreseen under Chapter VI of the UN Charter (Pollard, 2000).

Peace support operations (PSO). Operations including preventive deployments; peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations; diplomatic activities such as preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace building; as well as humanitarian assistance, good offices, fact-finding, and electoral assistance (Pollard, 2000).

Renforcement des capacités Africaines de maintien de la paix. The French peacekeeping assistance initiative in Africa commonly referred to as "RECAMP." It is similar to the U.S. ACOTA program and includes multinational seminars both in France and Africa, as well as multinational command post and field exercises (Liégeois, 2010).

Sub-Saharan Africa. African countries located south of the Sahara desert.

Summary

This chapter provided information on the background for this study to include an introduction to the ACOTA program, its history, and the ACOTA training model. The chapter also provided an overview of the qualitative methodology used to conduct the study, the problem statement and purpose of the study, the research questions, the sample, the limitations, the assumptions, and the significance of the study. The chapter ended with a definition of terms. This chapter is followed by chapters on the review of the literature, the methodology used to conduct the research, the results of the research, and an analysis and discussion of the findings with a short conclusion.

CHAPTER 2 - Review of the Literature

This literature review provides an overview of the historical, sociological, and political context associated with this study, addresses closely related research, and provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as a benchmark for comparing the results with other findings (Creswell, 2009).

The purpose of this chapter is to identify and describe the literature related to the ACOTA program in light of the body of knowledge concerning adult education. In essence, the goal is to consider the environment, Africa, and to set the stage for understanding the ACOTA program from the theoretical perspective of adult education. The chapter presents information needed to understand the ACOTA program and the theoretical foundation for the study. In accordance with the suggestions of Strauss and Corbin (1998), this review presents an understanding on the nature of the educational experience being studied and suggests theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the conduct of the study.

The review includes a description of the contemporary African environment, the complexities existing on the continent that the ACOTA program must prepare its peacekeepers to confront, and a description of the creation of the ACOTA program to place it in context. Related literature in the field of adult education is then discussed to provide a theoretical framework for the study. Both the literature and its authors were chosen carefully. The qualifications of the African studies authors used in this document are found in Appendix H, Bona Fides of Authors of African References.

Africa's Contemporary Challenges

The African continent has nearly 1 billion people (Wariboko, 2003) speaking more than 2,000 languages (Agwuele, 2003). Ghana has over 100 languages and dialects (Berry, 1995); Nigeria has nearly 250 different language groups, probably more than any other single nation; Tanzania has over 100; and Kenya has more than 40. Africans living in vastly different local circumstances adapt to their environment, speak different languages, develop distinct cultures, practice different customs and lifestyles, and have diverse national interests and worldviews (Agwuele, 2003; Khapoya, 1998).

Africa is a continent, not a country, and the concept of "Africanness" and of an African "nation" as a supra-ethnicity is a myth (Ellis, 1996; Herskovits, 1962). Despite this fact, people generalize, using Africa and African as a reference, even to the point of naming ACOTA the "African" Contingency Operations Training Assistance program. Although ACOTA's effort applies to the continent, political circumstances are such that the Arabic northern Maghreb nations, though not excluded from joining, have yet to participate in the program (Karis, 2009).

The problems of sub-Saharan Africa influence interactions on the continent and with the non-African world. These problems shape conditions in sub-Saharan Africa, and in turn, shape the environment in which the ACOTA program operates (Cooke, 2009). Africa has problems that arguably have their roots in the circumstances of its colonial history, its newly gained independence during the Cold War, and in the current post-Cold War era (Meredith, 2006; Reader, 1998).

Historically, the arrival of the European colonizers and their missionaries brought economic, social, and political change to the continent and is arguably a major contributing factor to the turmoil that exists to this day (Gordon & Gordon, 1996). When the colonial authorities divided Africa with arbitrary international boundaries at the Conference of Berlin in 1884-1885, they paid little regard to the inclinations of the people themselves or to the geography of their ethnic communities (Ellis, 1996; Khapoya, 1998; Pakenham, 1992). The foreign powers partitioned Africa, acquired political supremacy, and used it to establish authoritarian administrations which reorganized society in the interests of the colonial powers and their local settlers (Ellis, 1996; Pakenham, 1992).

To further their control, the colonial powers alienated various ethnic groups and undermined traditional African patterns of authority by compromising African values and dismissing indigenous ways of knowing as inferior (Khapoya, 1998; Walters, 2008). Denying colonized Africans the right to participate in the political process retarded post-colonial political development, while the use of excessive force in addressing political problems carried over into the post-colonial period (Khapoya, 1998).

The majority of the first generation, post-colonial African leaders—Senghor in Senegal, Nyerere in Tanzania, Kenyatta in Kenya, Kaunda in Zambia, Azikiwe in Nigeria, and Banda in Malawi—were products of the missionary education system (Ellis, 1996; Khapoya, 1998; Southall & Melber, 2006). Africa's diversity caused these African leaders to adopt the colonizers' European languages as the official languages of their respective nations because the African states were politically incapable of deciding which

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of their pre-colonial languages to adopt nationally (Khapoya, 1998). Thus sub-Saharan Africa is largely divided into Anglophone, Francophone, and Lusophone countries, and the remnants of the colonial past are seen in the boundaries, bureaucracies, economies, and polities of these states (Ellis, 1996; Herskovits, 1962).

History, nature, and the global economic system have combined to deprive Africans of much of their potential wealth and its associated well-being (Gordon & Gordon, 1996). Among the issues that adversely affect sub-Saharan Africa are rapid population growth, food crises, a disjointed transportation system, urbanization, unemployment, the marginalization of women, the dismemberment of traditional homogeneous cultural groups, capital shortages, the debt crisis, thin markets, deforestation, environmental degradation, weak agricultural growth, dependence on single commodity crops, rudimentary educational systems, skill shortages, the blight of the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), their illogical political geography, and ethnic and tribal conflicts (Ellis, 1996; Gordon & Gordon, 1996; Iliffe, 2005, Von Kotze, 2002).

A global influence that impacted Africa was the end of the Cold War in 1989. Its end contributed to instability on the continent as the détente brought about by superpower influence was abandoned and the void filled by instances of hostility. While some African countries adopted democracy, instituted a multiparty political system, expanded civil liberties, held public officials accountable, and instituted free elections, others stifled the free press, suspended constitutions, banned opposition parties, prosecuted dissidents, dismantled their independent judiciaries, and co-opted and jailed legislative opponents to

create "rubber stamp" parliaments (Gordon & Gordon, 1996). The post-Cold War era witnessed conflicts in the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Rwanda, and Burundi, and continuing conflicts in Somalia, the Sudan, the Darfur, and the Congo (Prunier, 2008).

The successful leaders of African independence movements, faced with the task of building nation-states out of the remnants of colonial quasi-police states, accepted the former colonial boundaries and, joining together in the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union, agreed to respect the arbitrary territorial status quo (Ramsay, 1997). Thus, one of the more daunting problems confronting Africa is how to create and build national identities within states that are politically, ethnically, and culturally incongruous. Ethnic nationalism, ethnic heterogeneity, and tribalism bedevil attempts at national political integration (Gyekye, 2002).

Although the colonial administrations were dismantled in the 1960s, the ties to the former colonial powers remained. Undiversified cash crop economies left African countries at the mercy of their former colonial masters and the whims of the international market. The unequal and exploitative power relationship in the international capitalist system was a dominant force. In both dependency theory and center-periphery models of development, the wealthy, developed countries (the center) prevented poor countries (the periphery) from developing (Khapoya, 1998). The optimism of national unity for some peripheral countries was replaced with discord. Countries such as Burundi, Chad, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, the Sudan, and the Republic of the Congo experienced internal and external strife that impacted the international community and signaled a need for a strategic response (Prunier, 2008; Ramsay, 1997).

U.S. Interests in Africa

In Africa, U.S. strategic security interests translate into support for long-term development: investing in human capital, infrastructure, institution building, and better governance; building critical capacities that support human rights and political stability; encouraging the implementation of effective socioeconomic policies and entrepreneurship; and capitalizing on Africa's natural resources to diversify their economies, strengthen food security and self-sufficiency, and mobilize the efficient allocation of domestic and external financial resources (Cooke, 2009; Gordon & Gordon, 1996). Politically, the U.S. encourages a free press, constitutionally based governments, opposition parties, and independent judiciaries and legislatures, and the U.S. demands that African political leaders conform to the same ethical and moral standards to which other countries are held (Gordon & Gordon, 1996; Gyekye, 2002). Addressing security, the U.S. provides training, equipment, and assistance, such as ACOTA, to select African militaries that support regional peacekeeping efforts, encourages other conflict resolution means, and backs UN peace missions (Booker, 1998).

The role of the UN in the post-Cold War era has become the subject of debate. One concern is an emerging Western consensus downplaying previously held international legal norms of sovereignty and nonintervention at the expense of human rights and humanitarian crises (Gordon & Gordon, 1996). The previously held consensus was codified in Africa when 53 African governments joined the Organization of African Unity and adhered to its charter concerning non-intervention in the internal affairs of member states (Organization of African Unity, 2010). This perspective, formerly used to

condemn foreign intervention in Africa as motivated by neocolonialism and neo-imperialism, has now paradoxically been replaced by demands for U.S. and UN involvement in controlling conflict on the continent. In disparity, both the U.S. and UN are reluctant to be cast in the role of imposing order in Africa (Ottaway, 1999). It is, however, in the interests of the U.S., within its legal means, to prevent the creation of radicalized political leaders and the consequent formation of segregated, militant, and radically fundamentalist political structures that resort to violence and terror (Gordon & Gordon, 1996).

Currently, a large, moderate Muslim population in Africa favors harmony with the U.S. and the West (Cooke, 2009; Joseph & Kew, 2008). However, the threat of extremist elements expanding through Algeria and the Sudan is present, along with a propensity for these extremists to utilize unstable countries with large Muslim populations for safe havens (Stearns, 2010). It is important for the West to maintain stability in Africa and to retain the support of the moderate Muslim population located throughout the continent. The U.S. National Security Strategy confirms this importance by stating that in Africa, both promise and opportunity sit side-by-side with disease, war, and poverty. Disease, war, poverty, and extremism threaten human dignity. and that, in turn, is a strategic threat to U.S. interests and values (Bush, 2002; Evers, 2003).

U.S. values and African values should operate in a complimentary manner. Too often, advisors to African governments exacerbate a particular situation by assuming that traditional African ways are inferior and Western methods are invariably superior (Ramsay, 1997). Can the U.S. impose solutions on African nations or should its

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approach be patient, composed, and consistent with U.S. interests and values while

recognizing that the African approach must be consistent with African interests and

values? What T. E. Lawrence noted almost a century ago regarding the Arab Revolt is

relevant today in Africa:

> Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it
>
> tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help
>
> them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of
>
> Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is.
>
> (Lawrence, 1917)

Although the U.S. and the rest of the Western world are interested in the concept

of stability for Africa, this interest is not usually enough to warrant the commitment of

their own military forces. In 1993, the events in Somalia taught the U.S. that there are no

easy ways to handle conflicts on the continent (Bowden, 2001). As a consequence of the

tragedy in Somalia, the U.S. was unwilling to commit the resources necessary to prevent

the massacre of hundreds of thousands in Rwanda in 1994 (Power, 2001). The result was

that many governments in Africa and the West reached the conclusion that to create

stability, the continent must develop its own ability to establish peace (Evers, 2003).

In 1996, the crises in Burundi resulted in 400,000 displaced within the country,

and a further 350,000 were refugees in Zaire and Tanzania. In July 1996, Major Pierre

Buyoya, a Tutsi, led a successful coup attempt, suspended the national parliament, and

banned political parties. Fifty UN member states were approached to explore their

willingness to contribute troops to a possible PKO, but only Ethiopia, Uganda, and

Tanzania responded positively and the initiative died (Steering Committee, 1996). U.S.

guilt over failure to react to the 1994 situation in Rwanda surfaced in 1996 in Burundi.

With the terrorist bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam,

Tanzania, the belief that a strategy of engagement in Africa was a prudent and necessary

course, in order to avoid the adverse consequences of neglect, was strengthened within

U.S. political circles (Albright, 1997).

African Crisis Response Force.

Arguably, the U.S. mishandled its peacekeeping efforts in Somalia, but it equally

mishandled the crises in Burundi and Rwanda by failing to act (Evers, 2003;

Kwiatkowski, 2000; Pollard, 2000). By 1996, the crisis in Burundi served as a catalyst

for the U.S to become more actively engaged in Africa (Albright, 1997). In response, the

U.S. offered assistance by suggesting the creation of an African Crisis Response Force,

an African military force that would be trained and equipped with U.S. help and made

available for deployment to trouble spots wherever needed on the continent. This seemed

a way for the U.S. to avoid a repeat of a Rwanda or Somalia-type of catastrophe without

suffering the liabilities involved when placing U.S. troops on hostile ground (Handy,

2003). Unfortunately, the gesture was not well received by most African nations.

When U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher went to Africa in October 1996

to present the idea of the African Crisis Response Force, many of the details were still

incomplete (Biermann, 1999). African leaders were troubled that the U.S. had failed to

consult them in the development process of this concept. The unsolicited offer of a U.S.-

trained African military force created anxiety about the prospect of American

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imperialism that was evocative of European colonialism, an era that Africans did not want to revisit (Handy, 2003; Henk, 1997-98).

African Crisis Response Initiative.

The U.S. was committed to its peace efforts in Africa, so in early 1997 it formed an interagency working group led by Ambassador Marshall McCallie. The interagency working group focused on long-term capacity building of African peacekeeping forces and crafted a relationship with the UN (Biermann, 1999). Thus, the African Crisis Response Force evolved into ACRI, a plan intended to enhance the peacekeeping capability of African military forces without their forfeiting operational control over their own forces (Lolatte, 1999). By mid-1997, seven African countries signed up as partner nations for the ACRI program and eight battalions were scheduled to be trained (Handy, 2003). History would show there were actually nine ACRI partners.

The mission of the ACRI program was to enhance existing capabilities of selected African militaries to enable their greater and more effective participation in humanitarian relief or peacekeeping operations (HUMRO/PKO) (Evers, 2003). ACRI was to help identify, organize, equip, train, deploy, and advise capable African forces to conduct HUMRO/PKO, which would provide a more secure environment, render assistance to refugees or internally displaced civilians, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, relieve human suffering, and deter violence (Brower, 1999).

ACRI evolved into a set program of instruction that sought to raise the basic peacekeeping skills of participating military units. The concept was to provide the members of a battalion with an initial basic training experience and then to follow up

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with sustainment training over a period of several years. There was little flexibility in the

way the program was presented, and after the first training event, it was evident that the

level of training within battalions varied and the program had to be adjusted accordingly.

A problem developed with the training of some units, specifically composite

organizations, which had a varied return rate for follow-up training. Another problem

arose in achieving one of the goals of the training—the development of trainers to

provide the units an organic training capability. Although the intention was to establish a

train-the-trainer program, ACRI did not have a practical method to develop effective

trainers, and the concept did not develop as anticipated (Evers, 2003).

In order to enhance the effectiveness of the ACRI training program, the strengths

and weaknesses of the effort had to be identified. However, as Evers (2003) pointed out

in her thesis, the ACRI program had no effective measures of success, no methods for

evaluating the actual performance of the trained forces in the mission area, and no ability

to otherwise track the performance of ACRI trained units. Absent these measures, the

means did not exist by which to identify training shortfalls and to subsequently provide a

more tailored and effective program of instruction (Evers, 2003). The ACRI training

concept lacked flexibility. The program of instruction was rigidly established and, as

taught, it was broken into the major components of Initial Training (IT) and Follow-on

Training (FT) for battalions consisting of FT-1 through FT-5, and Brigade Initial

Training (BIT) and Brigade Follow-on Training (BFT) consisting of BIT-0 through BFT-

2 (Humphries, 2001). (See Appendix I, ACRI Training Programs.)

The flaw in the ACRI program was that it was not tailored to meet the needs of the participants. The change in administrations, the U.S. past experience, and the trauma of 9/11 caused the Bush administration to reevaluate the robustness of the effort. The results of that evaluation lead to the establishment of the ACOTA Program (Evers, 2003; Karis, 2009).

African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program

The last year of the ACRI program was U.S. Fiscal Year 2002. The Bush administration changed the name of the program from ACRI to ACOTA and pursued a stronger, more versatile approach to the training (Handy, 2003). The management of the program shifted from the interagency working group, with U.S. DoD participation, to a U.S. DoS-only operation under the management of the ACOTA Program Office. The ACOTA program placed much greater emphasis on training the trainer, on assisting higher-level staffs to improve their overall training methodology, and on emplacing simulation centers to support ongoing peace support operations training in countries that can sustain the effort (Humphries, 2004).

The actual transformation from ACRI to ACOTA began in December 2001. The new initiative placed more emphasis on peace enforcement, versus peacekeeping skills, including weapons training, convoy escort, logistics, protection of internally displaced persons, negotiations, field medical skills, individual health maintenance, field communications skills, command and control, and robust force protection (Klare & Volman, 2004). Training was tailored for each country to address shortfalls and enhance the ability of the force being trained to conduct peace enforcement operations as required

(Evers, 2003). Peace enforcement missions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter infer a greater degree of potential lethality than peacekeeping missions (United Nations, 1945). The objectives of the ACOTA program are to

- train and equip African military units and headquarters for peace support operation;

- build a sustainable peacekeeping capacity (train-the-trainer cadre);

- enhance peace support operation command and control;

- promote commonality and interoperability; and

- enhance international, regional, and sub-regional peacekeeping capacity in Africa. (Shanahan & Francis, 2005, p. 3)

As was true for ACRI, the determination by a partner nation to deploy ACOTA-trained troops remains a sovereign national decision. To date, the ACOTA Program Office has negotiated training agreements with 24 countries, including Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia. The DoS seeks to broaden the list of participating countries through bilateral agreements. The ACOTA Program Office has also sponsored training and assistance for major sub-regional organizations, including the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) and the International Peace Support Training Center, Karen, Kenya (Bittrick, 2008; Boulama, 2007; Gilbert, Uzodike, & Isike, 2009). The conditions for participation as an ACOTA partner remain relatively unchanged from the conditions set by the ACRI program:

- Serving under elected civilian government with transparent decision making;

- an absence of a record of human rights abuse with vetting required as directed by U.S. Congressional legislation—the Leahy vetting;

- an expressed interest in deploying peacekeepers; the potential capacity to deploy peace support operation contingents; and

- an agreement to end-use, reuse, and security assurances for U.S. defense goods and services provided. (Devlin, 2005)

The ACOTA program provides a menu of courses from which the partner nation can select, in negotiation with the ACOTA Program Office, based on the training level of its forces, its needs, and the anticipated requirements of its peace support operation deployment. The training program that ACOTA has developed and offers includes the foundational courses on strategy, training, methods of instruction, and field training, as well as command and staff training, command post exercises, and computer assisted exercises (see Appendix B, ACOTA Core Courses). Additional courses are offered as needed, including training in mechanized operations, riverine operations, leadership, medical, new equipment, logistics, and military police training (see Appendix C, Other ACOTA Courses).

The ACOTA program has a much greater training depth than did the ACRI program. But like ACRI, ACOTA is based on an international standard and it has a UNDPKO-approved program of instruction for its core programs of instruction. Each of the courses can be modularized and the segments adjusted to meet the needs of the

partner nation. Each program of instruction also provides for awareness training in human rights, gender respect/elimination of sexual exploitation, child protection, combating trafficking in persons, protection of civilians and innocents, coordination with nongovernmental organizations and international organizations, HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, refugee and internally displaced persons (IDP) management, rules of engagement (ROE), and UN operations (Karis, 2009).

Command and staff training for the organization's leadership includes the command and staff operational skills course, followed by a command post exercise and a computer assisted exercise referred to as the CSOS-CPX-CAX. Instruction includes the military decision making process, specific duties of principal and special battalion staff sections, and the functioning of a battalion operations center. Additional awareness training is also provided. Command and staff operational skills training is 10 days long and the students are provided advanced handouts, student workbooks, and the supplies necessary to complete the course of instruction.

During the first two days of the command and staff operational skills course, the students receive lectures on common staff skills, including an introduction to peace support operations; command and control, command post organization, staff organization, staff coordination, and information management; planning consideration for logistics, administration, and terms of reference; interoperability, reception, staging, onward movement, and integration; force protection; legal aspects of peace support operations, rules of engagement, mandate, and human rights; civil affairs; the media; introduction to psychological operations; and the conduct of military briefings (Karis,

2009). These subjects are presented to all members of the staff, as a group, and provide an overview of how the various battalion staff sections interrelate during a peace support operation (Karis, 2009).

The next three days of the training are spent in small group instruction and are devoted to the primary staff skills that serve as the foundation for the military decision making process. These skills apply to the primary staff sections: the administration, intelligence, operations, logistics, and civil-military operations sections. The material is advanced and staff-specific for each staff section. By way of example, the administration and logistics staff section receives instruction on basic administration, health, supply, maintenance, deployment, and convoy operations, while the civil-military operations staff section receives instruction on the operation of the civil-military operations center, joint military commissions, human rights and humanitarian relief operations, negotiations, mediation, and relations with the media.

The second week of the command and staff operational skills course covers the military decision making process (MDMP). MDMP instruction lasts four days and the battalion staff is mentored throughout the process. The design of this portion of the course starts out with a short period of instruction on a specific aspect of MDMP, followed by a practical exercise in which the staff works together as a whole and is tasked to conduct a peace support operation in Africa. Specific instruction covers mission analysis, course of action development, analysis, and comparison, with a recommendation to the commander for a decision (see Appendix J – The Military Decision Making Process). This is followed by the development of the operations plan, a

written product that is briefed to the commander. The morning of the last day of week two is used to conduct a communications exercise (COMEX), and the afternoon is used for the commander's discussion. Following the command and staff operational skills instruction, the battalions achieve the training objectives by conducting a weeklong command post exercise and a weeklong computer assisted exercise.

Supporting their overall training objectives are course-specific training objectives and tasks. Typical ACOTA command and staff operational skills course training objectives are to exercise command and control procedures, exercise communication procedures and equipment, exercise logistics operating procedures, exercise medical and medical evacuation procedures, establish force protection measures, and protect and support non-governmental organizations. Training objectives are translated into specific subordinate training tasks. For the "exercise command and control procedures," typical tasks would be to write an operations order, exercise positive control over subordinate units, and delegate authority.

Such ACOTA training objectives and training tasks are consistent with the types of missions and tasks the unit confronts during a peace support operation. Following the command and staff operational skills instruction, unit personnel practice what they learned during a five day command post exercise. The command post exercise scenario accurately reflects anticipated peacekeeping challenges using a master event list approved by the unit commander, and it presents the training audience with problems similar to the ones they will encounter on their peace support operations mission (see Appendix K – Command Post Exercise).

To accomplish the command post exercise and computer assisted exercise tasks, the students receive a peace support operation cease fire agreement, a peace support operation mandate, a peace support operation resolution and accords, rules of engagement, a standing operating procedure, and a higher headquarters operations order with annexes and maps. The computer assisted exercise flows directly from the scenario and training objectives of the preceding command post exercise and reinforces the training received during the command and staff operational skills course.

A typical ACOTA computer assisted exercise uses the JANUS simulation and a peacekeeping scenario designed to stress commander and staff in a peace support operation. Role players portray the senior commander and staff, as well as members of the former warring factions, representatives of an overarching African political organization, members of non-governmental organizations, and so on. The battalion's actual subordinate commanders participate in the computer assisted exercise by maneuvering their units, portrayed as icons, in the simulation based on the battalion's orders and with the help of simulation workstation controllers. The computer assisted exercise culminates with a commander's discussion in which the events of the exercise are reviewed, the lessons learned captured, and other observations discussed among the staff in a non-threatening manner.

The initial computer assisted exercise scenario portrays the unit as part of a multinational African peacekeeping force occupying the assigned sector in the mission area. During ACRI, and the beginning of ACOTA, the computer assisted exercise focused on a UN peacekeeping operation per Chapter 6 of the UN Charter. As the

lethality in the peace support operation environment escalated due to increasing violence in states such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Congo, and the Sudan, the computer assisted exercise changed and now focuses on peace enforcement operations under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter (Shanahan & Francis, 2005). The computer assisted exercise is conducted in five training days using a tailored scenario (see Appendix L, Computer Assisted Exercise).

The CSOS-CPX-CAX is normally followed by a peace support operation soldier field training experience that provides field instruction on those skills necessary for soldiers, at the individual, squad, platoon, and company levels to operate on a peace support operation. During soldier field training, the battalion commander and staff execute the tasks learned during the CSOS-CPX-CAX by deploying their troops in a capstone training event at the end of the training cycle.

Unlike ACRI, which was contingency training for battalions for an undetermined future PKO or humanitarian relief operation, ACOTA trainers generally found themselves conducting just-in-time, predeployment training for units that were actually deploying into a specific mission area. The ACOTA program currently provides these units with training oriented on their actual mission area. ACOTA also represents a shift from the ACRI program peacekeeping orientation. ACOTA provides partner nation units with an even greater military capacity that allows them to conduct not only peacekeeping missions, but peace enforcement missions as well. Under ACRI, a partner country had to accept or reject a fixed program of instruction, while with ACOTA, the partner country can request that the program be tailored to its particular needs (Humphries, 2004).

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ACOTA's emphasis on train-the-trainer activities involves the effective methods of instruction course, the command and staff operational skills course, the command post exercise, and soldier field training. These are achieved over the course of three training iterations. The host nation trainers are integrated into the first battalion, training as students and members of the battalion staff. During the second battalion training, the trainers go through the effective methods of instruction course and then rehearse and conduct 50% of the ACOTA training for the second battalion, while the U.S. ACOTA instructors train the other 50%. During the final training iteration, the host nation ACOTA trainers rehearse and train 100% of the ACOTA program of instruction, while the U.S. ACOTA instructors mentor and assist, supervising their rehearsals and monitoring the actual instruction. From this point on, the host nation ACOTA trainers have the capacity and are expected to teach these courses to future battalions, with U.S. ACOTA instructors reverting to mentor and assist roles (Karis, 2009).

Each peace support operation is unique and different because of the multitude of combinations presented by the threat, the environment, the civil populace, and the nature of the operation. Inherent tension is involved in the reality of these missions and the means to accomplish them. By design, ACOTA presents the organization's leadership with an adult education experience and the analytical tools needed to gauge a peace support operation, to strike a balance between the application of military force and the successful accomplishment of the mission by other means. The ACOTA command and staff course is an adult education experience; during its design, adult education principles and methods were considered and incorporated within the course.

Adult Education

As a field, adult education has a broad foundation that includes a theoretically based doctrine, a framework with models for action, and a research tradition. Each of these aspects was addressed in this portion of the review of the literature, as well as the cross-cultural challenges that are involved when Americans provide instruction to Africans.

Adult education theoretically based doctrine.

A premise of this study was that the command and staff skills portion of the ACOTA program has a theoretically based doctrinal foundation that can organize an understanding of the process (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). This portion of the literature review provides an adult education framework for the study of the ACOTA program, identifies areas of knowledge that may prove helpful in understanding the responses of the participants in the study, and intellectually frames the study.

The relationship of theory to practice in adult education is viewed by Peters, Jarvis, and Associates (1991) from four perceptions:

1. Adult education is carried out without reference to an organized body of professional knowledge and theory—Practice Without Theory.

2. A body of knowledge developed through the scientific process should be applied to practice so that practice can be improved—Theory as the Foundation for Practice.

3. The best way to improve practice is to uncover and critique the informal theory that practitioners use in their work—Theory in Practice.

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4.   Unity between theory and practice highlights the ideological character of

all knowledge and argues that adult education can be improved by

fostering emancipation—Theory and Practice for Emancipation.

While all four perceptions have merit, the concepts of theory as the foundation for

practice and theory in practice best frame the study. These views posit that practice

should have a theoretical foundation, that practitioners operate on the basis of theory, and

that theory can be derived from practice by systematically uncovering the structures of

meaning that influence the ways that individuals act (Peters et al., 1991).

Theory in practice argues the position that theory can be developed by reviewing

and articulating the concepts implicit in good practice and that theory can then be applied

to practice (Peters et al., 1991). Malcolm Knowles recognized this relationship and

sought to refine it with his conceptualization of andragogy. Andragogy, and its

associated set of assumptions, was Knowles' effort to develop a theory specifically for

adult learning. The assumptions of andragogy concerning the design of learning include

that adults need to know why they need to learn something, adults need to learn

experientially, adults approach learning as problem-solving, and adults learn best when

the topic is of immediate value (Knowles, 1989; Merriam & Brockett, 1997 & 2007).

Using Knowles' assumptions, and given the explanation of the command and staff

portion of the ACOTA program detailed earlier in this document, a case can be made that

ACOTA is an adult education program. First, all of the African staff officer students are

adults and generally range in age from their mid-20s to their late 50s. The fact that they

are slated to deploy on a peace support operation establishes a need to know the subject

matter taught and the fact that the subject areas of the training are based on the past experiences of former peacekeepers and are presented using practical exercises, command post exercises, and computer assisted exercises, addresses the need to learn experientially. Each of the learning exercises posed problem situations directly related to peacekeeping and were of immediate value when these officers deployed into the peace support operation mission area. With this perception, the ACOTA program is an adult education experience and merits study.

A framework with models for action.

Research is a purposeful, systematic process by which we know more about something than we did before engaging in the process (Peters et al., 1991). Shulman (1988) pointed out that educational research has emerged from the social and natural science disciplines, which have well-developed paradigms of discovery and verification. In regards to adult education, Peters et al. (1991) identified three paradigms in the field: positivist, interpretive, and critical.

According to the positivist view, "We gain scientific knowledge through sensory or observational experience combined with logic" (Peters et al., 1991, p. 44; see also Bredo & Feinberg, 1982). The basic assumption is the notion of a single, objective reality that can be observed, known, and measured, with the aim of uncovering laws to explain that reality. The scientific method, used in the natural sciences, was appropriated by the social sciences and education as a positivist way to build a knowledge base (Peters et al., 1991).

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The interpretive paradigm draws from many disciplines, including anthropology, history, phenomenology, hermeneutics, and the Chicago school of sociology. Research from this paradigm has been called qualitative, naturalistic, field study, ethnographic, and grounded theory (Peters et al., 1991). Essentially, the purpose of this paradigm is "to replace the scientific notions of explanation, prediction and control, with the interpretive notions of understanding, meaning and action" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 83). In contrast to the positivist paradigm's objective reality, interpretive research advances there are multiple realities. Reality for this paradigm is not an object that can be discovered and measured, but rather a construct of human thought that is subjective and that must be interpreted rather than measured (Mezirow, 1996; Peters et al., 1991).

In the interpretive view, beliefs rather than facts form the basis of perception in a world that is dynamic, rather than static (O'Brien, 1998). "Knowledge continually changes; new constructs permit new perceptions and....Objects, events, and especially people are continually changing. The process of that change is as important to study as continuity" (Deshler & Hagen, 1989, p. 4). The major data collection strategies of this type of research—interviewing, observing, and analyzing—directly involve the researcher with the phenomenon under study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Rather than testing hypotheses, researchers use an interpretive approach to inductively build hypotheses and theories, in contrast to researchers oriented toward deduction. Deductive researchers "hope to find data to match a theory; inductive researchers hope to find a theory that explains their data" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 49).

The critical paradigm finds its roots in German philosophies espoused by Hegel, Marx, the Frankfurt School, and Jürgen Habermas (Peters et al., 1991). Central to this paradigm is the concept of praxis, the combination of reflection and action. "It is the 'doing' which will be reflected upon in retrospect and which is prospectively guided by the fruits of previous reflections" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 147). The practitioner's interpretations of the world and self-understandings are accepted as the bases for developing knowledge (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). This paradigm requires researchers to critically reflect upon society and their involvement in reinforcing the oppressive structures of the social order. It affords them the opportunity to overcome domination and repression through praxis. In the positivist view, knowledge is objective and value-free, but in the critical view, knowledge is regarded as subjective and emancipatory.

Taking action is fundamental to changing the social structure and the process is considered both freeing and empowering. The aims of critical research are enlightenment and empowerment brought about through an educational process that leads to transformative action (Peters et al., 1991). In this form of research, "the politics of the relationship between the knower and the known assumes center stage; the task becomes developing methodological approaches to involve the researched in the negotiation of meaning and power and the construction and validation of knowledge" (Lather, 1989, p. 252).

The current study was situated in all three paradigms: positivist, interpretive, and critical. While the command and staff training has an objective reality, the meaning it had for its student participants and the respondents to this study was subjective; that is,

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subject to their interpretive notions of understanding, meaning, and action. The reality of the educational experience the Africans encounter in the ACOTA program was subjective and must be interpreted rather than measured. The critical paradigm concept of praxis, reflection and action, also applied as the students were presented with one situation after another, upon which they had to reflect and act. If the interpretive and critical paradigms applied to the subject under scrutiny, then the research methodology used to study the process had to take this under consideration.

Cross-Cultural Considerations

This study considered that complicated cross-cultural issues may have had an impact in regards to U.S. instructors training Ghanaian student officers. Researchers cannot deny that culture is a complicated subject. Culture can be understood as the way a group of people solve the problems posed by situations they face in their everyday lives (Van Maanen & Barley, 1985), or it can be viewed as "the deeply learned confluence of language, values, beliefs, and behaviors that pervade every aspect of a person's life" (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009, p. 9).

Culture can be considered as the knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, social hierarchies, religions, notions of time, roles, spatial relationships, and concepts that a group of people have developed over the course of time (Samovar & Porter, 2003) or it can even make something as hard and fast as the simple truth an ephemeral notion, "When it comes to truth, there is either no truth, many truths, or truth for a particular culture" (Cunningham & Fitzgerald, 1996, p. 49). Even this caveat is further confused by Ginsberg and Wlodkowski's (2009) comment that, "Truth in a

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multicultural world is not entirely indeterminate, there are facts." As far as Africa is concerned, after more than 40 years of independence, cultural disputes still reverberate. "Indeed, so politicized does the concept of culture remain with regard to Africa that the mere mention of it risks causing immediate misunderstanding" (Ellis, 2006, p. 206).

Regardless of the definition of culture, or the emotionally charged misunderstandings that it may entail, it defines and even governs the circumstances under which people interact, communicate, and understand each other. The ways a person behaves and communicates are largely driven by culture (Samovar & Porter, 2003). Failure to appreciate the cultural implications of communication can lead to miscommunication. Miscommunication means that the message was not clearly understood. The dilemma of miscommunication for ACOTA students is that they may be caught between genuinely needing the vitally important information being presented, while trying to deal with well-meaning American instructors who may be unaware of the possible negative impact of their own cultural biases and behaviors (Ziegahn, 2000).

The implications of the dilemma may be far-reaching, for difficulties that occur between American instructors and African students may broaden into international consequences, as the ACOTA program is conducted under the auspices of bilateral international agreements between the U.S. State Department and the national authorities of the ACOTA partner nations involved. For this reason, intercultural communication skills, as well as knowledge of the larger sociopolitical environment, are critical for the instructor, facilitator, and mentor working on ACOTA missions. There is a distinct need to achieve intercultural competence, the ability to interact within another cultural identity

in a mutually appropriate and effective manner (Collier, 2003). Cultural awareness, both of one's own culture and of the other, is crucial (Spindler & Spindler, 1994).

Every time they entered the intellectual cauldron of the African classroom, ACOTA instructors were crossing class, rank, ethnic, and racial lines. What is key was "learning to recognize that other people's view of their world is as legitimate to them as yours is to you" (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 21). What was important for the purposes of this study was that the subject of culture was addressed by the Ghanaian participants, and their Ghanaian perceptions were captured in the results of the research.

Ghana: Background, Culture, and Military

As the participants in this research were Ghanaian, some background information on Ghana is fitting. The Republic of Ghana is a West African country bordered by the Gulf of Guinea, Benin, Burkina Faso, and the Ivory Coast. It is a democracy and was the first sub-Saharan country to gain its independence, from the United Kingdom in 1957 (Berry, 1995). In Ghana, the local languages are used during interpersonal communications, while the former colonial language—English—is used for educational, official, and governmental purposes (Agwuele, 2003). The major ethnicities are the Akan, Ewe, MoleDaghane, Guan, and Ga-Adangbe (Berry, 1995). Typically, communication "among ethnic groups speaking different African languages was usually achieved in the tongue of the Metropole," thus the use of English as the official language of Ghana (Herskovits, 1962, p. 372).

Ghanaians are 62% Christian, 15% Muslim, and 22% other (Berry, 1995). Religion plays a great role in everyday life. During ACOTA opening and closing

ceremonies, the unit chaplain generally renders a Christian prayer and the unit Imam provides an Islamic prayer. Regardless of the denomination of the members of the unit, all are respectful during these observations..

Ghana is one of the wealthiest nations in West Africa. It is resource-rich and benefits greatly from the Volta River's Akosombo Dam, which provides hydroelectric power for itself and its neighbors (Berry, 1995). As a tropical country, Ghana struggles with diseases such as cholera, typhoid, tuberculosis, anthrax, pertussis, yellow fever, hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, and malaria, and the government emphasizes immunization and primary health care programs (Berry, 1995).

Ghana has about 7,000 people in its army, air force, and navy. While Ghana is acknowledged to have one of the lowest ratios of active troops per thousand citizens in the world, it is also acknowledged to be the most professional and up-to-date military in Western Africa (Wapedia-Wiki, 2010). During the precolonial period, Ghana's military tradition was based on the Assante tribe, but after colonization by the British, its military tradition, like that of the U.S., was inherited from the United Kingdom (Berry, 1995).

Ghana is a collective culture and a hierarchical society where respect is rendered based on age, experience, and position. Ghanaians, like many African cultures, place an extremely high premium on respect for elders (Gavin, 2007). Ghanaians also value dignity, decorum, and honor. Family loyalty is very strong, as the family is a primary source of identity for a Ghanaian. Family obligations generally take great precedence (Kwintessential, 2010).

Ghanaians expect to be addressed by their academic, professional, or honorific title and their surname. Ghanaians typically use the handshake in greetings, but when shaking hands, they hold the right hand in the normal manner but then end the shake with a twist and snap of the fingers. It is a very distinctive greeting. When gifts are given, only the right hand or both hands are used, never the left hand (Kwintessential, 2010).

Summary of the Review of the Literature

The literature examined in this review covered Africa's contemporary challenges, the U.S. interests in Africa, and the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program. The next topic in the review was the discipline of adult education in terms of its broad foundation, including a theoretically based doctrine, a framework with models for action, and a research strategy. Cross-cultural concerns and a brief overview of Ghanaian culture ended the chapter.

In Chapter 3, the discourse about the study is further developed by examining the research design, describing the data gathering method, discussing the strategy used to analyze the data, and explaining how the study's trustworthiness was ensured. Ethical and political issues in the conduct of the study are also discussed.

CHAPTER 3 - Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology used to gather and analyze the data in the current research. Discussion centers on the study's research design, the research questions, the problem statement, the purpose statement, and the significance of the study. Explanations describe the population, sampling methodology, the selection of the sample size, and rationale for selection. Ethical considerations and IRB approval to conduct the study are discussed. The chapter ends with a discussion of the data collected.

Research Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative methodologies are the two important research traditions in the field (Suter, 2006). The quantitative approach, akin to the positivist view, is based on the scientific method and uses experimental and quasi-experimental designs to collect data for statistical analysis (Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Cook & Campbell, 1979). In contrast, qualitative procedures are typically inductive and interpretive in orientation, during both data gathering and analysis (Creswell, 2009; Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004; & Merriam, 2009). Even though qualitative procedures are different from quantitative ones, qualitative research is increasingly respected and accepted within the academic community, as it continues to develop and improve its methodological sophistication (Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004; Merriam, 2009).

Qualitative research methods are particularly useful for discovering how individuals understand their world and how perceptions influence behavior, as well as applicable in exploring and providing illustrations and explanations for an experience

(Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004). The merit of a qualitative case study is judged by how insightfully the research data were analyzed, how well interpretations are presented, and how carefully phenomena are related to theory. Multiple interpretations of a situation may be quite acceptable, depending on how various people perceive it (Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004).

The purpose of this study was to develop as complete an understanding as possible of the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff course prepared them for peace support operation missions, based on the information the Ghanaian officers provided during the interviews. While there are a variety of ways to obtain qualitative data, interviewing is the most widely used method (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Interviewing is like detective work, in that it is a search for clues concerning the underlying principles and themes pertaining to a problem, and then compiling the investigative effort into a reasonable explanation of the situation (Evans, Gregg, & Evans, 1980).

Marsick (1998) stated that the key to good analysis is its grounding in the facts, so as to limit unsubstantiated speculation concerning the case. Adult educators have an interest in assessments that enhance programs and increase professional competence in ways that inform action and improve conditions (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). Having an understanding of an adult education program gained by such assessments, in relation to theory, inputs, and process, will improve results (Steele, 1989).

Research Design

This study described the ACOTA command and staff skills course from the viewpoint of the participants. It was an empirical inquiry that investigated a real-life situation, within its perceived context, to interpret the data for the emergence of concepts, theories, ideas, and themes (Hanna & Benton, 1998; Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Ragin & Becker, 1992; Yin, 1994, 2009).

This study was undertaken to investigate practices with the intent of determining how to improve them. Both the practices and the study occurred in a cross-cultural adult education setting, with American instructors sent to prepare serving officers in the Ghanaian Armed Forces for peace support operations (Hatch, 2002). In-depth interviews provided the Ghanaian military officer recipients of the command and staff course an opportunity to share their knowledge, perceptions, and insights, as well as the value of this ACOTA training in preparing them for their respective peace support operation missions, including how the training can be improved (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Creswell, 1998; Hatch, 2002; Hayes, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Case study.

In preparation for this research, thought was given to determine what kind of study it would be: phenomenological, grounded theory, narrative analysis, or a critical or ethnographic study. The dilemma was that this research did not fit neatly into any of these categories. Merriam solved the problem by pointing out, "One does a qualitative research study, not a phenomenological, grounded theory, narrative analysis, or critical or ethnographic study" (2009, p. 22). But both Creswell (1998, 2009) and Merriam (2009)

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identified the case study as within the qualitative research tradition. A case study is a detailed examination of one setting, a single subject, a single depository of documents, or one particular event (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). Case studies vary in their complexity, but in design, they progress from broad exploratory beginnings to more directed data collection and analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The general objective of a case study is to develop as full an understanding of the case—the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course—as possible (Silverman, 2005).

The purpose of case studies is to answer focused questions, producing in-depth descriptions and interpretations in order to provide an understanding of the information for decision making as well as for education. For the most part, generalization is not a goal of a case study, "Because discovering the uniqueness of each case is the main purpose" (Hayes, 2004, p. 218). As distinct from evaluation studies, case study research may leave the determination of meaning and worth to the reader, who constructs personal generalizations by drawing on the information provided (Hayes, 2004; Stake, 1995). Stake cautioned that while most case studies are not evaluations, the interpretations made by the researcher are evaluative in nature, so in that sense, the case researcher is always an evaluator (1995, p. 96).

Qualitative research is often written as a case study, as such a format is ideal for illustrating the complexity of causation (Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004). Thus, "case study analysis is appropriate for intensive, in-depth examination of one or a few instances of some phenomena" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 46), in contrast to other methods, such as survey analysis, which normally addresses fewer aspects of a phenomenon but across

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more instances. The researcher's purpose in conducting a case study, however, is not to study everything going on at the site, but to focus on a specific issue, problem, or program. Clear boundaries are necessary. Case studies can be bounded by a particular individual, situation, program, institution, time period, or set of events, or through the use of research questions. Otherwise, the researcher may be drawn away from the topic of study (Hayes, 2004; Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004; Merriam, 2009). The nature of the research, its end-state, the target audience, the location—Accra, Ghana—and the research questions bounded the current case study.

Research questions.

Research questions focus the study, limit the scope of the investigation, and provide a device to evaluate progress and completion. The research questions serve the purpose of the inquiry (Hatch, 2002). Ultimately, the research questions are not addressed to the participants, but rather to the researcher. The research questions are self-addressed to the researcher: they bind the study and serve as a control for developing questions to be posed to the participants in the interview protocol.

Research question 1. What are the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning the influence of the ACOTA command and staff course in preparing them to serve as peacekeepers?

Research question 2. What is the perceived influence of the ACOTA command and staff course on their effectiveness as peacekeepers?

Research question 3. What is the nature of the ACOTA command and staff training experience in regards to the rank and experience of the participants?

Problem statement.

The problem is that to date, there is no evidence of any study that speaks to the perceptions of African military commanders and their staffs on how well the ACOTA program prepares them for their deployment on peacekeeping missions.

Purpose statement.

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff skills course prepared them for peace support operations.

Significance of the study.

The significance of this study was that the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff skills course prepared them for peace support operations provided insights and feedback that merit attention in regards to the program usefulness, whether there was a need for change, and what improvements could be made. As veteran peacekeepers and experienced military officers, their perceptions and insights ought to be considered in the training of future peacekeepers. This is the first study of its type to query the recipients of ACOTA training to determine their views on the efficacy of the effort.

Population

Although the exact number of Ghanaian officers who participated in the ACOTA command and staff operational skills program is difficult to determine, the best estimate of the number of participants who met the criteria for this study, considering that

approximately 15 battalions were trained, is between 150 and 200 officers. Participants

for this study were drawn from this population.

Sampling methodology.

Theoretical sampling is selecting "groups or categories to study on the basis of

their relevance to your research questions…and most importantly, the explanation or

account which you are developing" (Mason, 1996, pp. 93-94). Such purposeful sampling

is common in qualitative research and may actually be preferred if the sample is typical

and can provide a rich source of information. If purposeful sampling provides a group

that is fairly typical of the population of interest, then the study will be enhanced,

especially if a rational basis for participant selection can be explained (Hanna & Benton,

1998; Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Ragin & Becker, 1992; Yin, 1994).

The rational basis for the selection of Ghanaian officers for this study was that

Ghana was an original member in the ACRI program and continues to participate in

ACOTA. The Ghana Armed Forces has vast experience on peacekeeping missions under

UN and African Union auspices in Afghanistan, the Balkans, the Congo, the Ivory Coast,

Pakistan, Rwanda, Liberia, Lebanon, and Sierra Leone, with numerous small troop

deployments as UN observers throughout the world (Agemang-Bioh, 2000; U.S.

Department of State, 2010a). Ghana has a well-deserved reputation as a leader in the

field of international peacekeeping (Adeti, 2003). Ghanaian participants in the ACOTA

program typically have experienced multiple peace support operations and a pool of

officers were available in Accra, Ghana, from which the sample for this study was drawn.

Ghana was preferred over other large African peace support operations troop contributing

countries, such as Senegal or Ethiopia, as Ghana is an Anglophone country versus

Senegal, which is Francophone, or Ethiopia where the official language is Amharic.

Conducting the interviews in Ghana required fewer resources than conducting the

research in an other than English speaking country.

This study used a criterion-based selection process to choose participants. A list

of characteristics or attributes the participants must possess in order to qualify for

participation was constructed (LeCompte & Goetz, 1993; de Marrais, 2004). Five criteria

had to be met for an individual to be eligible for inclusion in the sample. Each participant

must have been

- A Ghanaian commissioned officer or warrant officer;

- A key member of a battalion staff (i.e., commander, second in command, sergeant major [warrant officer], or staff officer such as personnel, information/intelligence, operations, logistics, or civil-military operations);

- A recipient of the command and staff portion of the ACOTA program;

- A veteran of a United Nations, African Union, or major sub-regional organization sponsored peace support operation; and

- A volunteer who willingly signed the informed consent statement to participate in the study.

Although a key concern of sampling is representativeness, in qualitative studies,

samples should be selected on a rational basis. Representativeness in this study was

enhanced in that participants were from different battalions, went through the training at

different times, and participated in different peace support operations. Study participants were asked to identify other potential persons of interest, rich in information, to participate in the study (Creswell, 1998). This process is consistent with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) recommendation that maximum variation is best achieved by selecting each unit of the sample only after the previous unit has been tapped and analyzed, what they called serial selection of sampling units. Snowball sampling was employed, as each participant was asked to identify a potential next participant in a snowball manner' thus, the sample was continuously adjusted and focused (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This sampling methodology was feasible in terms of cost-effectiveness, time and resources available for the study, and the African setting. Adequate information was obtained to successfully complete the study.

Sample size.

In purposeful sampling, the size of the sample is determined by informational considerations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Sample size depends on the nature of the research; the richness of the interviews; and the extent to which the participants are able to respond to the research purpose, address the problem, and answer questions. A 1½ hour interview typically yields a transcript of about 30 pages of text and a sample of 15 respondents yields 450-500 typed pages of transcribed data (de Marrais, 2004). Creswell stated that with an in-depth interview lasting as long as 2 hours, 10 participants in a study represents a reasonable sample size (1998, p. 122).

The proposal for this research anticipated a sample size of 15 participants. It was believed that the concept of saturation, the point when additional interviews cease to add

much to previous ones, what Lincoln and Guba (1985) called the "point of redundancy", would be reached at 15. When the researcher begins to see "similar patterns in the responses from participants or when little new information is received from the interview process, it is probably time to stop the interview portion of the study" (de Marrais, 2004, pp. 60-61). However, Patton (1980) cautioned that care must be exercised when declaring that saturation has been reached, for "The moment you cease observing, pack your bags, and leave the field, you will get a remarkably clear insight about that one critical activity you should have observed... but didn't" (p. 195).

In the current study, the sample size ended with 24 Ghanaian military officers. Given Patton's admonition and the fact that time and resources were available to accommodate 9 additional participants, a decision was made to increase the sample to that number. As the purpose is to maximize information, sampling was terminated when no new information appeared to be forthcoming and redundancy was achieved. The point of redundancy is the point at which efforts to recruit additional participants cannot be justified in terms of the additional outlay of energy or resources required; a point of diminishing returns (Lincoln, & Guba, 1985). Fifteen participants did not provide the certainty that the point of redundancy was reached to the same degree that 24 participants did. The diminishing returns on the research effort was sufficient to cause the field portion of the study to end with interviews at 24.

Characteristics of the sample

Tables 1 through 4 display demographic characteristics of the sample. Table 1 lists the rank spread of the participants. The junior officers, lieutenant through captain,

were typically primary staff officers. The senior officers, major through colonel, were commanders and seconds-in-command. Participants in this research attended ACOTA training exercises from 2006 through 2008. Of the participants in the research, only one was female, which is not inconsistent with the small numbers of women presently in the Ghana Armed Forces. The actual proportion of women to men is classified by the Ghanaian Directorate of Defence Intelligence; see Afrim-Narh, 2006.

In regards to interviewing females, there has been a movement among feminist researchers over the past few decades to change the interactions in interviewing from authoritative, sociable, or therapeutic to being expressly egalitarian. This concern evolved from studies involving the powerless and may not transfer, or may even be counterproductive, when involving the powerful. Ghanaian commissioned officers, regardless of sex, are not powerless, and education, social class, and military status ought to overshadow gender differences (Hertz, 1996; Luff, 1999; Warren, 2002). Table 1 displays the ranks of the participants. Table 2 displays the age of the participants and the age of the sample.

Table 1

Ranks of the Participants

Rank	*n*
Regimental Sergeant Major	2
Lieutenant	4
Captain	5
Major	4
Lieutenant Colonel	7
Colonel	2
Total	24

Table 2

Ages of the Participants

Age	*n*
26-30	2
31-35	5
36-40	3
41-45	3
46-50	4
51-55	4
56-60	2
Not given	1

Table 3 displays the military specialties of the participants. The larger proportion of combat arms officers reflects that peacekeeping missions typically ask troop-contributing countries to provide combat arms units to support the operation.

Table 3

Military Specialty of the Participants

Military Specialty	*n*
Combat Arms (Infantry, Armor, Artillery)	14
Combat Support (Military Police, Engineers)	4
Combat Service Support (Signals, Quartermaster, Ordnance)	6

Table 4 displays the highest level of civilian education achieved by each of the participants. The A-Level is equivalent to a U.S. high school college preparatory course. The Ghanaian military academy is a 22-month officer producing institution, not a degree-granting institution, although graduates are awarded a diploma in military studies which is above the high school level. The diploma in public administration is equivalent to a U.S. associate degree (telephone interview with Major William Kwabiah, Ghanaian Armed Forces, April 6, 2010). Many of the officers listed in Table 4 with bachelor degrees, master degrees or diplomas in public administration are also graduates of the Ghana Military Academy.

Table 4

Highest Education Level of the Participants

Highest Civilian Education Level	*n*
High School/A-Level	5
Ghanaian Military Academy	1
Diploma in Public Administration	4
Bachelor's Degree	8
Master's Degree	6

Ethical Considerations

Hatch (2002) noted that the ultimate gatekeepers, the people who determine

whether and to what extent the researcher will have access to the information desired, are

the participants. Before approaching potential participants, researchers should have an

outline of a research arrangement in hand. This outline should include a description of

the roles of the researcher and participants, what the study will involve, and what will be

expected of participants (Hatch; 2002). This information was provided to the participants

in the form of an introductory note to participants (See Appendix M) and a protection of

human rights release form (See Appendix E), which was used to gain informed consent

and to provide an explanation at the outset concerning the purpose, motives, and

protections involved in the interview.

Reciprocity for the participants was stated in the consent statement. They were

given an opportunity to discuss their experiences and viewpoints in a safe setting of their

choosing with a researcher who confirmed the importance of their participation. In regards to the setting, the participants chose the venue, which included their offices, the classroom, and a private room set up especially for the interview (Warren, 2002). Their right to privacy was and will continue to be protected. No identifying information was included in the transcriptions, and pseudonyms were used in place of the real names. Participants were provided an opportunity to review the transcripts of their interview, sent to them via e-mail (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Participants were also provided with a Leatherman Surge Multi-tool in appreciation for their contribution to the research. The implement was uniformly appreciated by all of the participants.

Human participants were involved in this study, so an application to perform the research with human participants was submitted, including the initial draft of chapter 1 of this dissertation, a copy of the protection of human rights release form used in the conduct of the research, and a draft of the interview protocol to the Kansas State University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects for their review and approval. The review was conducted under proposal number 4722 and a determination was made that the collection of data for this research was exempt from further review.

Data Collection

Data collection in qualitative research can be carried out by using interviews, which are considered to be one of the richest and most important sources of data (Hayes, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Semi-structured interviews were used in this research to gather descriptive data in the participants' own words, in order to gain insights into how they viewed the ACOTA program. The goal of

understanding how the person being interviewed thinks is at the center of the interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Direct observation of the performance, the actual behavior of ACOTA trained Ghanaian officers in their peace support operation mission area, was ruled out due to restrictions on travel into hostile areas imposed on the researcher by the sponsoring corporation and the U.S. government. Interviewing was the best recourse.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to test procedures and equipment, resolve issues, identify unforeseen problems, and practice data collection (Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004; Yin, 2009). Methodologically, the pilot study provided insight about the relevance of the interview protocol and about logistics in the field (Yin, 2009, p. 94).

Two field grade officers were interviewed using the initial interview protocol as presented to the Institutional Review Board. The interviews were videotaped and audio taped. The participants expressed no problems with these recording methods and a review of the tapes indicated as much. The pilot study confirmed Krathwohl's (1998) observation that a video record is clearer and more understandable than an audio record.

The interviews conducted during the pilot study revealed that a 1½ hour interview takes about two hours of prior coordination to arrange and another two hours to set up and conduct. It then takes three hours to create the backup digital video discs (for the interviewee, the interviewer, and for transcription). It takes approximately four to six hours (based on intonation and accent) of transcription time for every hour of interview. Verbatim transcriptions were made, as they "provide the best database for analysis"

(Merriam, 2009, p. 110). The magnitude of the transcription task and the available time

mandated using three transcribers. The pilot study verified Krathwohl's comment:

> Don't assume, however, that qualitative methods are a breeze compared with
>
> quantitative ones. ...both require skill, and qualitative methods are extremely
>
> labor intensive. It is hard to appreciate this fact thoroughly until you are
>
> confronted with the usual mountain of notes that you must organize, analyze,
>
> digest, and interpret. (1998, p. 228)

As a result of the pilot study, the questions asked from the initial interview

protocol were fine-tuned by making them more open-ended and including questions that

addressed cultural issues. Also, the analog tape recorder was replaced with a digital

recorder, and a longer lasting battery was obtained for the video recorder. A safety

deposit box was obtained to safeguard recordings for three years after completion of the

study.

Everything recorded was data, so everything was transcribed (Hatch, 2002) for

input into QSR's N6 qualitative research computer program (QSR, 2002). Based on a

recommendation by Professor Trudy Salsberry, Kansas State University, the data

gathered during the pilot study were included in the case study database (Yin, 2009).

The pilot study revealed the mechanics of recording require attention. The

recorder's batteries must be fresh and electrical adapters properly plugged in. The quality

of sound can vary with background noises such as generators and air conditioners, which

are required when teaching indoors in the African tropics. Such noise can interfere with

capturing interviewee comments, so the volume of the recorders needs to be turned up

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(Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 126). The procedures established during the pilot study were instrumental in ensuring that no data were lost during the data gathering portion of the research.

Data Analysis

Sorting through the data and making meaning of it, the data analysis phase, again was basically detective work. "The researcher acting as a detective must search through the clues (data) to follow threads of evidence (patterns of consistency in the data) to a final decision" (Hayes, 2004, p. 232). The research questions guided the data analysis effort, as the intention was to answer those questions and to discover the relationships they uncovered, in order to make a case. Data analysis was a reduction process, as the data were analyzed, sorted, organized, and reorganized in order to draw final conclusions (Hayes, 2004). This was an involved process, as Patton warned, "You will need roughly two to five times as much time for processing and ordering data as the time needed to collect it" (1980, p. 295).

Completing the data reduction process is comparing the data in a repeated to-and-fro manner, constantly reviewing the implications of additional evidence as it comes in (Silverman, 2005). Basically, Glaser and Strauss's (1967) constant comparative method involved comparing data segments to determine similarities and differences. Simultaneous data collection and rudimentary analysis, the process of making sense out of the data in an inductive manner, were conducted while still in the field (Merriam, 2009). After leaving the field, data analysis became less rudimentary and more sophisticated.

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Marshall and Rossman provided the following guidance for data analysis: Organize the data; generate categories, themes, and patterns; code the data; test the emergent understanding; search for alternative explanations; and write the report. Open coding creates categories of data and a preliminary framework for analysis. Axial coding reexamines the categories and how they link to the big picture (1999).

Using a similar approach to Marshall and Rossman, Glaser and Strauss's (1967) methodology compares incidents applicable to each category; integrates categories and their properties; delimits the theory; and writes the theory. The challenge is how to avoid drowning in data. The mass of data produced in a study requires careful thought, preparation, and planning to collect and analyze the data utilizing techniques of coding, sorting, memoing, data summarizing, and data presentation to construct a reasoned explanation of the findings (Hanna & Benton, 1998). In this instance, the process was accomplished by creating a database and using QSR's N6 computer program to analyze the data, print reports, conduct follow-on analysis, and then collate the results to distill reasoned meaning.

The QSR N6 computer program proved useful in assisting in the analysis of the research data. A database was established by transcribing the 24 taped interviews into a Microsoft Word® document. Each transcription was then cross-checked against the videotaped interviews by an independent peer reviewer and corrections were made. This was considered necessary, as the transcriptionists were unfamiliar with the Ghanaian accent and intonation, which caused gaps in their transcriptions that the peer reviewer, who was familiar with Ghanaian intonation, was able to fill. A final cross-check of each

transcription against the videotaped interviews was then completed by the researcher. At that point, the transcribed interviews were finalized and forwarded to each participant for member checking. The entire transcript, some 500 pages, was read, reread and highlighted by the researcher, and then margin notes were made. "This process of making notations next to bits of data that strike you as potentially relevant for answering your research questions is also called coding" (Merriam, 2009, 178). The transcriptions were converted into a text file and imported as a project into the N6 software.

Coding data proceeds in stages (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). N6 was used to code the data into categories for analysis and to assist in the development of the themes. The 24 interviews were imported into the N6 document explorer to explore, browse, and annotate as paragraphs, not lines or sentences, in order to retain contextual meaning. Initial codings, based on the research questions and the interview protocol, were loaded into the N6 node explorer. The initial code words used to organize and analyze the data included the following categories: mission, team, instructor, student, experience, confidence, change, materials, computer assisted exercise, skills, decision making, leadership, problem solving, communications, issues, strength-positive, weakness-negative, culture, scenario, young, and junior.

The coding separated the data into categories for further analysis and for extraction of thematic ideas. A repeat series of text searches were completed, and a report was printed, read, analyzed, and consolidated. The N6 reports were then consolidated, reread, and highlighted to get a sense of meaning of the data and to search for relationships among categories of data (Creswell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Working with codes in N6 can be mesmerizing to a new researcher, so steps were taken to avoid dysfunctionally coding too much, what Richards (2002) warned as over-coding and ritualistic coding. This was done by reverting to printed N6 reports and doing stubby pencil analysis of the printed data, distilling it into the themes. The process resulted in capturing an overall sense of the data in margin notes and then distilling the effort into the ultimate themes of the research.

> In coding the interviews, you can mark each passage with a brief summary of what the person was telling you. Some of these summaries that you make suggest themes, because they seem to fit a common pattern… You then check out the theme suggested by your coding by reexamining the interviews for further examples that confirm or disconfirm your tentative new theme. (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 235).

Credibility and trustworthiness.

Krathwohl (1998 & 2004) advised that qualitative research, like all research, has real-world implications and therefore cannot escape judgments on quality. While quantitative research has a vocabulary and procedures to achieve rigor, a review of the literature revealed that qualitative research struggles with unfair comparisons to quantitative research. Krathwohl pointed out that Lincoln, in a 1995 presentation to the American Educational Research Association, attempted to set forth parallel terms describing quantitative versus qualitative research. Krathwohl (1998, p. 338) observed that qualitative researchers are more content with the terms on the right of this listing:

scientific rigor	vs.	trustworthiness
internal validity	vs.	credibility
external validity	vs.	transferability
reliability	vs.	dependability
objectivity	vs.	confirmability

The literature on qualitative methods revealed the truth of the statement by Dr. Frank Spikes, Director of the Adult Education Doctoral Program, Kansas State University, that "People get lost at the intersection of quantitative and qualitative methods" (Personal conversation, 2009). While credibility and trustworthiness are essential characteristics for any investigation (Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004), puzzlement arises in the confusion of terms: validity, internal validity, external validity, authenticity, replication, generalizability, etic issues, emic issues, representativeness, reliability, predictability, objectivity, transferability, and the list goes on. To simplify the complex, the easiest and most defensible way to discern order out of this confusion appeared to be to pick a model that addressed issues of credibility and trustworthiness and apply it to the current research. Quantitative researchers press for explanation and control, while qualitative researchers press for understanding the complex interrelationships that exist (Stake, 1995, p. 37). As Krathwohl stated, "A comparison of qualitative methods with quantitative methods is a bit like contrasting the use of essay questions with multiple-choice ones" (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 231). Each serves a distinct purpose.

A distinction between what knowledge to shoot for fundamentally separates quantitative and qualitative inquiry. Perhaps surprisingly, the distinction is not

directly related to the difference between quantitative and qualitative data, but a

difference in searching for causes versus searching for happenings. (Stake, 1995,

p. 37)

Sorting through Creswell (1998, 2009), Krathwohl (1998 & 2004), Lincoln and

Guba (1985), Marshall and Rossman (1999), Silverman (2005), and others, Merriam's

model on strategies for promoting validity and reliability (2009) appeared to be most

appropriate. The rationale for this decision was that Merriam hailed from the field of

adult education and had researched and written extensively on qualitative research.

Merriam's 2009 edition on the subject was among the most current in the field. As Table

5 reveals, Merriam's list of eight strategies include triangulation, member checks,

adequate engagement in data collection, researcher's position or reflexivity, peer

review/examination, audit trail, rich-thick descriptions, and maximum variation.

Table 5

Strategies for Promoting Validity and Reliability

Strategy	Description
Triangulation	Using multiple investigators, sources of data, or data collection methods to confirm emerging findings.
Member checks	Taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking if they are plausible.
Adequate engagement in data collection	Adequate time spent collecting data such that the data become "saturated"; this may involve seeking discrepant or negative cases.
Researcher's position or reflexivity	Critical self-reflection by the researcher regarding assumptions, worldview, biases, theoretical orientation, and relationship to the study that may affect the investigation.
Peer review/examination	Discussions with colleagues regarding the process of study, the congruency of emerging findings with the raw data, and tentative interpretations.
Audit trail	A detailed account of the methods, procedures, and decision points in carrying out the study.
Rich, thick descriptions	Providing enough description to contextualize the study such that readers will be able to determine the extent to which their situations match the research context, and hence, whether findings can be transferred.
Maximum variation	Purposefully seeking variation or diversity in sample selection to allow for a greater range of application of the findings by consumers of the research (Merriam, 2009, p. 229).

Triangulation.

Triangulation means comparing and cross-checking interview data collected from

people with different perceptions (Merriam, 2009, p. 216). Triangulating data enhances

the research by corroborating evidence (Creswell, 1998). Credibility is achieved through triangulation, so the data in the current study were triangulated. Patton (1990) mentioned four ways to triangulate data: methods triangulation; data triangulation (comparing perceptions from different points of view); triangulation through multiple analysis (using multiple analysts to review the findings); and theory triangulation (using multiple theories to interpret data). The triangulation methods used in this study were peer checking and member checking (data triangulation); outside reader (multiple analysis); and keeping an audit trail.

The outside reader and peer reviewer played a key role in ensuring a sense of conformity in the themes discerned from the participants' transcripts. The peer reviewer examined the collected data for accuracy and the outside reader examined the analysis to render an independent confirmatory judgment that the data and the analysis were accurate to an ordinary, reasonable, and prudent standard. Much like quantitative analysis, where inter-rater reliability is the degree of agreement among raters in regards to consensus, this study verified the results of the assessment by resolving variation in the interpretation of the data between the researcher, the peer reviewer, and the outside reader through collaboration. There was no significant divergence of opinion between the researcher and the two readers and agreement on the themes was achieved.

The outside reader had a doctoral degree, was an associate professor on the tenure track at Baylor University, and taught courses on research methods for Kansas State University. The peer reviewer had a bachelor's degree and 11 years of experience

working with ACRI and ACOTA. Both read the dissertation a number of times and they were thoroughly familiar with the transcriptions.

Member checks.

A second common strategy used to ensure credibility is member checks, also called respondent validation. In this method, feedback is solicited on emerging findings from some of the people interviewed.

> This is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of
> misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perception
> they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying
> your own biases and misunderstanding of what you observed. (Maxwell, 2005, p.
> 111)

Each participant was provided with a digital video disc of their respective video and audio tapes and they were e-mailed their final, transcription for review and modification. The initial draft of the dissertation was also sent to them for review and comment.

Adequate engagement in data collection.

Adequate engagement in data collection means the researcher must eliminate rival explanations (Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004). Real life is composed of different perceptions that do not always reconcile themselves; thus, discussing contrary, discrepant information adds to the credibility of an account. Contradictory information was presented and explained to make the study more realistic and hence more valid (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009).

Researcher's position on reflexivity.

Preparing to do a case study begins with the skills, preparation, and training of the researcher. Case studies include procedures for protecting participants, the development of a case study protocol, the screening of candidate cases to participate in the case study, and the conduct of a pilot case study. Case study researchers must (a) be comfortable with ambiguity, (b) demonstrate an ability to ask good questions and to listen, (c) be adaptive and flexible, (d) have a firm grasp of the issues being studied, and (e) understand bias and either avoid it or acknowledge it when it occurs (Yin, 2009).

The gatekeepers and participants are stakeholders in this research, but interpreting the data is the responsibility of the researcher. The characteristics of the researcher, including gender, race, ethnicity, education, experience, the ability to ask questions, and to listen, are important factors. The data collected for this research was filtered through the researcher's lens, so information must be provided to situate the researcher's perception and relationship to the case (Hayes, 2004). An unbiased appreciation of the evidence, without preconceived notions, is the goal of research. A researcher's characteristics can help or hinder that process (Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Ragin & Becker, 1992; Yin, 1994). In a qualitative study, the researcher's involvement in the study has an inherent influence on the outcome of the study. As Ratcliffe noted, "One cannot observe or measure a phenomenon/event without changing it, even in physics, where reality is no longer considered to be single-faceted" (1983, p. 150). Openness and candor dictate that the biography of the researcher, as it applies to the research, should be scrutinized.

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The requirement of transparency and disclosure dictates that the following information be provided. The researcher is a 62-year-old, white, male, who has trained African soldiers under the ACRI and ACOTA programs since May 1999 and has made 86 trips to 22 African countries, spending 20-35 weeks a year on the continent. The researcher was recognized for his contributions to these programs by the award of a U.S. State Department Certificate of Appreciation in 2004. The researcher has 30 years of military service, of which 10 were spent as a criminal investigator.

The researcher has a Master of Science degree in Adult, Occupation, and Continuing Education from Kansas State University. In July 2009, the researcher was conferred professional certification by the award of Certificate of Training in United Nations Peace Support Operations and is a 2007 graduate of the United Nations Staff Officers Course, presented at Kungsängen, Sweden. While a researcher can claim that there is no reason to believe that there are any special biases that would distort the research, it is up to the reader to decide. The researcher's background is provided so it can be taken into account in judging the findings (Krathwohl, 1998 & 2004).

Peer review and examination.

In pursuit of greater transparency, a peer on the ACOTA program was asked to review the video recordings of the interviews and render an assessment. The peer reviewer observed that the researcher suffered from the effects of jet lag during some of the interviews; the researcher was at times impatient in obtaining demographic data; the researcher was deferential to the more senior officers, calling them "Sir"; and the questions were not posed in exactly the same way to each participant. The researcher

does not dispute the observations of the peer reviewer. There is a difference of six time zones between Ghana and the U.S., so exhaustion is always a companion in these instances. Demographic data is important, but not important enough to dwell on at the expense of the research questions. After 30 years of operant conditioning by the U.S. military, the researcher's respect for senior officers is ingrained in his psyche. Finally, it is the nature of a semi-structured interview process that questions are not posed to each participant in exactly the same manner.

Audit trail.

Within the current study is a database of material provided by the participants and by the literature to support the findings. An audit trail was established to contribute to the trustworthiness of the study, and in turn, it was made available to the peer reviewer and outside reader for review (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). An audit trail reveals the path the researcher took through the data to determine whether the conclusions are reasonable (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

As distinct from a peer debriefer, an external audit, what Lincoln and Guba termed the *inquiry audit*, is accomplished by the dissertation supervisory committee, providing an objective assessment at the conclusion of the study as to its merit (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The procedure of having a supervisory committee look over the various aspects of the project (e.g., the relationship between the research questions and the data, the level of data analysis from the raw data through interpretation, etc.) enhances the overall validity of a qualitative study (Creswell, 2009).

Rich, thick descriptions.

Geertz' (1973) rich, thick description, as a strategy to enable transferability, refers to a description of the setting and participants of the study, as well as to a detailed description of the findings, with adequate evidence presented in the form of quotes from participant interviews. As Lincoln and Guba stated, the best way to ensure the possibility of transferability is to create a "thick description of the sending context so that someone in a potential receiving context may assess the similarity between them and...the study" (1985, p. 125). Thick description is "the particular perceptions of the actors" that readers can accept as subjective description (Stake, 1995, p. 42).

With dense data, the credibility of qualitative work with the audience tends to be very high, as it is "more effective than mere numbers in conveying the characteristics of situations", the people, and their interrelationships (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 337). Like the very convincing nature of eyewitness testimony, qualitative research tries to establish an empathetic understanding for the reader, through the thick descriptions of the participants that convey to the reader a vicarious experience (Stake, 1995). Rich, thick descriptions will serve as the foundation of chapter 4 in presenting the results of the research.

Maximum variation.

Maximum variation is purposefully seeking variation and diversity in the sample selection to allow for a greater range of application of the findings by the consumer of the research (Merriam, 2009). In this study, maximum variation was enhanced in that participants were from different battalions, had gone through the training at different times, and had participated in different peace support operations. Study participants were

asked to identify other potential persons of interest, rich in information, to participate in the study (Creswell, 1998).

Summary

Chapter 3 described the qualitative research methodology used to gather and analyze the data in this study. Discussion included the research design and the research questions, the problem statement, the purpose statement, and the significance of the study. Explanations addressed the population, sampling methodology, and the sample size. Ethical considerations and IRB approval to conduct the study were disclosed and the chapter ended with a discussion of the data collection and the data analysis processes used.

CHAPTER 4 - Results

The results of this research are discussed in this chapter. The themes are identified and the participants' perceptions pertaining to those themes are reported. The basic procedure in reporting the results of a qualitative study are to develop descriptions and themes from the data; to present these descriptions and themes as findings so that they convey the multiple perceptions of the participants using rich, thick description; and give the discussion "an element of shared experiences" (Creswell, 2009, p. 192). By providing many perceptions about a theme, the results become more realistic and richer, adding to the validity of the findings (Creswell, 2009).

When using interviews to report events or explain occurrences, the participants' responses may be subject to poor recall and/or the inability to articulate accurately. This situation is alleviated when their perceptions are reported verbatim and the study ensures that that no original data was lost to analysis through carelessness or otherwise, thus ensuring that all of the data collected receives appropriate attention (Yin, 2009).

The goal is to balance the amount of concrete description, analysis, and interpretation presented such that the narrative remains interesting and informative. The quality and quantity of the evidence persuades the reader that the inductively derived findings are trustworthy. Such effort is woven into a narrative that achieves balance between description and interpretation, evidence and analysis. While Merriam's recommendation was to avoid "lengthy, single-spaced quotes; rather, embed shorter, multiple pieces of evidence in the narrative" (2009, p. 254), the quotes must contain

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enough of the responding participants' rich, thick descriptions to assure that their meanings are clear.

The Research Questions and Resulting Themes

The intent of the study was to answer the three research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning the influence of the ACOTA command and staff training in preparing them to serve as peacekeepers?

2. What influence does the ACOTA command and staff training have on their effectiveness as peacekeepers?

3. What is the nature of the ACOTA command and staff training experience in regards to the rank and experience of the participants?

The interview questions were developed to obtain the participants' responses provide the basis to answer the research questions. The protocol provided the framework for the data collection during the semi-structured interviews. The remainder of the chapter contains reports of the perceptions of the participants .

The 13 Themes

1. Students perceived the teaching and learning as effective.

2. ACOTA instructors were perceived to have done a good job.

3. Time allowed for the course was considered insufficient.

4. Contingency training did not familiarize students with their mission area.

5. Team building was a perceived strength.

6. Student notification and preparation needs improvement.

7. The training benefits junior officers more than senior officers.

8. U.S.-Ghanaian cultural differences were not perceived as affecting training.

9. The teaching methodology instilled confidence to perform the mission.

10. Course reference material, books, and CD-ROMs were valuable.

11. Military decision making and problem solving are important skills.

12. The command post exercise and the computer assisted exercise brought out the skills studied in the command and staff operational skills course.

13. Leadership and communication skills were enhanced by student interactions.

Overview of the Themes

Overall, the results of the research revealed that the students perceived the teaching and learning as effective. The ACOTA command and staff operational skills experience gave participants a broad appreciation for peace support operation missions. The participants were eager to attend the training, it matched their doctrine, and it prepared the young officers for their promotion exams. The training provided commanders and key staff officers with knowledge of what to expect on their peace support operation missions, and the program was considered suitable for military professionals. No participant considered individual participation in the staff course as a waste of time.

The ACOTA instructors, predominantly retired U.S. military officers with long service, were perceived to have done a good job. Their experience was appreciated, the

insights they gained in training peacekeepers from other troop-contributing countries were valued, and they were considered friendly and approachable. However, a number of participants perceived that these former American officers did not speak the English language clearly, which adversely impacted participant understanding of the course material. This perception was not held by Ghanaian officers who had received training in the United States. Participants also thought the ACOTA program would be well served if instructors were sent into their mission areas to interact with their former students, obtain lessons learned, and inform their teaching. Sending instructors into the mission areas is outside the scope of the statement of work required by the ACOTA Program Office.

For some participants, the time allowed for the course was perceived to be insufficient. The students felt that more time should be provided to enable the students to understand and participate effectively in the course, especially where the course material was new to the student. For those officers who attended ACOTA training for a prior deployment, it was considered a revision. These officers benefited by the review of material that they had previously learned and the team building process they experienced by participating in the training with the same unit that they would deploy.

As contingency training, ACOTA did not familiarize students with their mission area. However, at the direction of the ACOTA Program Office in a September 24, 2007, letter (Beck, 2007) the command and staff operational skills training shifted its approach from contingency training to predeployment training. This switch was implemented in Ghana in the spring of 2008, at which time the Ghana Armed Forces were provided with predeployment training using scenarios, maps, and background information on the

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country and mission area into which the officers were to be deployed. Until then, ACOTA, as its name implies, was contingency training and was not oriented toward a specific peace support operation mission. The contingency aspect of the training was perceived as a lost opportunity for the officers to familiarize themselves with the mission area into which they were eventually assigned: the geography, background, culture, current situation, participants in the conflict, and overall area of operations. These areas are now covered during the command post exercise and the computer assisted exercise as part of the intelligence officer's briefings concerning the information preparation of the area of operations for the mission area into which the battalion will deploy.

Team building was a perceived strength, as the commander and staff used the ACOTA staff training as an opportunity to develop and observe the staff perform their tasks in a simulated environment, to assess the personalities and capabilities of their individual officers, and to work together as a team prior to the actual deployment. This aspect of the training was perceived to be especially important when the organization being sent on the mission was a newly formed (provisional) battalion task force. To the extent possible, the entire battalion headquarters staff, regardless of rank, participated in the training and this further enhanced team building.

In a number of cases, the ACOTA training was the first time the commander, the second in command, and the staff worked together. Interacting as a team in a training environment and identifying their roles and responsibilities proved useful and built unity. Everyone became involved in accomplishing the mission, as the program was such that no one person could accomplish all the requirements.

Time was a factor, both in advanced notification to attend the course and in the time allowed to cover the course material. The lack of timely advance notification to the students that they were to attend the course had an adverse impact on the training. It was suggested that a month's advance notification be provided by the Ghana Armed Forces so that personal and family concerns could be addressed prior to attending the course. The lack of timely notification at times resulted in the assigned staff members being unavailable to participate in the course at the outset, to include the commander.

Battalion commanders of provisional peacekeeping organizations spent valuable training time assembling the staff from their donor units and obtaining administrative and logistical support for the unit while the course was in progress. This necessitated some staff personnel working in roles and assigned duties other than the one they were to have on the peace support operation mission. Likewise, time allowed for the course was perceived to be insufficient and participants requested that more time should be provided to enable the students to understand and learn the doctrine and to allow for effective participation, especially when the material presented was new.

Even though the junior officers (from the rank of lieutenant through captain) attended the same ACOTA training as the commander and the senior officers (major through colonel), the training was perceived to benefit junior officers more than the senior officers. Senior Ghanaian officers are experienced peacekeepers and are thoroughly trained in their own and foreign military educational institutions. For them, ACOTA was viewed as being a refresher (the term the Ghanaians used was *revision*)

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course, while it was a preparatory course for junior officers, especially if they lacked

peace support operation experience and had not attended a staff course.

The course was considered a good review for the young officers, preparing them

for their promotion exams, teaching them how to coordinate operations, how to operate

on a headquarters staff, and how to communicate. Even though the senior officers were

highly trained, participants believed the commanding officer and deputy commanding

officer (DCO) should have had a separate short course prior to commencement of the

training so that they would be familiar with the material presented to their staff

beforehand. A battalion command group mentorship course would allow them to play a

greater role in the process of developing their staffs during the program.

Ghanaian officer students did not perceive cultural differences with U.S.

instructors as an issue. When the topic of culture was brought up, the participants shifted

the conversation from concern about interacting with U.S. instructors toward concern

about the culture of the inhabitants of their assigned mission area and their wish for more

cultural training in that regard. They noted that ACOTA needs resource specialists in the

culture of the mission areas and that two days of instruction should be added to the course

to cover the cultural issues, to include the local history, background of the conflict,

topography, geography, the culture of the locals, and basic (survival) language skills.

The African view is that respect for cultural norms improves situational awareness.

In regards to the interactions between U.S. instructors and Ghanaian students,

participants expressed their perceptions that Ghanaian culture is not complex, Ghanaians

are friendly, and Ghanaian soldiers are exposed to American culture through various

venues, as well as other cultures from their peace support operation experience. The military, despite the difference in nationality, is a culture in its own right and the Ghanaians considered U.S. instructors as brothers in arms. The American instructors were perceived as being open, approachable, friendly, eager to learn, and sensitive to culture.

The teaching methodology instilled confidence in the officers to perform the mission. The progressive nature of the ACOTA training methodology and varying delivery methods—lecture, practical exercise, group work, briefings, critique, and so on—were well received and considered effective. The fact that the predeployment exercises and events related to practical situations, not abstracts, was a perceived strength. Mixing senior officers, junior officers, warrant officers, and senior NCOs in the same class was also considered beneficial in encouraging teamwork, although junior personnel were perceived to be at a disadvantage by the presence of senior personnel and by the newness of the material.

Course material, such as student workbooks, CD-ROMs, handouts, read-ahead packets, were considered to be valuable resources and were referred to during the training and later taken into the mission area to be used as a reference. Having the materials prior to the start of the class for preparatory study was desirable, as the workbooks aided in preparing for the presentations. Overall, the officers perceived the ACOTA instruction to be well organized and resourced.

The staff training provided tools that enhanced military decision making and problem solving skills. The military decision making process (MDMP) was perceived as

a valuable, systematic tool that opened the mind and led students through all the thought processes required to solve a problem. MDMP was perceived as requiring the student to learn a great deal of information. However, it was considered as more important than the staff instruction which was completed during the first week of class, and a participant recommended that MDMP training be extended to two weeks long. Besides improving knowledge on decision making, the training encouraged officers to be proactive, to follow up, to interact with the higher headquarters, to consider variables and options, and to think aloud.

The objective of the ACOTA command and staff skills course is to impart staff skills, such as administration, logistics, planning operations, the intelligence cycle, and civil-military operations. The command post exercise and computer assisted exercise brought out the skills studied during the command and staff operational skills course. From the spring of 2008 on, the events used during the conduct of the exercises were mission specific. Students perceived that it would be more helpful to tailor the exercise scenarios to the country and mission in which they would be serving. Actual scenarios familiarized students with the maps of the area, provided cultural awareness, and covered background information. However, the participants noted that learning the basics of staff work and decision making using the fictional Caribbean scenarios during class presentations did not detract from the course and facilitated completing the real scenarios for the command post exercise and computer assisted exercise. The command post exercise and computer assisted exercise events pertaining to developing skills in dealing

with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local civilians were considered

particularly important.

Student interactions during the course enhanced leadership and communication

skills. Participants perceived that their leadership skills improved as the training

improved their analytical abilities, problem solving, decision making, team building,

planning, and communication skills.

The Themes as Perceived by the Participants

Here, the 13 themes perceived by the participants are examined. Although

English is the official language of Ghana, it must be noted that for most Ghanaians,

English is a second or third language, learned after their original ethnic language (Berry,

1995). The rich, thick descriptions that follow, at times, reflect this fact. Table 6

Participant Information provides the pseudonym of each participant for ease of

identification, as well as rank, branch, and duty position. The participants appear in the

table in the order of their interviews.

Table 6

Participant Information

Pseudonym	Rank	Branch	Duty
1. Suhuyini	Major	Armor	Second in command
2. Newman	Major	Engineer	Second in command
3. Toba	Captain	Military Police	Administration
4. Agbolema	Lieutenant Colonel	Infantry	Commander
5. Fifth Interview	Lieutenant Colonel	Infantry	Commander
6. Nab	Senior Warrant Officer	Infantry	Sergeant Major
7. Xasese	Captain	Infantry	Commander
8. Eagle	Colonel	Infantry	Commander
9. Grenade Rock	Captain	Signals	Operations
10. Azima	Lieutenant Colonel	Artillery	Commander
11. Amkofis	Major	Communications	Second in command
12. Macgarret	Lieutenant Colonel	Infantry	Commander
13. Fast Guy	Colonel	Armor	Commander
14. Dzakpata	Lieutenant Colonel	Operations/Training	Commander
15. Railstation	Lieutenant Colonel	Communications	Commander
16. Lemat	Lieutenant Colonel	Corps of Signals	Commander
17. Kekeli Senam	Lieutenant	Engineer	Engineer
18. Ricardo	Lieutenant	Engineer	Engineer

Table 7. *Participant Information* (continued)

Pseudonym	Rank	Branch	Duty
19. Pablo	Major	Artillery	Second in command
20. Entsie	Lieutenant	Infantry	Administration
21. Naapo	Captain	Ordnance	Operations
22. Logum	Lieutenant	Medical Corps	Administration
23. Doks	Captain	Infantry	Information
24. Dove	Senior Warrant Officer	Infantry	Sergeant Major

Theme 1. Student officers perceived the teaching and learning as effective.

The results of the research revealed that the students perceived the teaching and learning in the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course as effective. The command and staff operational skills experience gave participants a broad appreciation for peace support operation missions. The participants were eager to attend the training, it matched their doctrine, and it prepared the young officers for their promotion exams. The training also provided commanders and key staff officers with knowledge of what to expect on a peace support operation, and the program was considered suitable for military professionals. No participant considered individual participation in the staff course as a waste of time.

The students perceived the teaching and learning as effective. Newman commented "I said the training, the training is good, the training is really, really good and I think it should go, it should really go." This was echoed by Agbolema, "Specifically,

the ACOTA training, as I said, is a very good training package that we Ghanaians, or African officers and men, are privileged to go through." Fifth Interview participated in two ACOTA training experiences in 2006 and in 2007 and was more critical than other participants, particularly concerning the non-mission-specific, predeployment training that was conducted in 2007. He stated,

> I didn't perceive the training to be bad. My expectation was that it would prepare me adequately for my task and our mission, but certain expectations were not met. Though on the whole the training was good. I have never perceived ACOTA training to be bad.

> The training was viewed as useful preparation for the peace support operation mission. Suhuyini stated, "The exercises that we have conducted during the ACOTA training also helped to improve on this; I mean it helped on the mission in those ways." Ricardo stated, "So I think ACOTA has given me a tool. For now, I'm okay. I'm ok to handle any situation which might arise in my AO [area of operations]."

Reflecting back to his experience in Rwanda during the genocide, Newman, in a deeply introspective moment, stated that the lack of ACOTA type training for the peacekeepers contributed to the situation there:

> Rwanda, that was the first experience I had. Rwanda, peace enforcement. Even if you got to a stage that it was critical. The international committees asked us to withdraw, to put down, to scale down the number, because when we leave the faction to fight, that is where the, what you call it, force commander was blamed at a certain point. Why did he leave? Why did they, the peacekeepers, scale

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down? Why did the peacekeepers withdraw and allow a massacre to go? That

was a time when we went initially and saw that we would incur casualties because

we did not prepare much for peace enforcement; our equipment and our resources

were not that much.

In general, Ghanaian officers are eager to attend the training, as it matches their

doctrine and prepares the young officers for their promotion exam. Agbolema stated:

My final comment is that, now, a lot of officers are eager to attend ACOTA

training, based on what others have achieved from ACOTA. And I must, if I can,

tell you that most Ghanaian officers are prepared now to attend ACOTA training

because it can be carried on to our way of doing things, especially for the officers

in our practical exams, and even the dealings in the teachings, and in our various

training schools, because as I said the MDMP program is almost the same..

Finally, a review of the interviews revealed that none of the participants

considered participation in the staff course as a waste of time: in fact, it was uniformly

considered worthwhile. Pablo observed, "So, on a whole, I think that it has been very

good. We really commend the government of the U.S. for giving us these resource

persons to come and give us this kind of training."

Theme 2. ACOTA instructors were perceived to have done a good job.

The ACOTA instructors, predominantly retired U.S. military officers, were

perceived to have done a good job. Their experience was appreciated, the insights they

gained in training peacekeepers from other troop-contributing countries was valued, and

they were considered friendly and approachable. However, a number of students

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perceived that the Americans did not speak the English language clearly, which adversely

impacted their understanding of the course material. This was not true for Ghanaian

officers who received training in the United States. Students also thought that ACOTA

instructors should be sent into their mission areas to interact with their former students, to

obtain lessons learned, and to gain insights that would inform their teaching. Suhuyini

noted that the instructors

> had the experience. They are officers who have been in the system for 20 and
>
> more years, so they have a lot of military experience, and it didn't really make
>
> any difference whether they are still serving officers or retired officers.
>
> Pablo commented, "The instructors understood where we were coming from and I

think they were mature and experienced instructors." For Agbolema, the instructors were

perceived as resource persons, "The instructors, or the resource persons, are well vested

in peacekeeping. Since they've been doing this [instructing] for a longer time, they are

able to give us more specific examples so that they also contribute…it's a way of sharing

ideas." Naapo, a younger officer, stated that he reported to his GHQ that more retired

Ghanaian officers were needed in their training schools:

> I went to the GHQ; it was in one of my recommendations that we should have
>
> more of our retired officers and NCOs in our training schools and other areas so
>
> that when a person is talking, he is talking from experience.
>
> Newman affirmed this view, "When we have military retirees, we say once a

soldier always a soldier, and they have more experience." The younger Ghanaian

officers, more so than the senior officers, seemed to derive greater benefits from the

experience of the U.S. ACOTA instructors, especially their combat experience. Lemat noted:

> Most of our younger officers have not seen high intensity conflict in the area before, so you bring in somebody who has been in active duty and served in so many areas. He comes down and is better able to shape certain issues and pass down his experiences.

According to Agbolema, one justification for using retired versus active duty instructors was based on U.S.-international relations.

> Everybody has his own belief based on what the U.S. is doing in Iraq, is doing here, doing there, that getting people who are retired is better to teach ACOTA than to take somebody who is still in the military or the American Armed Forces to come and teach, because it's likely to impart some things which he's physically going through or something which may not help, and he may be a little bit biased.

Agbolema also noted that the instructors tapped into the student's experience, "Based on their experiences, they achieve in the various ACOTA programs, the great need to share, and you also put our experience on the drawing board." However, a number of students perceived that the Americans did not speak English clearly or spoke too fast, which adversely impacted their understanding of the course material. Amkofis observed,

> Because one of the problems, sometimes along the line, when the lecturer leave the room, I have to take my time to explain some of the areas to them, because I could read from their faces. Not that they don't understand, but it's like the guy

was too fast…talking…even though they prompted us and I always draw their attention when they are moving, talking very fast, the but troops felt very reluctant to ask that, too.

Finally students thought that instructors should be sent into their mission areas to interact with their former students, obtain lessons learned, inform their teaching, gain additional credibility, and directly observe the effectiveness of the training. "Because probably with a contemporary warfare, and contemporary military situations, they [the instructors] may not have been in a position to have experienced them…for them to really know what situations are like currently in peace support operations" (Railstation). Newman stated succinctly, "Send instructors to the mission area to learn the challenges that the peacekeepers experience, gain credibility, and directly observe the effectiveness of the training."

Newman stated that the U.S. ACOTA instructors providing training on a specific peace support operational mission area ought to take part in an orientation visit to that area. Barring the opportunity to do so, Newman suggested that recently returning Ghanaian peacekeepers should be brought in to provide their insights concerning the mission area. "People right now, new people who are going, we just want to share. People who are going through the course, going to the same mission area, can share their experiences of their places for people to make this more real."

Theme 3. Time allowed for the course was insufficient.

For some participants, the time allowed for the course was perceived to be insufficient. The students felt that more time should be provided to enable the students to

understand and participate effectively in the course, especially where the course material was new to the student. However, for officers who attended ACOTA training for a prior deployment, it was considered a revision, what we would call refresher training. Agbolema stated,

> As a commander, what the I would say that, being officers and the NCOs who attend this ACOTA training, I think the time is a little bit short, and if possible, if it can extended, because if I've gone through before, then it means I'm coming to revise. But most of the time, the new people are introduced to this ACOTA training, and if you've not gone through it before, everything seems to be rushed, because the time period is very short.

Suhuyini stated that "The duration of the course especially the lecture period, some of the lessons need a lot of time." He stated the reason the additional time was required was because "not all the troops that come on, have been on the course, and some of them some have problems with the accent so they need to (have) more time on the lessons that are being taught…" Dzakpata perceived that the course should be extended from four to eight weeks.

Theme 4. Contingency training versus predeployment training.

As contingency training, for both ACRI and the first five years of ACOTA, the training did not familiarize students with their mission area. The training used generic, fictional scenarios to achieve the training objectives for a rapid military response or a contingency force. Fictional scenarios on the Caribbean Islands of Haiti and Puerto Rico were used during the command post exercise and the computer assisted exercise, so as to

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deflect concerns that the U.S. government was providing training to one African country that involved conducting military operations in another African country. However, based on a policy change of the U.S. Department of State ACOTA Program Office in a September 24, 2007, letter (Beck, 2007), the command and staff operational skills training shifted its approach from contingency training to predeployment training.

The switch was implemented in Ghana in the spring of 2008, at which time the Ghana Armed Forces ACOTA students received predeployment training using scenarios, maps, and background information on the country and mission area into which they were to be deployed. The fact that ACOTA, as its name implies, was contingency training and was not oriented toward a specific peace support operation mission, was perceived as a lost opportunity for the students to familiarize themselves with the mission area into which they were going, including its geography, background, culture, current situation, participants in the struggle, and overall area of operations.

The shift from a contingency training approach to predeployment training was confusing, as the program name did not change–the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program—to reflect this shift in focus. Officers expecting predeployment training in 2007 and the beginning of 2008 expressed disappointment that it was instead, contingency training. Fictional scenarios based on Caribbean Islands did not provide these officers with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with their mission area or with the local culture. Despite this fact, and although the fictional scenarios lacked relevance from the students' perspectives, the staff training was still perceived as appropriate. Participants' conclusions were that scenarios needed to be

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realistic, the actual mission area should be studied, lessons taught in the classroom should

have application to the mission, and maps used in the course should reflect the actual

deployment area—the area of operations. Such changes would enhance the training

experience. Once the shift to predeployment training was made, the officers were

pleased to be afforded the opportunity to focus their attention on their actual mission

areas. Newman noted:

> ACOTA, as I said, is a contingency thing, and you're training us for a
>
> contingency; it's not training for an immediate mission. Then we have to look at
>
> what pertains to that particular mission and gear the training toward it. But this is
>
> like a contingency, so it should prepare us for the hardest. It is my observation
>
> that then ACOTA should look at what pertains in that particular mission and fuse
>
> in some things that we expect to experience.

Fifth Interview concurred with the necessity to focus on the particular mission the

soldiers were about to undertake.

> My expectations were that it was going to prepare me as a battalion commander
>
> adequately. As an example, we were going to deploy in DRC (Democratic
>
> Republic of the Congo). We have no knowledge at all what the topography looks
>
> like, what the general area even looks like. So, it really didn't prepare us for
>
> Congo. What we saw was, in the command post exercise, the map of Puerto Rico
>
> or somewhere that we used for that particular problem. So I thought that to make
>
> it very relevant and applicable to mission-specific soldier training. You should get
>
> something, some material from the intended mission area. It will help a lot.

However, a few students noted that using a non-African scenario was good for teaching the military decision making process and well prepared them to use the process in their actual mission area during the command post exercise and the computer assisted exercise.

> Very positive, because that was…I think I liked the way the course package was arranged. Because Camponia (Haiti scenario) was a new ground altogether. Nobody knew Camponia. All of a sudden, here is a map of Camponia. We can give you something else; you can do a mission analysis on that aspect. We took our time. We have never seen that map before. I've never been to Haiti before. We took the trouble to put everything into detail. And I remember the words of the instructor told us, we have gone too detailed into that aspect. And that was the challenge. And it was what made the Liberia Scenario very easy. (Amkofis)

Thus, although the fictional scenarios were perceived to have lacked relevance, using them for the staff training was still perceived as appropriate. Once the shift to predeployment training took place, the officers were pleased to be afforded the opportunity to focus their attention to their actual mission area. Grenade Rock stated,

> Relating the training to the mission…direct to the mission area. But I will not say it is negative, but I also know that it is not easy putting all the material together and getting everything started. So if previously it was based on Haiti, Puerto Rico scenarios, now gradually it is getting better and bringing it to the specific African situation or specific missions.

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Railstation also noted the advantages of predeployment training, "Well, it teaches you new things. It gives you a lot of knowledge about the operational situation…the operational area that you are going to visit. The terrain, belligerents, challenges, and so on."

Theme 5. Team building was a perceived strength.

Team building was a perceived strength, as the commander and staff used the opportunity provided by the ACOTA staff training to develop and observe the staff perform their tasks in a simulated environment, assess the personalities and capabilities of the individual officers, and work together as a team prior to their actual deployment. This aspect of the training was considered especially important when the organization was a newly formed (provisional) battalion task force. The Ghana Armed Forces is a small military of under 7,000 troops (GhanaWeb, 2010), yet they provide forces to peace support operations in Afghanistan, Chad, Ivory Coast, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Sudan, and the Western Sahara (United Nations Information Centres, 2009). To achieve the required force levels of each of these missions, the Ghana Armed Forces generally has to form provisional units and borrow personnel from its formed battalions to provide the manpower. In a number of cases, the ACOTA training was the first time that the commander, the second in command, and the staff worked together.   Agbolema commented:

The team building is very good here. From the word "go," we know that okay...this is my staff...this is my commanding officer. Yes, I've not operated with them before, and the ACOTA training actually brought me together with all

these staff officers… I would assess their capabilities in terms of staff work before going to the field. I know that this guy can perform well based on what he has acquired from ACOTA, and I get to know them well, and also let them know I'm their commander.

Azima's perspective was, "I would say that ACOTA was like the threads in building my team." Newman noted, "One, the few staff officers who were on my team, it helped me assess their level of confidence, where I can really use them, their capabilities." Grenade Rock highlighted the importance of the staff interaction:

At least going into the basic duties of staff officer, whichever area, and then knowing the staff responsibility to the commander, it was a very useful thing to me, especially the point of looking at who becomes the commander's 2IC [second in command], the alter-ego stuff. That is something that I really like.

Eagle also emphasized teamwork: "Yes, it does. A lot because you have to work as a team. And a Brigade headquarters staff and the staffs various cells have to communicate with each other. We work together as a team." For Pablo, team building was considered especially important when the organization was a newly formed (provisional) battalion task force. "For us, who were not coming from one battalion, we're a task force and I think that introducing us to that before embarking on a mission was great because we got to know each other." Naapo noted:

We are not a formed unit. We are a task force. The CO comes from a different place, the XO comes from somewhere there. This is the time we get to know each

other, although we have known each other as individuals; this is the first time we

learn to work as a team.

Interacting as a team in a training environment, identifying their roles and

responsibilities, proved useful and built unity. Everyone became involved, as the program

was such that no one person complete all requirements. "For me it has been very, very

rewarding, very, very rewarding. I'm talking about preparation, building the team,

forming the weapon. ACOTA has been the starter" (Azima). "Because if it is a team,

and all the members of the team know the role that they are playing, at the end, they work

as a team" (MacGarrett). "And eh…it automatically builds a team, because when you

start working together, so right from the beginning, you know it" (Fast Guy).

Theme 6. Student notification and preparation needs improvement.

Time was a factor in regards to the staff course, both in advanced notification and

the time allowed to cover the course material. The lack of timely advanced notification

to the students that they were to attend the course had an adverse impact on the training.

They did not have adequate time to prepare for the course, to finish off projects they were

working on, or to address family matters. It was suggested that a month's advance

notification be provided so that personal and family concerns could be taken care of prior

to the officer departing home station to attend the course.

Battalion commanders spent valuable training time assembling their staff from the

donor units and obtaining administrative and logistical support for the unit while the

course was in progress. This necessitated some personnel working in roles and assigned

duties other than the ones they were to have on the peace support operation mission.

Likewise, time allowed for the course was perceived to be insufficient and participants requested that more time should be provided to enable the students to understand and learn the doctrine and to allow for more effective participation, especially when it was new material. Railstation stated:

The only problem sometimes was with the timing of the training. The timing of the training, and probably we had nominations for the training for officers who were not really prepared for the training or who had other commitments, and so they couldn't fully participate.

This was reinforced by Kekeli Senam:

One, you need more time to plan ahead. We did not have more than three weeks to prepare for the course. We also, as of the time we were supposed to start, we did not have more than 30 people nominated. We were supposed to have 850, but we did not have more than 30 people. Out of the 30 nominated, just about seven, eight of us could attend the course.

Theme 7. The training benefits junior officers more than senior officers.

Even though the junior officers (from the rank of lieutenant through captain) go through the same ACOTA training as the commander and the senior officers (major through colonel), the training was perceived by the participants to benefit junior officers more than it did the senior officers. Senior Ghanaian officers are experienced peacekeepers and are thoroughly trained in their own and foreign military educational institutions. For them, ACOTA is a refresher course, while it was considered a preparatory course for junior officers, especially if they lacked peace support operation

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experience and have not already attended a staff course. The course was considered a

good review for the young officers, preparing them for their promotion exams, teaching

them how to coordinate, how to operate in a headquarters, and how to communicate.

Even though the senior officers were highly trained, one senior officer, Agbolema,

perceived that the commanding officer and the deputy commanding officer should have a

short separate course prior so that they could play a greater role in the process of

developing their staffs into a team. Suhuyini perceived that the junior officers benefited

more from the command and staff operational skills course than did the senior officers.

> I think the junior officers benefit because the two…the 2IC [second in command]
>
> and the commanders, we have been on a lot of courses. We have…some of them
>
> have been in the United States and on various courses, so whatever has been
>
> taught: military decision, the process and analysis, other things, they already
>
> know them because they've been to various trainings. Some have gone on special
>
> peacekeeping training and the UN organized peacekeeping training in other
>
> countries and other missions, so the senior officers, they already have the
>
> knowledge in this training. So the junior officers benefit more because…some of
>
> them, this is their first training…training they are having with this, their first
>
> ACOTA training they've been on, so they benefit more.

The ACOTA staff training, per Newman, was considered a refresher course for

senior officers and a preparatory course for young officers.

> The ACOTA training, I see it as a refresher course for some of us and a new
>
> preparatory course for young officers and other ranks. I'm saying so because

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some of us, some of the officers who had appointment for this, have gone through

similar courses in their career. But young officers and other ranks may not have

gone through the course. So I see it as a preparatory course for a mission. It was

a necessary step for us to revise, for some of us a revision, a reminder of things

that we know, and before we were launched into an operation.

For young officers, the course was considered a good review, preparing them for

their promotion exams, teaching them how to coordinate, and illustrating how to operate

in a headquarters. "Yes, and that actually can go through a mission analysis for the

young officers, because it's almost along the same line like you do mission analysis and,

what you call it…practical promotion exams" (Agbolema). Suhuyini stated, "Some of

the officers, especially the young officers who were on the course, helped them in

knowing how to operate at the headquarters as a staff officer."

Theme 8. U.S.-Ghanaian cultural differences were not perceived as affecting

training.

Officer students did not perceive difference in cultures to be an issue when

interacting with the U.S. ACOTA instructors. When the topic of culture was brought up,

the participants shifted the conversation from concern about interacting with U.S.

instructors toward concern about the culture of the inhabitants of their assigned mission

area and their wish for more cultural training in that regard. Responses from the

participants indicated that ACOTA needs resource specialists in culture and participants

recommended that two days of instruction should be added to the course to cover the

culture within their mission area, to include its history, the background of the conflict, the

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topography and geography, the culture of the locals, and basic (survival) language skills. The Ghanaian view was that respect for the culture and cultural norms enhanced situational awareness.

In reference to the interactions between the U.S. instructors and the Ghanaian students, participants seemed to believe that Ghanaian culture is not complex, and that Ghanaian soldiers are exposed to American culture through various venues, as well as to other cultures as a result of the peace support operation missions they participated in. The American instructors were perceived to be open, approachable, friendly, eager to learn, and sensitive to culture; however, the American slang was an issue. Participants were concerned about the culture of the inhabitants of their assigned mission area.

> ACOTA should be able to get this background from potential countries that you
>
> are supposed to be launching to, and teach potential peacekeepers, and that should
>
> be included in your program, because Africans most of the time believe in
>
> tradition and culture. And that is where I think ACOTA is lacking a little bit,
>
> because African culture is different from the Western world. (Agbolema)

Participants perceived a need to train on cultural differences. Xasese reflected, "'Cause you need to get the cultural differences, get maybe the language difficulties, then interaction by other ways, and it's the theater by which you are operating."

Findings indicated that participants felt a need for ACOTA to have resource specialists in culture, and that two days of instruction should be added to the course to cover the culture(s) within their mission area, to include history, background of the

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conflict, topography, geography, the culture of the locals, and basic (survival) language skills.

> Culture and traditions that they are supposed to respect, for the people to respect them and accept them. ACOTA should be able to bring such resources specialists …from countries or wherever they can get, who knew about their culture and traditions so that wherever, before the troops are launched to the peacekeeping theater, they know what they're supposed to do in terms of culture and traditions. I think two days can be OK because that will encompass traditions and culture. (Agbolema)

> Logum's perceptions were particularly telling:

> I think my problem more like, is with the scenario, okay. Peacekeeping, you have to relate to the locals. If you don't have quite a good relation with the locals, you may have more problems, for especially with Congo, where naturally, because of the mindset of the locals, they see the peacekeepers as…as enemy. So if you don't relate with them well, you will just be jeopardizing what they think of you.

Cultural issues between the U.S. instructors and the Ghanaian student officers were not perceived as a problem. Eagle observed that the military is its own culture.

> Maybe, one reason why there isn't, is what I've just said about your culture, and the other reason is the fact you both are military officers, have a past in military training. Military is the same everywhere, actually. Basic training and all that. Staff training. Command training and all that. Having passed through all that, your perspectives are close with each other.

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Americans instructors were perceived as open, approachable, friendly, eager to learn, and sensitive to culture; however, the use of American slang was an issue.

It's good. You are open, very approachable, friendly. You want to learn other countries. The fact that you are like a melting pot. Where you come to Ghana you want to see what the Ghana culture is like. You try to learn, which is very good. It makes us…puts us at ease. It makes us feel comfortable. If you were aloof, then it would be a different thing. But you are very open. (Eagle)

Grenade Rock commented that the instructors understood culture, "No, the…the instructors have so far demonstrated an understanding of the culture. I want to say they quickly acclimatized and you know they can…you know, the good thing is that the Ghanaians don't have a very complex culture."

Theme 9. The teaching methodology instilled confidence to perform the mission.

The progressive nature of the ACOTA training methodology instilled confidence in the officers to be successful in the course and to perform their mission. Varied delivery methods—lecture, practical exercise, group work, briefings, critique, and so on—were well received and considered effective. Amkofis perceived as a strength that the exercises related to practical situations, not abstracts, "I think, I think basically all the methods for teaching were employed here. I saw demonstrations, I saw presentations, I saw discussions, and I saw lectures. Which is very good."

Your methods, you use to teach. It's quite good. It makes it easy. And it's very beneficial because these staff officers will go on the staff knowing what to do and

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doing it well and therefore to enhance the command and control of the brigade

headquarters or any other headquarters, for that matter. (Eagle)

I think the presentations weren't bad. Most of the presentations by the instructors

were okay. They give students a chance to also speak and to also ask questions,

and most of them in a form of discussion, so I think, as a professional teacher, it is

a very good way of teaching. (Doks)

Knowledge of staff procedures taught in the command and operational skills

course instilled confidence in the participants. Eagle stated,

I find it very progressive. Where you learn the basics—learn the general staff

training—the general staff training to specific staff training. S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4, S-

5 training and then you progress until you are able to go into do the Military

Decision Making Process. You start using those tools to plan a peacekeeping, or

peace support operation. It's progressive, and by the time you start planning,

you're very conversant with the skills that you need to use to plan effective peace

support operations.

The fact that the exercises related to real situations, not abstracts, was also a

perceived strength.

A lot, because like I was talking about the exercises, they relate to practical

situations. You understand, it was not an abstract kind of thing, where you think

some incidents somewhere, but it gives practical situations, and that is what,

because you know that these are some of the things that you are expecting when

you go on missions. (MacGarrett)

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Grenade Rock concurred:

I know the style of teaching of the United States. It is more of practice. A little

teaching, you go in smaller groups, and then you go and do, and then you come

back with a presentation. So I was expecting that it was going to follow the same

thing. Especially in the MDMP class, 35 minutes there is a lecture, quickly, you

have to put a presentation together, and come and deliver.

Fifth Interview, a battalion commander, commented, "For every student, and

those of us who have been teaching for some time, the experience is that it is always good

to give the lecture and put the soldier or the student to practice it. Lecture and practice."

Lemat concurred, "So practical exercises, assignments, a lot of assignments, we go home

sit down, we come to a classroom, a lot of assignments."

Theme 10. Course reference material, books, and CD-ROMs were valuable.

Course material—student workbooks, CD-ROMs, handouts, read-ahead packets,

and such—were considered valuable resources. Such materials were referred to during

the training and were later taken into the mission area to be used as a reference. Having

the materials prior to the start of the class for preparatory study was desirable, as the

workbooks aided in preparing for the presentations.

I still have my ACOTA workbooks and I refer to them. I think they are; it's

something we need to keep. It's good" (Lemat). "Still, we are keeping most of the

manuals you gave us, so in case we encounter any problem, quickly we can use the

reference materials" (Entsie).

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The materials we're given as what was taught, I think they were adequate. They

were adequate and it served as a reference material. I have gone to them a couple

of times just to remember. I've not done a critical analysis, but I think anytime I

went to it, I think it gave me what I needed. (Newman)

Nab was succinct in expressing his satisfaction with the materials, "Yes. I'm

much, very happy about the aids and the materials for the ACOTA training." As was

Grenade Rock, "Because we have all the materials that we need; there is nothing that you

request for that you don't get, from the resources. So to me, it's a well-organized training

program."

Students wanted reference material apart from the slides, additional

documentation, and other resources pertaining to the mission area that would add to their

learning. Railstation observed, "I'm sure it would be advisable if either you give us

reference material, apart from what appears on the slides, that you print for us, or give us

comprehensive notes in addition to the slides." Doks stated,

Yeah, we were issued workbooks on almost everything we did. The workbooks

are okay. It's a reference material and, most of the time, if I am facing

difficulties, I just refer to it. I have all of them now there.

Having the materials prior to the start of the class was perceived to be desirable,

as it would allow the students to read ahead and prepare for class. "The workbooks are

very beneficial because one, it lets you read ahead" (Agbolema).

Because I must be honest with you, before I entered, apart from hearing what

ACOTA training was all about, I didn't know what I was going for, but if I had all

the materials about a week or two before, maybe three weeks before, I would have prepared better." (Railstation)

Finally, the participants considered that the ACOTA instruction was well organized. "I thought it was well-organized, and well resourced; all that we needed to undergo the training were given to us, I would say, at no cost. And then eh, resource personnel of the team were readily available to assist" (Xasese).

Theme 11. Military decision making and problem solving are important skills.

The staff training provided tools that enhanced military decision making and problem solving skills. The military decision making process was perceived as a valuable, systematic tool that opens the mind and takes students through all the thought processes required to solve a problem. The training improved knowledge on decision making, encouraging officers to be proactive, to follow up, to interact with the higher headquarters, to consider variables and options, and to think aloud. Students gained background information on the mission area that effectively prepared them to react to a peace support operation situations.

Lemat's commented on military decision making: "I think it enhanced my problem solving skills. Like I said, military decision making process was a very good thing." Kekeli Senam was to the point when expressing, "It gave us the tools to go through problem solving. It actually gave real life, real situations, real life problems." Pablo stated: "The mission, the military decision making process itself is a problem solving tool, it's a problem solving tool. So, when applied properly in whatever task you

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are given, it will help you, asking the questions and so what." Toba related, "The MDMP taught us how to analyze our missions and it's great."

Given my experience, I think it would be effective because it took us through orders writing, course of action analysis, course of action selection. These are things that we know but we usually don't go through it stage by stage. (Kekeli Senam)

Participants discussed how they thought the process prepares staff officers to think aloud and to consider variables.

But the military, the MDMP that we went through, when you get to know the intent of your commander and what you want to achieve in the long run, there are so many things that you go through as a staff officer. So it prepares you as a staff officer to think aloud. (Agbolema)

Overall, the MDMP was perceived as useful and systematic by the interview participants. "I think ACOTA training has made planning very easy, and because of that, you will go through using the MDMP process in analyzing situations or coming up with a decision. By doing so, you will not leave out details," observed Ricardo.

Although the students were taught war gaming in their educational system, actually doing it took it from the abstract realm, making it more relative to their experience.

Personally speaking, sometimes most of these things are—let me put it—abstract, because we have no really being in similar situations. For instance, war gaming. Until yesterday when I got deeply involved into the war gaming aspects, I never

understood what war gaming was. So because of that, if you don't really

understand it, you see it as an abstract thing. You are learning something that you

think you will never apply or something that does not exist at all. (Naapo)

As a solution to what might seem an overload of information, Doks recommended

that MDMP should be two weeks long, "The MDMP process, if made about two weeks,

wouldn't be bad. It would allow better understanding."

The officer participants perceived that NCOs not previously exposed to the

planning process (junior officers are at the military academy) need additional time to

learn. Lemat stated, "MDMP, I think, should be two weeks. Because especially for

NCOs who don't; who are not used to MDMP. Most of our NCOs don't go through the

process at all."

MDMP was perceived as a useful tool to provide the staff with an understanding

of the military situation. This was expressed by Azima: "The Military Decision Making

Process. I think it's, again, I have to emphasize how useful it is. Why? Because it

allows you to understand." Participants distinguished between the MDMP they had

learned in the Ghana Armed Forces educational system, which focuses on conventional

operations, while the ACOTA MDMP applies to peacekeeping.

I think it's very useful, because of some of the skills we are just being introduced

to in the Ghana Armed Forces, like the Military Decision Making Process. What

we were taught has the conventional use of the Military Decision Making Process,

but here it's being used in a peace keeping environment, so the factors this and

other criteria...It's quite different than the conventional approach. So I find it

very useful, indeed. (Eagle)

Theme 12. The command post exercise and computer assisted exercise

brought out the skills studied in the command and staff operational skills course.

The objective of ACOTA command and operational staff skills course is to impart

staff skills. The command post exercise and computer assisted exercise brought out the

skills studied during the command and staff operational skills course. From the spring of

2008 on, the events used during the conduct of the exercises were mission-specific.

Students perceived that tailoring the exercise scenarios to the country and mission they

were launched into was beneficial. Participants noted that learning the basics of staff

work and decision making using a fictional scenario did not detract from the course and

made doing the real scenarios during the exercises easier. Thus, using non-African

scenarios was perceived by some participants as good for teaching. Exercises pertaining

to developing skills in dealing with NGOs and local civilians were considered

particularly important. "The scenario is tailored towards what exactly happens. It is the

scenario that is being painted, which is very important" (Suhuyini).

Grenade Rock expressed his thoughts: "The realism brought into the command

post exercises, how messages flow and the reaction, and the rest is also positive for you

to know that in the mission area or in realistic conditions, this is how things will be."

Other participants concurred, "The computer assisted exercise program actually brings to

fore what you studied during the skills training" (Agbolema). Although the lack of

timely notification to attend the course meant that key personnel did not attend, others

benefited. Entsie, a personnel officer, had this to say:

> Now, even though I am not a logistics officer, I have some basics about logistics,
>
> how to handle logistics, especially in the last exercise, the computer assisted
>
> exercise, computer assisted exercise. I really enjoyed it and the role as an S-4.

Fifth Interview perceived that the course taught the NATO staff system, which he

perceived as a negative. "The only difference that I've said that ACOTA dwells on the

NATO system, the staff system. Some of other courses that I've done or that I've been

to, the staff procedures are different." He had a point, as the UN Staff Officer's Course is

taught by the Swedish International Center, Kunsangen, Sweden, and the UN system and

the NATO system are very similar.

In 2007, the scenario was for contingency training and not predeployment training

for a specific mission area. Newman, who deployed to Liberia, a mission that was

ending, was disappointed that the ACOTA scenario was for a mission that was starting.

"But here we come, the scenario, it was a new conflict, somewhere where we were

suppose to go and tackle. So there wasn't a direct link [to Liberia]."

Participants consistently stated that the command post exercise and computer

assisted exercise scenarios should pertain to the countries where the students are going to

be deployed. For instance, Ricardo said, "But you always try to paint the scenario to

represent what is in the AO." Mission-specific scenarios were introduced into the

training in 2008, and the background information provided was appreciated by

Railstation; in his case, information on the Darfur.

That's quite some time, but at least I knew about the various factions to the

conflicts, the signatories and the non-signatories, and the Janjaweed factor, and

some of the atrocities that they caused were clearly spelled out in the scenario; in

the scenarios, and they were confirmed with the happenings."

Amkofis noted the scenarios as a perceived strength.

The strength…is the ability for the instructors to paint scenarios. You realize that

the scenarios, narratives, examples, both given from the troops, our own troops,

and from the instructor, mostly from the instructor, depicts the likely occurrences

that one will encounter in a peace support operation, and that is really a very

strong side.

The officers involved in contingency training were disappointed in the fact that

they saw an opportunity lost for studying their mission area of operations. However,

officers involved in predeployment training, who were taught the MDMP using a Haiti

scenario, did not see it as a lost opportunity as long as the actual mission area was used

for the command post exercise and computer assisted exercise. This contrary, discrepant

perception was explained by Kekeli Senam.

Considering cases of time, you would have had more time for the scenarios in

Lebanon even though the Haiti scenario made it such that you do the Lebanon

scenario just perfect. Because your training from something else and using the

knowledge from that onto what you are actually going to do. If you, I believe, if

you made the mistakes on where you are going to, you would remember some of

the mistakes and correct them.

Newman noted that after ACOTA training, he deployed to Liberia, where the UN was scaling down the mission, as success had been achieved. The contingency training that he experienced in ACOTA was to respond to a crisis, not to terminate a mission.

There were, like, we reached a stage in the mission in Liberia where, it's like…we were showing presence. Maybe there is even…before we left, we, there were instructions on our scaling down the force. So that is where we stayed with readiness. So they are near normalcy. So we did not apply most of the things we learnt.

Newman noted that toward the end of the mission, the problem in Liberia was not between two former warring factions, but rather banditry turned out to be the real problem, "Banditry…in Liberia, because of unemployment, there's much robbery. People are armed robbers and we arrest armed robbers and we arrest thieves; hand them over to the police… So banditry, banditry was real and we have to tackle such issues." After ACOTA Railstation became an authority on Darfur, "Oh yes, and I drew a lot of experience from the ACOTA training which I just had, so I became an authority all of a sudden on Darfur issues, because they are still very fresh in my mind."

Theme 13. Leadership and communication skills were enhanced.

Leadership and communication skills were enhanced by student interactions during the course. Participants perceived that their leadership skills were improved, as the training improved their analytical abilities, problem solving, decision making, team building, planning, and communication skills. Suhuyini observed, "In terms of leadership, ACOTA training really improved my skills, and this analyzing of tasks and

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other things. Tasks, assignments, other areas operationally, so it has improved the way I look at tasks when I am assigned a task." "For me, yes, I get to know people better, in terms of for leadership. You get to know people you can easily work with and delegate to" (Kekeli Senam).

> So, I know what a group leader, if you are the leader in a group, you are
> responsible for part of things, bad or good things that a group does. So, with
> ACOTA, I think it has improved my leadership skills, because, for instance, I
> don't just dictate on what we do, I also, you know, anytime I've been without my
> point. I ask my other group members to move through. I ask them of what they
> think. On a few occasions they decide to go with me, and I go with them.
> (Naapo)

Participants expressed how the training built their confidence and morale. Confidence comes from knowing. Teaching what you know builds morale. Toba, a young officer, stated, "and they [NCOs] know that you really know all these things, so it boosts your morale. It raises your confidence and then you are able to teach others what you've been taught. So it's really a…confidence booster." Dzakpata, a senior officer, stated that as a commander, your confidence is also boosted when you have a situation and your subordinates can respond.

> When you have a situation where you are not the only repository, you the
> commander, you the leader, are not only the repository of the basic knowledge,
> your confidence is highly boosted. You can trust, you can go into your room, rest
> assured, and know that the things that have been taught can be well implemented.

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And so there is a higher level of confidence that the subordinates at whichever

level are capable of doing a good job." (Dzakpata)

Knowledge builds confidence. "It's like whenever you are facing a problem or

you want to go about anything, once you know your stuff, your confidence level is high,

and you are able to do it and do it well" (Doks).

The staff training brought the students face-to-face with the commander and the

other members of the staff. They had to communicate their ideas effectively. The

participants found the opportunity to get to know the people they were going to work

with in the mission area, and those they could delegate tasks to, as an important benefit of

the training.

> It gave me an opportunity to get to know some of the people I was going to work
>
> with, some of those who are good, some of those are not good. Some of those
>
> were lazy; some were not lazy. At least it gave me an opportunity to know them
>
> beforehand, so some of them I know how to deal with. (Kekeli Senam)
>
> Briefings enhanced communication skills.
>
> By communication, I think you are even talking about briefing….including
>
> briefing, yes, we are talking about standard view of briefing, situational briefing,
>
> all this kind of briefing, so it taught me that it is situational…deal with the
>
> issue…Also personnel briefing, I know what to do on personnel briefing. (Toba)
>
> Nab noted, "It made my communication, dealing with all the personalities, all the

personnel effectively." The requirement to do briefings instilled confidence, as

mentioned by Grenade Rock. "A lot of briefings, so it gives you the confidence, how to

organize your thoughts, how to present issues, and that was an improvement in

communications skills." Doks perceived that the MDMP briefings enhanced

communication skills.

> For every stage of the MDMP process, I was to brief as S-2. I stood in front of
> the lecturers, my co-students, and had to brief the commander. So, at this time, I
> realized my confidence levels as to briefing were very good.
>
> Ricardo echoed,
>
> As I said, due to the briefing, you have…it's like literally every day, there's a
> briefing. After everything, there is briefing. You have the confidence every time
> you are facing a crowd, talking to them. Then you have to explain why you are
> doing the words. And at the end of everything, there are questions asked. That
> really shows your understanding of what you've done. You are not copying, you
> are understanding. I remember one occasion I came up with some things, and a
> commanding officer asked me why I did this and I have to explain it. That really
> showed I understood it, not book work. So, everything I say, I make sure I
> understand why it is so, why I am doing this. Why not the other one? I have
> reasons for taking a very particular course of action. And so it was beneficial.
>
> One of the challenges was the daily briefings, the daily briefings. It was
> not; there wasn't much pressure, but, naturally, especially for the first time, there
> was some kind of pressure, but I think everything went down well. We did it for
> the first time, you constructively criticized. We picked up from there and
> corrected on it. I think from there, it was okay. So, for me, I think it has

improved on my briefing skills, my confidence, and for coming and standing in

front of a "big man," to stand in front of the big men to brief them, and tell them

about my plan, tell them about something that I have come up with, how to

present it. (Entsie)

Utilizing radio communications also increased confidence. "The communication

radio room, the exercise went on successfully" (Nab). Lemat noted that voice procedures

were enhanced with radios.

As part of the troop training, we go through communication exercises, voice

procedure, and I think we make sure that every soldier went through that, and

because of the communication equipment that ACOTA gives out, we have a lot of

equipment to play around with, so I think it enhanced voice communication.

Radio, we had a lot of radios. Virtually every cell, we had like two radios.

Everybody communicated on radio. At a point in time, the IIC made a comment.

Later, other officers joined, but they are very young officers, new officers, and

initially when they pick up the radio and talk, they are kind of panicking on the

radio. Second, third day, when a person picks up a radio and he's talking, you

will be happy.

Summary

The results of this research were discussed in this chapter. Thirteen themes were

identified and the participants' perceptions pertaining to those themes were reported. The

multiple perceptions of the participants were reported using their own words in rich, thick

description (Creswell, 2009). Chapter 5 follows, with a discussion of the findings of this

study concerning the original research questions as perceived by the participants and the link to the field of adult education, along with implications, recommendations, and a conclusion.

CHAPTER 5 - Analysis and Discussion

A discussion of the findings of this study concerning the original research

questions and how the ACOTA program was perceived by the participants appears in this

chapter. The findings of this research are then linked to the field of adult education. The

strengths and weaknesses of the ACOTA program from the participants' perspectives are

discussed, as are the implications for practice and for research. Chapter 5 ends with

recommendations and a short conclusion.

Discussion of the Research Findings

The analysis of the participants' responses within the context of the literature

reviewed in chapter 2, obtained and coded into themes using the methodology of chapter

3, and given voice in chapter 4, forms the basis for answering the research questions. In

chapter 5, the research uses the rich, thick descriptions of the participants concerning

their perceptions. Findings from the research follow.

Research question 1.

What are the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning the influence

of the ACOTA command and staff training in preparing them to serve as peacekeepers?

The overall learning objective of the command and staff operational skills course

was to plan and execute a battalion level peace support operation (PSO). Themes 1 and 2

of the research revealed that the participants in this study perceived the teaching and

learning in the ACOTA program was effective and that the ACOTA instructors did a

good job. These perceptions were articulated in the observation of MacGarrett, a senior

officer in the infantry:

> Because, they [participants] have gone through their training, they have practiced

> it, they practice it…so when they get in there and the same situations are the

> situations they are confronted with, then they go out there, so it's like, "Oh! This,

> I know about. So let me do the same thing that I did here, to solve the problem."

MacGarrett went on to say, "So it's like not making a journey into the unknown.

It introduces you to the thing that we expect. It gives knowledge, of what you are going

to see." MacGarrett then cited an example in Kinshasa, Congo, where the well-trained

Ghanaian peacekeepers were sent to protect the Tunisian (peacekeeper) contingent and

further elaborated, "Yes! And then they (Force Command Headquarters) even had to

send us go to protect the logistics base, which was closer to the Tunisian contingent

…they could have asked them to do it."

In Themes 9 through 13, the perceptions of the Ghanaian participants were also

positive. The teaching methodology instilled confidence to perform the mission and

course reference material, books, and CD-ROMs were considered valuable. The

peacekeepers identified the positive aspects of learning military decision making and

problem solving skills. Suhuyini, a major and second in command of a battalion, stated

that this aspect of the training prepared him for the peace support mission, "So, my

appearance with the ACOTA training was my first time to be taken through the military

decision making process… So I learned a lot, which helped me in the mission area."

Participants thought that the command post exercise and the computer assisted exercise

brought out the command and staff operational skills studied in class, and perceived that the course enhanced the leadership and communication skills of the students.

Although the command and operational skills course was positively perceived, the course could be strengthened. Themes 3, 4, and 6 revealed the time allowed for the course was perceived to be insufficient, the contingency training did not familiarize students with their mission area, and student notification and preparation needed improvement. The time allowed for the course was subject to both resource constraints and the urgency associated in getting peacekeepers into their mission area to perform peace support operations in a timely manner. The change in the orientation of the training, from contingency operations to predeployment training, has altered the focus of the course, which now presents the students with a case study of their particular mission area.

Given the responses of the participants and the themes that emerged from the research, the answer to Research Question 1 was that the ACOTA command and staff training was positively viewed in preparing participants to serve as peacekeepers.

Research question 2.

What influence does the ACOTA command and staff training have on their effectiveness as peacekeepers?

Themes 9 through 13 indicate that the participants perceived that the ACOTA command and staff training had a positive influence on their effectiveness as peacekeepers. The teaching methodology instilled confidence in their ability to perform their mission. Toba, a military police captain, stated, "The ACOTA training…boosts

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your morale. It raises your confidence, and then you are able to teach others what you've been taught." Eagle, an infantry colonel, reinforced this perspective, "The peace support operations are done in an international environment. Other members of the staff, from other countries, will see that you know what you are about, so certainly, your confidence level will go up."

The course reference and instructional material were considered by the participants to be valuable. Azima, an artillery commander, noted, "The workbooks, notebooks, notepads, they all are strengths of the ACOTA program." The participants identified the positive aspects of learning military decision making and problem solving skills. Lemat, a signals lieutenant colonel, stated "ACOTA was the staff…training that I underwent. I think it was excellent…that was the initial steps that we were being introduced to the military decision making process, it made a lot of sense to us." The participants perceived that the practical exercises, the command post exercise, and the computer assisted exercise brought out the command and staff operational skills studied in class. Ricardo, an engineer lieutenant, was of the opinion that "ACOTA cannot be done without the practical exercises. It exposed the experience gained during training. That brought out the level of understanding people have achieved, have gotten on the course."

The participants also perceived that the course enhanced the leadership and communication skills of the students. Doks, an infantry captain with military intelligence/information experience, noted, "I think it gave me some level of confidence to talk, or to brief. Because for every stage of the MDMP process, I was to brief as S2."

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He went on to say how he stood before his classmates and briefed his commander, commenting "So, at this time, I realized my confidence levels as to briefing were very good."

Given the responses of the participants and the themes that emerged from the research, the answer to Research Question 2 was that participants in this study viewed the influence of the ACOTA command and staff training on their effectiveness as peacekeepers as positive.

Research question 3.

What is the nature of the ACOTA command and staff training experience in regards to the rank and experience of the participants?

Theme 7 revealed that the participants perceived that the training benefited junior officers more than it did senior officers. In reference to the planning process, Fifth Interview, an experienced battalion commander, stated, "Most of the staff who…saw it for the first time, because they are young in the service and they have not had the opportunity to go for staff training…it was good for them to understand." Suhuyini stated "It improved especially we, those of us who came on the course as young officers, especially a number of us have not yet been in the staff course at the staff college, so the ACOTA course sort of improve on the staff, staff work."

Senior Ghanaian officers are experienced peacekeepers and thoroughly trained in their own and foreign military educational institutions. For them, ACOTA was a refresher course, what they term a revision, while it was considered a preparatory course for junior officers, especially if they lacked peace support operation experience and had

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not already attended a staff course. The course was considered as being a good review for the young officers, preparing them for their promotion exams, teaching them how to accomplish staff coordination, how to operate in a headquarters, and how to communicate. Grenade Rock, a signals captain, stated, "In ACOTA training, we are looking at the staff and their relationship with the commander. Emphases are built on the input of the staff into the commander's plan for it to be successful. A lot of coordination goes on."

Theme 5 revealed that team building was a perceived strength of the course. The most senior officer in any military organization is the commander. Commanders are responsible for everything their unit does or fails to do. One of the major goals of commanders and senior officers is to develop their staff officers into a high performing staff that can respond to military emergencies, under stressful conditions, with acumen. Eagle commented, **"**Working together like this, you get, you tend to see what the usefulness of every officer and their inputs into their roles in these exercises. It is quite useful." Grenade Rock observed, "By the time you set yourself as a force, you parade on the same frequency, with common understanding, the common personal picture, so that is where the team building comes in." If the team building of the staff was a perceived strength, then the senior officers benefit as well, but in a different manner than do the junior officers. Senior officers benefit not so much from the content of the course material that they have learned, but from the overall outcome that has contributed to the production of a high performing staff.

Given the responses of the participants and the themes that emerged from the research, the answer to Research Question 3 revealed that the participants perceived that the junior officers benefited more from the ACOTA course than did senior officers. The findings revealed that the senior officers, already familiar with the course content through their years of experience and training, benefited by the opportunity to shape their staffs into the high performing teams they desired prior to deployment.

The next section links the results and findings of this study with the theory in the field of adult education and the development and implementation of the command and staff operational skills course. This links theory to research and practice. Extracts of participant quotes reinforce the points made, while the full quotes appear in part two of Appendix O – Selected Perceptions of the Participants.

The Adult Education Link

Yin (2009, p. 141) stated that to describe "a phenomenon is to stipulate a presumed set of causal links about it, or 'how' or 'why' something happened." In the following section, the phenomena of the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course and how it is linked to the field of adult education are examined.

The desire to translate what was learned in the adult education classroom into practice in the day-to-day lives of adult students is a characteristic of the field of adult education (Graham, Donaldson, Kasworm, & Dirkx, 2000; Kasworm, Polson, & Fishback, 2002). In the development of the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course, the plan was to incorporate the concepts of adult education into the design, with the intent that doing so would enhance the peacekeepers' learning experience. The

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ideas and concepts that were considered during the development and improvement of the course included andragogy; the connecting classroom; situated learning; experiential learning; intercultural communications; the psychological, physical, social, and instructional climates; a case study approach; and Hiemstra and Sisco's (1990) instructor's first-aid kit. Critical theory was taken into consideration as part of the research process in order to address the cross-cultural aspects of this study.

Andragogy.

After four decades, the literature on andragogy remains a source of debate within the field of adult education over definition, approach, critique, and implementation (Rachal, 2002). Merriam and Caffarella (1991, pp. 249-250) stated that andragogy is "the best known theory of adult learning," but that "It has also caused more controversy, philosophical debate, and critical analysis than any other concept proposed thus far." Yet andragogy's influence on the field is evident in the fact "that Knowles has garnered more journal citations over the last 6 years than any of the half-dozen of the field's most well-known and well-published authors, with the one exception of Friere" (Rachal, 2002, p. 212).

For Rachal (2002), andragogy supports the principle that the learner should exercise a substantial amount of control, or at least input, over the objectives, the learning strategies, and the evaluation procedures for the instruction. The command and staff operational skills course was just one aspect of ACOTA training (see Appendix B and Appendix C for a complete list of ACOTA courses). The overall training objectives of the ACOTA effort in a particular country are determined during the course of a bilateral

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dialogue between the ACOTA Program Office and the ACOTA partner nation, and the

resulting agreement that authorizes the conduct of the training (Shanahan & Francis,

2005).

Specific course objectives for the command and staff operational skills course are

determined by the commander of the organization receiving the training, with the advice

of the unit staff and the recommendations of the ACOTA senior instructor. The

commander additionally influences the learning strategies employed in the course by

selecting those desired for inclusion in the training from a menu of over 100 classes (See

Appendix M – Command and Staff Operational Skills Classes). Likewise, the events that

occur during the command post exercise and the computer assisted exercise remain the

commander's decision. At the end of the course, a review is conducted during the

commander's discussion and a course critique sheet is completed by the student

participants just prior to graduation. The unit commander and staff thus exercise a

substantial amount of control and input over the objectives, the learning strategies, and

the evaluation process for the instruction.

The participants in the research perceived that the ACOTA training met their

needs and prepared them for their peace support operation. Fast Guy, an armor colonel,

stated that the course was very beneficial in preparing and focusing his efforts: "This is

what you should expect. And once you get to the mission area…you reflect what you

went through. And that assists you in your…accomplishing your task in your mission

area."

The evaluation at the end of the course was completed during the commander's

discussion was fundamentally a self-assessment by the commander and staff of what was

done well during the course and exercises, what was not done so well, and what should

be emphasized during future training opportunities. The discussion slide presentation

consisted of relevant questions developed jointly by the commander and the senior

instructor. Posing open-ended questions to the participants during the discussion

encouraged their participation and provided an opportunity for them to reflect. Posing

questions in this manner occurred throughout the course of instruction, and imprecise

student responses were rejected, forcing the students to reflect on their learning and

understanding. According to Chang (2004) and Sanders (1998), questioning that

"provides opportunities for two-way communication, has been identified as one of the

most effective teaching techniques" (Chang, 2004, p. 185). Entsie, a junior infantry

officer assigned to administrative duties, liked the way questions were posed: "One thing

that I want to commend the ACOTA training on is the way they involve students in the

training, like ask questions, ask for their opinion on how every student feels on the

course. I think it's very good."

Andragogy and critical theory.

In regards to andragogy, Brown, Cervero, and Johnson-Bailey, (2000) asserted

that Knowles (1980) believed learning is influenced by the interaction between the

learners and their environment. The critical role for the instructor was to create a positive

atmosphere for learning to occur. According to Knowles, the attitude of the instructor

has the greatest impact on the climate for learning and the attitude must be one of interest

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and respect for the students, especially taking care to listen to what the students have to say (Knowles, 1980)

Brown et al., however, were concerned that Knowles did not consider that the teacher's race and gender might influence these interactions, as "it is logical that societal relations outside the classroom affect the classroom climate" (2000, p. 10). The concern for the American classroom is reflected in the associated concern of critical theory for contesting hegemony and unmasking power in the classroom, and the contemporary tension in the intellectual traditions of Eurocentrism and Africentrism (Asante, 1990, 1998a, 1998b; Brookfield, 2003; Chang, 2004). Africentrism is the "written articulation of indigenous African philosophy as embodied by the lived experiences of multiple generations of people of African descent" (Hunn, 2004, p. 68). Eurocentrism, or European American ethnocentrism, "places the history, culture, and philosophical perspectives of people of European descent in a privileged, more valuable position than any other world culture" (Hunn, 2004, p. 66). Although Hunn's favor for Africentrism is reflected in her definition of the terms, particularly the use of its inclusive terminology, the real issue is reflected in the unconcealed distress that Brookfield expresses in his interpretation of critical theory, particularly for white privilege's collusion in racism (Brookfield, 2003).

Prejudice, whether conscious or unconscious, based on race, color, gender, or national origin, has no place in the classroom, in the U.S., in ACOTA, or in the world. While appropriately responding to prejudicial behavior is always a concern, the larger question for this research is the nature of Western versus the non-Western cross-cultural

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contexts in which the ACOTA training occurs. Although the purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of Ghanaian military officers concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff skills course prepared them for peace support operations, the opportunity to address cross-cultural issues presented itself and a decision was made to pursue it. The ACOTA program provides a rare opportunity to determine the cross-cultural perceptions of the non-Western, Black, Ghanaian, and African, active duty officer and warrant officer students being taught by Western, predominantly White, American, and allegedly Eurocentric, retired and former officers.

From the adult education perspective, Western and non-Western contexts are epistemological systems distinguished "in terms of focus (individualism promotion vs. collectivism and interdependence promotion), knowledge construction, nature of knowledge (in parts vs. whole), and the transmission of knowledge (teacher-student relationship)" (Reybold, 2009, p. 269). For example, Harter (1999, p. 290) stated that "the Western view of self emphasizes separateness, autonomy, independence, individualism, and distinctness." Western culture, as opposed to non-Western culture, is perceived as in favor of a controlling nature, focusing on the individual over the group, being task oriented, independent, and competitive (Merriam & Muhamad, 2000).

Given this perspective, the research delved into the subject of cross-cultural relations, but with recognition of Diouf, Sheckley, and Kehrhan's (2000) admonition in quoting Swartz: "Framing educational research and practices as Western or non-Western creates a false dichotomy that can oversimplify discussions of key issues, occlude important similarities, and reflect biases or false assumptions," as cited in Swartz (1998,

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p. 92). However, like Diouf et al., the research pursued the subject with "careful consideration of these limitations" (Diouf et al., 2000, p. 33).

Although there is no single understanding of culture, most definitions center on the idea of shared beliefs, customs, meanings, and values that differentiate one population from another (Hofstede, 1991; Merriam & Muhamad, 2000). The current research attempted to address the cultural issue by posing the two questions: "How did culture influence the training? How does the difference in culture between the American instructor and the Ghanaian student impact ACOTA training?"

The participants expressed their concerns about culture very differently from what was initially expected, given the writings of the researchers in the field of adult education. The perceptions of the Ghanaian participants were that the differences did not impact the training. Dzakpata, an operations and training lieutenant colonel, said, "I don't think there are any cultural diversities that may pinch negatively on the interaction between U.S. Army personnel or their colleagues who help us in the ACOTA training packages." The participants did not perceive the instructors as White or Black, but as Americans. Lemat's observation was priceless and telling:

> If Ghanaians are not allowed to use our hands, it does not mean that when
> Americans come, they should also. They should behave like an American. That
> is a difference we can recognize. I don't…we don't consider…I don't consider
> that one as very important. They, you speak, you speak like an American, I speak
> like a Ghanaian: that brings the difference between an American and a Ghanaian,
> because if I spoke like an American now, nobody would know that I am

Ghanaian. If you express yourself like a Ghanaian, nobody would know that you

are an American. Those differences are there and we can't do anything about it.

Toba's comment may be even more telling, "Sir, personally, to tell you the truth, I

don't understand culture. I don't understand culture. I'm not a very keen culture person.

I don't imbibe myself in a lot of culture. I just take things as they really are." The

Ghanaians were not concerned about the cultural differences between student and

instructor, but they were concerned for what they perceived as the American instructor's

inability to speak English in a clearly understandable manner.

Naapo, an ordnance captain, complained, "What I can see as a bad aspect of

ACOTA is the accent, the American accent. I bet you if a British comes to speak British

English, we understand it faster." Other officers also mentioned the American accent as a

problem, but Azima, a senior artillery commander, provided a most unique perception, "I

wouldn't even say the Whites, because I have, my daughters were all born in the U.S.; I

have two daughters and they are African; they were born in the U.S.; I find it difficult to

understand them and easier to understand you. So, when it comes to accent, it is not

color."

The participants also expressed a strong desire to learn more about the culture of

the people in the mission area into which they were headed. Agbolema, an infantry

battalion commander, even wanted to extend the course by two days to include training

dedicated to culture of the inhabitants of the mission area: " I think two days can be OK,

because that will encompass traditions and culture, and it is on that basis you get to know

that when you are going to Sudan, it's predominately an Islamic country."

What caused these perceptions was outside the scope of the research. Perhaps the taxonomy used–Western/non-Western, age, color, national origin, Africentric/Eurocentric–was eclipsed by mutual membership in respective militaries, membership in the officer/warrant officer class, and in the mutual respect that professionals normally have for colleagues. When Grenade Rock was asked about the relationship between U.S. and Ghanaian military personnel having more in common with each other or with their national civilian counterparts, he replied, "Yes. U.S. military and Ghanaian military have more in common than the civilian aspect. That one is a fact."

This perception must be coupled with the fact that the Ghanaian military officer corps is very professional and highly respected in Ghanaian society, as well as in the world community. Using Brookfield's ideas on marginalization, all indications are that Ghanaian officers are not marginalized (Agemang-Bioh, 2000). By contrast, the literature of critical theory in the U.S. reflects an empathy for those segments of our society that are perceived as marginalized (Brookfield, 2003).

The connecting classroom for adults.

The connecting classroom represents the link between the adult's student life and the adult's real world life outside the classroom, and the connection between the two. The more direct the relationship between the student's real world and what is studied in the classroom, the more powerful the learning experience (Graham et al., 2000; Kasworm et al., 2002). The command and staff operational skills course, presented to officers and warrant officers just weeks before they are sent into a mission area, makes a powerful connection between their classroom learning and the roles that they were about to

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undertake. As Kasworm et al. (2002, p. 90) stated, "An adult student's experience of a new job assignment, a pending world crisis, or a community project…can create a new awareness of course content and an urgency to learn it."

The students knew and understood that shortly after course completion, they would be spending six to twelve months of their lives on a peace support operation involving a world crisis. They also knew that the command and staff operational skills course was designed to prepare them for that deployment. There was a direct connection between the assignments in the classroom and their assignment to the mission area. This was further emphasized when a class on the conduct of aerial medical evacuations or de-mining operations would be introduced with the profoundly powerful statement, "Look around, people. If anyone falls asleep during this class, you or one of your friends are going to die in the mission area!" The connection, classroom to life, and the relationship, are direct.

Adult situated learning.

Situated learning theory addresses the interaction between the world of the instructor, the curriculum, and the environment, along with the world of the learner concerning work, family, and community relationships. "Each of these worlds has an impact upon the other, and upon the adult student's learning experience" (Kasworm et al., 2002, p. 89). In cross-cultural learning, such as ACOTA, situated learning is full of context, and instructors must understand that classroom practice, related to the learners' lives, pushes the learners toward change (Bandura, 1977; Chang, 2004; Pratt, 1990; Pratt & Nesbit, 2000).

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Chang emphasized that by fully participating in activities, making reports, playing roles, and performing in front of their group, learners adopt behaviors with which they are unfamiliar, allowing them to explore unfamiliar aspects of themselves (Chang, 2004, p. 184). As Doks commented, "With ACOTA, we realize that each stage is done by each cell. You don't get one person doing everything." Grenade Rock's statement supports Chang's observation, "Yes, there were a lot of briefings. I…I…I actually forgot. A lot of briefings, so it gives you the confidence, how to organize your thoughts, how to present issues, and that was an improvement in communications skills." Participation, briefing, and role playing are intrinsic parts of the course, and Theme 9 revealed that the teaching methodology employed in the course instilled confidence to perform the mission.

The impact of the theory of adult situated learning was further reinforced by one participant's observations relating to the religious aspect of his work, family, and community worlds. During the research interview, Naapo related, "Personally, I have been suffering a lot because of the period in which we are in. I am a Muslim and I have been fasting. We are in the Ramadan period." The situation in the classroom is not only influenced by the instructor, the curriculum, and the environment, but also by the student's outside world.

Theme 6, indicating that student notification and preparation needs improvement, specifically addressed the issue of the situated classroom in regards to the need for timely notification about when the course was going to commence and who the nominees for the course were. As Railstation, a communications lieutenant colonel, noted, "The timing of

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the training, and probably, we had nominations for the training, for officers who were not really prepared for the training or who had other commitments, and so they couldn't fully participate."

The situations of the participants were such that they thought at least a month's advanced notification of course commencement was desirable so that they could remedy any training distracters in their family and work lives in order to dedicate their efforts to the learning they needed to undertake prior to their deployment into the peace support operation mission area. Railstation's perception of the situation was, "Well, sometimes the problem was not with prior notification, but possibly a lot of officers have to combine doing, undertaking the ACOTA program, and then with their regular duties in the office" The combined time required for the training and the mission also placed a heavy burden on the family lives of these peacekeepers. Pablo, an artillery officer and second in command, noted:

> A key appointment holder has to participate in ACOTA training, he leaves his
> family for one month to train, goes back…another one month (field
> training)…and leaves for six months (the mission), is too much of a burden. It
> means that, you know, he has spent nine months out of home.

Understanding situated learning theory and the relationships that the adult students are trying to balance in their personal lives has a direct impact on how the ACOTA instructors approach the learning environment. Students arriving a few minutes late for class, having to miss class because a child needs to be taken to a doctor and the

family has only one vehicle, or having to arrange for required logistical support, all impact on the situation in which the learning occurs.

Real world logistical issues pulled Agbolema away from attending some of the classes and he lost valuable training time with his staff. "To arrange logistics…you have to run around the higher headquarters…to get all this logistics true, and if your staff officers, for example, miss you, and you're sent to the ACOTA skills training without the commanding officer." Situated learning informs adult educators that they can and should influence the world of the instructor, the curriculum, and the environment. It also informs them that control over the more fragile world of the learner concerning work, family, and community relationships is tenuous and requires tolerance, compassion, and understanding. Doks commented, "They [the instructors] gave us pieces of advice and, I think, they had patience, the times you were late. You come to class and about half of the class was late. They had the patience."

Experiential learning.

Experience and experiential learning are core aspects of adult learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Merriam & Brockett, 1997& 2007). Incorporating the learners' experiences and asking for potential solutions to problems posed are ways for connecting the course material with the expertise at hand. "By doing this, you are significantly increasing the odds that participants will retain the new information, and more importantly, put it into action" (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990, p. 57).

Gilley (1998) stressed that experience, judgment, and responsibility play a compelling role in the adult learning process. This was acknowledged by Newman, a

battalion second in command: "I realized you relied on our experience more, you rely on our experience more…than your experience... They (instructors) have more battle experience than peace support operational experience, so they enjoyed our experience when we shared them."

Intercultural communication.

Globalization is one of the most important issues currently facing the field of adult education (Holst, 2004). The global village is a result of human mobility, the global marketplace, increased contact across cultures, the prevalence of transnational corporations, and multicultural workforces (Samovar & Porter, 2003). Globalization brings with it the need to develop appropriate intercultural communication skills (Samovar & Porter, 2003).

The goal of communication across nations and cultures is intercultural competence: the ability to adapt to a culture in a mutually suitable and effective manner (Ziegahn, 2000). Effective use of language is intertwined with culture because language provides the means to preserve and share culture. In its most elementary sense, "language is an organized, generally agreed-upon, learned symbol system that is used to represent the experiences within a geographic or cultural community" (Samovar & Porter, 2003, p. 14).

There are 24 ACOTA partner nations, and in all of them, except Ethiopia, the official national languages include either English, French, or Portuguese, and possibly the local ethnic language(s) (Volunteer in Africa, 2010). This is a reflection of Africa's colonial heritage and the arbitrary international borders drawn at the time of

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independence, as discussed in the second chapter of this study. ACOTA training was given in a European language, in the case of Ghana, in English, which was adopted at independence as the country's national language. The English language is shared with the U.S., where English is the predominant language, because of its colonial heritage with Great Britain.

Triandis stated, "When people come into contact with members of other cultures, they are often unaware of their miscommunications, because they think that the others are more or less like they are" (2003, p. 23). Triandis called this unconscious incompetence. Nab, an infantry sergeant major, noted,

> Whichever instructor is in, also always tells the student that if I'm speaking fast, draw my attention to it…but that will not take away the fact that there are some people who also find difficulty in hearing them properly. Thus, even when the instructor asks the students for feedback in regards to his verbal presentations, the students do not necessarily give it.

According to Chang, (2004), these kinds of communication problems become barriers that preclude adult educators from establishing successful teaching programs overseas (Chang, 2004).

As previously mentioned, Theme 8 of the research revealed the Ghanaians perceived that the U.S. ACOTA instructors did not speak English well. A consistent response from participants in this research was that the U.S. ACOTA instructors spoke too softly, spoke too fast, interspersed unfamiliar slang in their dialog, and used different intonations. For example, Grenade Rock said, "Because there's a slang problem…or a

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language problem…in terms of pronunciation and in a way accent problem" The deleterious effect of unconscious incompetence in regards to communication is the fact that the instructor is unaware of its existence.

When a problem such as this surfaces during research, the tendency is to seek an explanation for what went wrong, to diagnose the sources of misinterpretation, and to determine what practical guidance should be given to prevent it (Ziegahn, 2000). The irony was that at the beginning of the training, the more experienced U.S. ACOTA instructors would know and expect the Ghanaians, as well as their counterparts in other ACOTA partner nations, to struggle with the requirements of the course. The senior ACOTA instructors, with years of experience, would expect this and advise the newer instructors to be patient with the students as they wrestled with the material being presented. They would counsel that after a few days, the sought-after "Ah! Ha! moments" would arrive and the instructors would be satisfied that learning was occurring.

In a similar vein, a new instructor typically takes about a week to get used to the speech patterns and intonations of the Ghanaian students. It appears that the initial difficulties the students experienced may not be related to waiting for the "Ah! Ha! moment" to arrive. Rather, the initial difficulty, for both the Ghanaian student and the U.S. instructor, may be getting used to each other's accent and intonations. This highlights the need for specific learning about interpersonal, intergroup, or intragroup communications in the cross-cultural classroom (Ziegahn, 2000, p. 313). It takes from a

few days to a week or more in the cross-cultural setting for familiarity with the accent and intonation to develop, even when English is the shared language.

Farrah (1998 & 2003) advised adult educators that they should speak clearly, loudly enough, and at an appropriate pace; they should build in frequent pauses and summarize often when they are providing instruction to adult learners in the American language. Farrah also cited Cross (1981), stating that older adults tend to go slower, and the time required for learning new material increases with age, emphasizing the need for pauses for what she termed "think time" (Farrah, 2003, p. 245). If this holds true for older U.S. students, it was all the more pertinent when conducting ACOTA training in Africa. Specifically, for the Ghanaian participants in this research, whose language of origin was likely based on their ethnicity rather than English, and where the age of one third of the participants in this study was over 51 years old (see Table 2. Age of the Participants) Farrah's advice takes on meaning. Azima stated, "We are second language learners, we use…second language users. We study the English language, and for a minute, we have to think in our own dialect before we converting it into English. That is how the mind works."

U.S. ACOTA instructors understood that they were responsible for the transmission of the course content in such a manner that the students could receive and comprehend the material. This may require corrective action, at least during the initial stages of instruction, to engage in such different behaviors as deliberately speaking more slowly, speaking louder, avoiding slang, paying attention to speech patterns, and being sensitive to intonation.

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Another option presents itself. That is to continue in the current manner, not take corrective action, and cause the students to recognize that intercultural communications difficulties occurred at the beginning of the course. The benefit with this course of action is that the students are deploying to a peace support operation where English is normally the official language of the UN Forces Command. They will then be aware, from their ACOTA experience, that they may initially encounter language difficulties with the troops from other contributing countries, given their accents and intonations. The experience of working through these difficulties beforehand, in the ACOTA classroom, will serve as a reference set, especially when these difficulties are included for dialogue at the end of the training in the commander's discussion. There is a need to think critically about this situation, to conduct additional research, to reflect on the underlying assumptions that serve as the basis of action, and to contemplate alternative ways toward a solution, if there is one (Brookfield, 1987, p. x).

Psychological climate.

When it comes to military training in the U.S., the sergeants' old adage that success is a function of "mind over matter" is normally accompanied by the sarcastic follow-up that "the sergeants don't mind and the soldiers don't matter." This quip however, is humorous because, while the soldier may have the impression that it is true, it is anything but the truth. The point is that creating a conducive psychological climate is critical for adult learning to occur. From the start of the first class until course completion, instructors are urged to provide a relaxed, friendly, open, and trusting climate (Kasworm et al., 2002).

This was accomplished by introducing the ACOTA instructors and their backgrounds to show a connection to the students' backgrounds and by establishing "ground rules for intellectual engagement in the course content" (Kasworm et al., 2002, p. 103). Entsie, a young officer, commented directly on this, "I was interested when you come to the class and give us your years in service. I was, wow! Your years in service is even more than my age."

At the outset of ACOTA training, simple ground rules were developed by the participants that contributed to the achievement of course objectives. The ground rules addressed the behaviors to which a military staff must adhere in order to provide the commander with the support necessary for mission accomplishment. Typical ground rules were that shared knowledge and shared information is power; when the commander is talking, everyone is writing; economy of force means no portion of the force is idle as everyone is engaged in the process; timely feedback is critical; attacking the material is expected; personal attacks on each other are unacceptable, and so on.

Physical climate.

Kasworm et al. (2002, p. 104) noted that instructors "have little control over many aspects of the physical classroom environment, frequently facing aged facilities, background noise, and cramped seating." As this was true in the U.S., so it was true in Africa. Yet these effects can be mitigated. As Kidd (1973, p. 233) noted, "Luxury is not required, but comfort, excellent illumination without glare, and absence from disturbing sounds or movements provide a setting in which the chances for effective learning are increased."

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For the training in Ghana, the Ghana Armed Forces and the ACOTA team partnered to mitigate these factors and to renovate the classrooms for the training. Air conditioners and ceiling fans were installed, the classrooms were painted white, fluorescent lighting was installed, new windows with curtains were put in place, an adequate number of chairs and tables were brought in, whiteboards were placed at the front and back of the class, a pull-down screen for projections was hung at the front of the class, and the classrooms were rewired electrically. A serious attempt was made to create a physical climate to maximize adult learning and deal with adult students' physical limitations, such as diminished sight and hearing due to aging (Kasworm et al., 2002).

Physical limitations were addressed by Eagle: "I only had a problem one night. Maybe my sight is going. I found some of the characters rather too small. Some of them were a bit too small. The boxes were too tiny." He was referring to the PowerPoint slides in the course workbook that he was reviewing for class the next day. He went on to say, "When I wear glasses when I read, I found them a bit too small. When [I] get to class the next day, the lecture was given and the PowerPoint was on the screen. I was more than comfortable with that." The physical climate of the classroom thus compensated for the inherently small fonts in PowerPoint handouts.

Kasworm et al. (2002) also recommended a number of techniques to enhance the benefits of a favorable physical climate. These included using multimedia strategies and written case study handouts, employing varied instructional activities, using small group breakouts, implementing a U-shaped seating placement to maximize opportunities for student interaction, and forming and enhancing a learning community. The instructors

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did not take roll call, passing the responsibility to the commander or a designated representative. This allowed students the opportunity to switch seats or to rearrange the classroom setting as they desired, which added to the informal and relaxed training environment the ACOTA team sought to establish (Kasworm et al., 2002). Finally, once the course commenced, hourly breaks and a 10:30 a.m. tea break were scheduled (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990, p. 46). Multimedia strategies, U-shaped seating, and providing student handouts and workbooks in advance were also accomplished. In Ghana, the physical climate was addressed.

Team building and social climate.

A goal in authoring the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course was to employ adult education concepts to build teamwork and prepare a staff for its peace support operation. As discussed earlier, learning can be a social act involving individual-to-group connections that create a connecting classroom. According to Kasworm et al. (2002), this connection can be enhanced by employing instructional strategies that foster interpersonal relationships, collaborative learning, and a positive social climate.

Theme 5, team building, was perceived as a strength of the ACOTA program. Theme 12, leadership and communication skills, were enhanced by student interactions, indicating that creating a social climate for learning was successful. The student staff was developed into a learning community to support understanding and reinforce course content (Cranton, 1994; Kasworm et al., 2002; Mezirow et al., 1991, 1999). Xasese, an infantry captain, commented:

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I would say that I really contributed towards the thought of the instructors. I was

always with them, we shared ideas. And where the team or the trainees find it

difficult to maybe "get" whatever lesson is being put across, I really jumped in to

assist them.

Xasese's comment reflects the collaborative and cooperative learning

environment that the instructors encouraged. Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2009) advised

that the process of working as partners or in small groups to generate questions and face

challenges together energizes group activity. As it is important in cooperative learning

groups that the learners are clear about their assignments, goals, and roles, such

information is provided for the entire course, for each lesson, and to each participant.

"Positive interdependence works best when all group members realize each person has a

part to do, all members are counting on them, and all members want to help them to do

better" (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009, pp. 98-99).

MacGarrett observed, " And I'm also very particular about this kind of staff

training…Because if it is a team, and all the members of the team know the role that they

are playing, at the end, they work as a team." In cooperative groups, members seek

outcomes that benefit both themselves and their colleagues. Wlodkowski (1998 & 2003)

stated that having a group of learners produce a plan of action is an example of

collaborative and cooperative learning.

Instructional climate.

According to Hiemstra and Sisco (1990), citing Knowles (1980), andragogy again

factors into the instruction process with recommendations to set objectives, establish time

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lines, plan for evaluation, use problem-centered learning, and emphasize personal experience. Implementing techniques that promote a positive instructional climate and that were incorporated into the command and staff operational skills course include small-and large-group discussions, role playing, simulations exercises, in-class application exercises, and case studies with feedback exchanged so that adjustments can be made to achieve the course objective (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009; Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990; Kasworm et al., 2002).

Setting a positive learning climate includes arriving early, being available at breaks, and staying after class for those learners desiring more direct verbal interaction (Farrah, 1998 & 2003). Entsie appreciated the fact that the instructors were "just available to us to assist in anything. After the class, if I don't understand something, I can move into you and say 'I don't understand this. How do we do this?' You teach me and it was quite okay."

Almost all of Farrah's (1998 & 2003) recommendations were incorporated into the command and staff operational skills course. Name tents were used until the instructors remembered the students' names. Handouts and workbooks with all of the slide presentations were handed out during the first class to provide an organizing framework and serve as reference (Theme 10), humor was used as an ice breaker, to the point that a humor file consisting of collections of jokes, mostly from back issues of *American Legion Magazine*, was maintained.

Wlodkowski (1998 & 2003) recommended making a learning goal. The command and staff operational skills course, as well as each class, began and ended with

a PowerPoint slide that listed the objectives as activities/tasks to be accomplished, the conditions under which they would be performed, and the standards to which they were to be performed. Wlodkowski (1998 & 2003) also recommended that activities should be planned to allow the adult students to share what they have learned and produced. "When adults know from the beginning that their learning outcomes will be shared and available to their fellow learners, their motivation for the learning task is usually increased" (Wlodkowski, 1998, p. 106). Recall Grenade Rock's statement, "Yes, there were a lot of briefings. I…I…I actually forgot. A lot of briefings, so it gives you the confidence, how to organize your thoughts, how to present issues, and that was an improvement in communications skills."

A case study approach.

Marsick (1998) advised that the key to a case study's success is the selection of the right problem situation, relevant to the interests and experience of the learners and to the concepts being taught. A case study approach was taken in choosing to do a command post exercise and the computer assisted exercise (Themes 11 and 12). These exercises put into practice the lessons learned during the classroom portion of the command and staff operational skills course and introduced the student to the mission area to which they were being deployed. Agbolema, Fifth Interview, Newman, Railstation, Amkofis, Kekeli Senam (an engineer lieutenant), and most others emphasized that the case studied should reflect the peace support operation mission area into which they were being deployed. This perception was common to all participants.

Cases include factual case reports and realistic details including conversations, maps, correspondence, policy statements, organizational charts, and pictures (Marsick, 1998, p. 199). Learners get practice in laying out plans for implementing the solution, including a "discussion of timing, strategies, obstacles, responsibilities of key people, and possible intended and unintended consequences" (Marsick, 1998, p. 200).

Marsick stated, "Included in the case report are facts about the problem itself, the environmental context (e.g., the organization, its clients and community, or special conditions bearing on the problem), and the characters of the people in the case" (Marsick, 1998, p. 199). As part of the command post exercise and computer assisted exercise package, the students were provided with the UN peace mission's mandate, UN resolutions, UN Secretary General reports, rules of engagement, terms of reference, a higher headquarters order, a map of the area of operations, an overlay, standard operating procedures, and course reference material.

Instructor's first-aid kit.

Regardless of the adult educator's philosophical orientation or theoretical beliefs, the benefit of Hiemstra and Sisco's (1990) recommendations for individualizing instruction were useful. So their advice that, "Perhaps the most important thing you can do is carry an 'instructor's first-aid kit'" was given close attention (Hiemstra & Sisco, 1990, p. 175). The instructor's educational first-aid kit oftentimes was the difference between success and failure when conducting ACOTA training in Africa.

Hiemstra and Sisco's (1990) recommended list includes such items as extension cords, markers, easels, tape, spare audiovisual bulbs, pencils, pens, paper, note cards,

rubber bands, paper clips, staplers, glass cleaner, paper towels, chalk, contact phone numbers, maps, resource guides, throat lozenges, aspirin, and a Swiss army knife, among other things. The ACOTA kit adds to this list: graduation certificate paper, printer and ink cartridges, Leatherman multi-tool, satellite phone, global positioning system receiver, adapter plugs, a small reference library of medical books, insect repellent, antibiotics, anti-allergy medication, malaria pills, and analgesics, to name a few. In Africa, having an instructor's first-aid kit, even when it was not needed, was infinitely better then not having it when it was needed.

Strengths and the Weaknesses of the Program

The thirteen themes addressed the strengths and weaknesses of the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course. They revealed that the students perceived the program as effective; team building was a perceived strength; U.S.-Ghanaian cultural differences were not perceived as effecting training; the teaching methodology instilled confidence to perform the mission; and course reference material, books, and CD-ROMs were valued. Results also found that the time allowed for the course was insufficient; contingency training did not familiarize students with their mission area; students did not receive timely notification to attend the course in order to properly prepare; and the course was perceived to benefit the junior officers more than the senior officers.

> **Strengths.**

The students expressed the following perceptions concerning the strengths of the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course and ACOTA training in general.

Toba: "I think it really gives you a broad perspective on how a peace support operation can really be like, from the day you are deployed 'til the day you come back. It really covers everything."

Xasese: "In terms of strength, I thought it was well-organized and well resourced; all that we needed to undergo the training were given to us. And then, eh, resource personnel of the team were readily available to assist."

Grenade Rock: "The command and staff training gives the staff lets you know the staff's basic responsibilities. And it takes each staff work and goes into detail."

Amkofis, a communications major, stated, "You realize that the scenarios, narratives, examples, both given from the troops, our own troops and from the instructor, mostly from the instructor, depict the likely occurrences that one will encounter in peace support operations."

Lemat: "Positive things, there are a lot of positive things about ACOTA. Our proficiency has been enhanced."

Ricardo: "I was made aware of the AO [area of operations].

To summarize the strengths, the participants perceived that the command and staff operational skills course was well-organized, well resourced, and provided them with a broad perspective on peace support operations. It provided detailed knowledge on staff work, enhanced their proficiency as peacekeepers. and exposed them to the scenarios and narratives concerning their area of operations.

Weaknesses.

The students expressed the following perceptions concerning the weaknesses of the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course and ACOTA training in general.

Suhuyini: "Not serious. Not…can't talk about serious weakness with ACOTA training. The only aspect of the ACOTA training that I see to be that needs a change, I stated, on the duration for each lesson."

Toba: "Sir, the only weakness I have realized, is the fact that ACOTA teaches from a standpoint that resources are, resources are, for want of a better word, resources are adequate."

Grenade Rock: "In generality, I may not say weakness, per se. Probably, I would just be looking at its relevance to a specific mission."

Dzakpata: "Time, if you ask me, time maybe, I should say the only weakness about the timeframe."

Agbolema: "Not negative in terms of ACOTA organization, but I think it will come from our area. Everybody should get on board. But for the first one week, we don't get the number of people that we're supposed to start with."

Eagle: "Nothing negative. How can a good thing like this have so many negatives? I think it's been a lot of positives."

Railstation: "The timing of the training, and probably we had nominations for the training for officers who were not really prepared for the training or who had other commitments, and so they couldn't fully participate."

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Pablo:" Negative, negative, it's a difficult one, you know? It's a difficult one."

Naapo: "The first negative thing I can think of is maybe the accent."

To summarize, the participants perceived that the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course had weaknesses. The length of time allocated for the course was perceived as insufficient. Additional time was needed due to the amount of material being covered, the perceived need for cultural training on their mission area, and to overcome initial difficulties with the differences in intonation and accent between the students and instructors. The need for mission-specific training was emphasized, to include incorporating the resource constraints that the deploying unit will face in the mission area. Finally, the participants perceived that they had insufficient advanced notification that they were going to attend the course.

Implications for Practice, Implications for Research, and Recommendations

       Implications for practice.

This research studied the effectiveness of the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course in preparing peacekeepers for their mission. Overall, the perspectives of the participants was that the course was successful. A review of chapter 4 and chapter 5, however, revealed issues that ought to be addressed; these issues have implications for practice.

Language was an issue. Instructors from the U.S. enter the Ghanaian classroom with a different accent and use different intonations and slang. Knowing this, instructors should consider speaking slower and somewhat louder until the students become accustomed to the different speech patterns. This is easily fixed in a letter of instruction

to the instructors, either during their pre-deployment training or during their in-country orientation.

The relevancy of the material being taught was especially important for the participants. The closer the curriculum approaches the reality of what the students will experience in the mission area, the better. This can be achieved by incorporating the latest news reports from the mission area into the scenario, sending select instructors into the mission area for an on-the-ground orientation to enhance their credibility, or having ACOTA partner nation officers who have recently returned from the mission area participate in the instruction as assistant instructors or guest lecturers.

The field of adult education emphasizes that course authors incorporate a variety of teaching methodologies into the instructional design of a course. Such incorporation took place for the command and staff operational skills course, and it was well received. The participants perceived that the practical exercises, the briefings, the decision making process, the team building, and the leadership opportunities enhanced their learning. A course design that emphasized practical exercises, collaborative learning, team building, and leadership provided the junior officers the opportunity to develop their skills and the senior officers the opportunity to develop their staff into the high-performing teams they wanted prior to deployment.

The ACOTA program sends U.S. military retirees and former U.S. military personnel to the ACOTA partner nations to train their soldiers in peace support operations. The ACOTA program also has a train-the-trainer component designed to provide the ACOTA partner nations with their own organic instructor cadre. The host

nation trainers are almost always active duty personnel from the ACOTA partner nation. These personnel are subject to reassignment and attrition, so the capability is perishable. Consideration should be given to recruiting partner nation trainers from their military retiree pool.

Implications for research.

A review of the study reveals implications for research. It is widely acknowledged that students are ultimately responsible for their own learning. As this is so, they should also be the primary source of feedback for the adult educator. The strength of qualitative research is that it provides a methodology to pursue needed feedback using techniques that reveal the truth as perceived by the participants.

The participants appeared to be pleased to participate in the research. They perceived that the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course was important for their predeployment preparation and they wanted to provide their feedback on the course. They were all volunteers and they were candid in expressing themselves. Their patience and support made this study possible.

Conducting this qualitative study in Ghana was time intensive. The current literature on qualitative research (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009) addresses this issue. Research of this nature generated a considerable amount of data that had to be transcribed, verified, and analyzed. The time and energy involved was considerable. Stakeholder support was obtained and a team was assembled, to include transcribers, a peer reviewer, an outside reader, a major professor, and a supervisory committee.

Without a support structure of this nature, a project such as this one would be unmanageable. The time available to conduct this research was a constraint.

Recommendations.

The ACOTA program and the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course were well received by the training audience. The course accomplished what it set out to do: Prepare ACOTA students for their peace support operations. The foremost recommendation, therefore, is that the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Congress should continue to support the program. The program provides ACOTA partner nations with the assistance necessary for them to take on the mission of providing for peace and security on the African continent.

Training peacekeepers to successfully perform their mission is a vitally important task. It is a task that requires input from the training audience on what skills they should train on and feedback on how well the training was received after it was accomplished. Mechanisms must be in place to ensure that this happens. ACOTA partner nation commanders should be brought into the process of designing the ACOTA program on which they will be trained. ACOTA needs to have a flexible program of instruction that is responsive to the needs of the commanders and feedback should be obtained from the students during the course, after the course, while the students are in the mission area, and after they return from the mission area.

Finally, results in this study revealed that the field of adult education provides ample knowledge, skills, and abilities to design a course that will successfully train peacekeepers for peace support operations in a cross-cultural environment. Adult

education, as a field of study, has a vast amount of literature that covers a myriad of topics, to include the relationship between theory, research, and practice. Efforts to link these three elements need to continue. Distilling the current theory and research to provide a primer for adult education practitioners involved in cross-cultural training and education would be a welcome addition to the field.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research has provided Ghanaian military officer and warrant officer participants an opportunity to provide their perceptions concerning how well the command and staff operational skills course prepared them for their peace support operations. The perceptions of the instructors who taught the course were outside the scope of the research and their input was not obtained. Future research should consider what their perceptions are concerning this matter. Having this information would be a complement to this study.

Participants in this research attended the ACOTA command and staff operational skills course at different times. The difference among participants as to the length of time between the time they received the training and the time they were interviewed was not captured and thus not analyzed in this study. Determining whether or not experiencing the training more recently versus experiencing the training at an earlier time could make a difference in the nature responses of the participants provide. This would shed additional insight on this matter. Likewise, separating and analyzing the data to compare and contrast the responses of the participants who participated in contingency training versus

predeployment training and by junior versus senior officer responses would also be insightful.

The ACOTA program trains African countries that are Anglophone, Francophone, and Lusophone. Ghana is an Anglophone country. Future research should consider conducting a similar type study in either a Francophone or Lusophone country, or both. Doing so would add to the body of knowledge on adult education and cross-cultural communications.

Based on the limitations of this study, the participants were not queried while on duty in their mission area. It would be interesting to assess the perceptions of ACOTA trained officers concerning the influence of the ACOTA command and staff training in preparing them to serve as peacekeepers while they are actually in the mission area.

Conclusion

The ACOTA command and staff operational skills course was designed in 2003 and it has been taught to African peacekeepers in English, French, and Portuguese ever since. The intent of the course was to prepare peacekeepers to plan and execute a battalion level peace support operation. The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of 24 Ghanaian officers and warrant officers as to how well the ACOTA course prepared them for their mission. The insights provided by these officers adds to the body of knowledge in regards to the efficacy of adult education, as practiced in the United States, being cross-culturally transferred into the African classroom.

The conclusion of this study was that the command and staff operational skills course, in regards to the perceptions of Ghanaian peacekeepers, achieved what it set out

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to do. These men and women, who place their lives in jeopardy to bring conflict on the continent to an end, were appreciative of the effort. They are champions of peace and stability, and protectors of human rights on the continent, which are core values of the ACOTA program. For the Ghanaian partners, and by extrapolation, all of the ACOTA partner nations, the program is a win-win situation. The world benefits as Africans take the lead to bring peace to their continent, African nations in turmoil benefit by the peace and stability that peace support operations bring, and America benefits by sustaining peace in the world and staying engaged in the process.

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APPENDIX A - Acronyms

ACOTA   African Contingency Operations and Training Assistance

ACRI   African Crisis Response Initiative

AIDS   Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome

AO   Area of Operations

APO   ACOTA Program Office

AU   African Union

BIT   Brigade Initial Training

BFT   Brigade follow-on training

BTLS   Basic Trauma Life Support Course

C^4 Combat Casualty Care Course

CAX   Computer assisted exercise

CCIR   Commander's Critical Information Requirements

Cdr.   Commander

CGO   Company Grade Officers Training Course

CFR   Code of Federal Regulations

CLS   Combat Lifesaver Course

CMO   Civil Military Operations

CMOC   Civil Military Operations Center

COA   Course of Action

CPX   Command post exercise

CSOS   Common Staff Operational Skills Course

DCO	Deputy commanding officer
DoD	U.S. Department of Defense
DoS	U.S. Department of State
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMI	Effective Methods of Instruction course
ENDEX	End of Exercise
ESF	ECOWAS Standby Force
FRAGO	Fragmentary Order
FT	Follow-on training
FTX	Field-training exercise
FWF	Former warring factions
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HUMRO	Humanitarian relief operations
IDP	Internally displaced person
INTREP	Intelligence Report
INTSUM	Intelligence summary
IPAO	Intelligence Preparation of the Area of Operation
IO	Information officer
IRB	Institutional Review Board
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
IT	Initial training
IWG	Interagency Working Group

JMC	Joint Military Commission
MAPEX	Map Exercise
MDMP	Military Decision Making Process
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
MNCPX	Multinational command post exercise
MNX	Multi-national exercise
NCO	Non-commissioned officer
NET	New Equipment Training Course
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OPLAN	Operations Plan
OPORD	Operations Order
PHTLS	Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support
PKO	Peacekeeping operations
POI	Program of instruction
PSO	Peace support operations
PSYOPS	Psychological Operations Course
PUC	Paramedic Upgrade Course
RECAMP	Renforcement des capacités Africaines de maintien de la paix (Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities)
ROE	Rules of engagement
RSOI	Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration Course
S-1	Staff-1, Administration
S-2	Staff-2, Information and/or intelligence

S-3	Staff-3, Operations
S-4	Staff-4, Logistics
S-5	Staff-5, Civil military operations
SFT	Soldier Field Training
STC	Strategic Training Conference
2IC	Second in Command
TPMD	Training Planning Management and Development Course
UN	United Nations
UNAMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
VIP	Very Important Person
WARNORD	Warning Order

APPENDIX B - ACOTA Core Courses

ACOTA Core Course	Duration
Strategic Training Conference (STC)	1 week
Training Planning Management Development (TPMD) Course	1-2 weeks
Effective Methods of Instruction (EMI) Course	1-2 weeks
Battalion Command and Staff Operational Skills (CSOS) Course (includes the Military Decision Making Process)	2 weeks
Brigade CSOS Course	2 weeks
Force Headquarters CSOS Course	2 weeks
Command Post Exercise	1 week
Computer Assisted Exercise	1 week
Multi-National Exercises (MNX)	1 week
Multi-National Command Post Exercise (MNCPX)	3 days
Map Exercise (MAPEX)	1 week
Soldier Field Training (SFT)(field training)	3 weeks

APPENDIX C - Other ACOTA Courses

ACOTA Core Course	Duration
Mechanized Training (Armored Personnel Carrier) Course	2 week
Engineer Training Course	2 week
Environmental Awareness Course	1 day
Riverine Operations Course	2 ½ days
Noncommissioned Officers Training Course	2 week
Company Grade Officers (CGO) Training Course	2 week
New Equipment Training (NET) Course	1 week
Basic First Aid Course	2 week
Field Medical Training Course	2 week
Basic Trauma Life Support (BTLS) Course	1 week
Combat Lifesaver (CLS) Course	2 weeks
Level II Hospital Advanced Trauma Management Course	1 week
Paramedic Upgrade Course	
(Accredited by the University of South Africa)	8 weeks

ACOTA Core Courses	Duration
Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) Course	
(Accredited by the American College of Surgeons)	2 weeks
Combat Casualty Care Course (C^4)	3 weeks

ACOTA Core Course	Duration
Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) Course	1 week
Peace Support Operations in a Built-up Area (in development)	3 days
Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOI) Course	3 weeks
Predeployment Operations Course	4 weeks
Logistics Training Course	3 days
Information Preparation of the Area of Operations Course	3 days
Military Operations Course	3 days
Civil Military Operations (CMO) Course	3 days
Military Police Peace Support Operations Course	3 days

APPENDIX D - Introductory Note to Participants

Dear (Participant),

I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this research and allowing me to interview you. The interview will take approximately 1-1/2 hours. With your permission, our conversation will be recorded and notes will be taken. Even if you decide that you wish to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time.

Enclosed are several documents for you to review and complete prior to the interview. The first is an interview worksheet. This will provide basic information and allow me to report on the demographic characteristics of the participants. If you do not feel comfortable providing any portion of the information please leave it blank.

The second form is the Protection of Human Rights Release Form. This is a requirement to ensure that you completely understand your rights regarding participation in this study. This includes:

- The purpose of this study;
- The motives of the researcher;
- The protection of your privacy;
- The confidentiality of your interview tapes, notes and transcripts; and
- Your right to choose not to participate in this study at any point prior to the defense of the study.

I am asking that you read both documents prior to the interview. We will review this information at the start of the interview and answer any questions you may have. At that time we will both sign the forms and you will be provided with a copy. You will also be provided with a copy of the actual interview on digital video disc that you can refer to when you review the transcript for accuracy.

Prior to the interview, please spend some time thinking about your participation in the ACOTA program command and staff course and your experience on the peace support operation you participated in. What are your thoughts about ACOTA training? How were your expectations from the ACOTA program met? What effect did ACOTA have on your confidence to successfully complete a PSO mission? How has ACOTA changed the way you approach your mission? How could ACOTA have better prepared you intellectually to accomplish your mission? What changes to the ACOTA approach, if any, would pass the common sense test? What can ACOTA do to better train future peacekeepers for PSO? What situations did you experience on your PSO mission that ACOTA did not prepare you for? How did the ACOTA program deal with issues of concern to you?

Thank you,

Daniel G. Karis
(Contact information)

APPENDIX E - Protection of Human Rights Release Form

PROJECT TITLE:

Preparing Peacekeepers: An Analysis of the African Contingency Operations, Training, and Assistance Program Command and Staff Operational Skills Course

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR: W. Franklin Spikes, Ph.D.

CO-INVESTIGATOR: Daniel G. Karis, M.S., Adult & Continuing Education

CONTACT AND PHONE FOR ANY PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS:

W. Franklin Spikes, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Foundations and Adult Education, 351 Bluemont Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, 785-532-5873; wfS-3@ksu.edu.

IRB CHAIR CONTACT/PHONE INFORMATION:

Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 1 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, 785-532-3224; or

Jerry Jaax, Associate Vice Provost for Research Compliance and University Veterinarian, 1 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, 785-532-3224. http://www.k-state.edu/research/comply/irb/index.html

SPONSOR OF PROJECT: College of Education

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

The purpose of this study is to determine the perception of Ghanaian military officers concerning how well the ACOTA command and staff skills course prepared them for PSO missions.

PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED:

The target of this study includes Ghanaian military officers who successfully completed the ACOTA program and served on a PSO mission. A sample of approximately fifteen personnel will be selected and interviewed about the command and staff training portion of the ACOTA program. The target sample will consist of battalion commanders, second-in-commands/chiefs of staff, staff officers, and regimental sergeant majors. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Each participant will be asked to review the transcript of their interview to ensure that the transcription is accurate, and that the intended perception of the participant was interpreted correctly by the researcher. The outcome of the study is to make informed decisions about the ACOTA training so that it better prepares a deployed battalion staff to accomplish its PSO mission with the outcome and achieves best practices.

LENGTH OF STUDY:

The interviews will last approximately one and one-half hours with possible follow-up questions via telephone or e-mail during the final data analysis stage. Also, participants will be asked to review the transcripts of the interviews as part of the member-checking process.

RISKS ANTICIPATED: None.

EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

Confidentiality related to all aspects of the data collected from each participant will be strictly maintained. The researcher will conduct the interview in a private location. The respondent will be asked to select a pseudonym to be used in labeling the data collection materials as well as in the transcript and final version of the research. The tapes of the interview will heard by only the transcriptionist, the third party reviewer, and the researcher. The transcripts of the interview will be seen by only the transcriptionist, the researcher and the third party reviewer. All data collection materials will be stored in a secured location. There is the potential that this research will be submitted for publication following the successful defense of the dissertation. In this case, the identity of the participants will continue to remain confidential.

TERMS OF PARTICIPATION:

I understand this project is research, and that my participation is completely voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation or penalty.

USE OF RECORDS

I also understand that as part of this project, an audio and/or video recording of the interview may be made. I indicate below, with my initials, what uses of these records I am willing to consent to. This is completely up to me. I understand that these records will only be used in ways that I agree to. In any use of these records, names will not be identified.

USE OF RECORDS	INITIALS
Records can be studied by the research team for use in the research project.	_____
Records can be used for scientific publications and/or meetings.	_____
Written transcript and/or records can be used by other researchers.	_____
Records can be shown in public presentations to non-scientific groups.	_____
All of the above	_____

I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

Participant Name: _____ Date:_____
Participant Signature: _____ Date:_____
Witness to Signature: _____ Date:_____

APPENDIX F - Interview Worksheet

Name: _____.

             Fist Name   Middle Names   Last Name

Pseudonym: _____.

          A fictitious name you select in order to retain confidentiality.

Rank:_____. **Military Specialty**: _____.

Birth Date: _____.

Address: _____

        _____

        _____.

Telephone Number: _____.

E-mail Addresses: _____.

Military Education: _____.

Civilian Education: _____.

What ACOTA training program did you participate in?

      TPMD   CSOS   MDMP   CPX   CAX   SFT

What positions were you trained for (S-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 2IC, Commander)? (Circle one)

     Personnel   Information Operations   Logistics   Civil Affairs

Other _____.

          Please list the staff position you trained for.

What positions did you hold during PSO and for how long? (Circle one)

     Personnel   Information Operations   Logistics   Civil Affairs Other

Length of time in the position_____.

                    Please list the time spent in that position.

Did you read and understand the Informed Consent Form? _____.

                              Initials

APPENDIX G - Interview Protocol

The interview protocol is a guide used to assist in the conduct of the interviews during the study. It is nothing more than a list of questions you intend to ask during the interview (Merriam, 2009). In general, "what" questions are exploratory, while "how" and "why" questions are favored for use in case studies (Yin, 2009)

Research Questions

Research question 1. What are the perceptions of participants concerning the influence of ACOTA command and staff training in preparing them to serve as peacekeeping?

Research question 2. What are the perceptions of participants on the influence the ACOTA command and staff training has on their effectiveness as peacekeeping military officers?

Research question 3. What is the nature of the ACOTA command and staff training experience in regards to the rank and experience of the participants?

Supporting Questions

Supporting questions address the major concerns of the study, while supporting subordinate questions cover additional information.

1. What are your thoughts about ACOTA training?

2. How were your expectations from the ACOTA program met?

3. What effect did ACOTA have on your confidence to successfully complete a PSO mission?

4.   How has ACOTA changed the way you approach your mission?

Sweep-up Questions

Sweep-up questions posed during the course of the interview elicit further

information on the topic.

5.   How could ACOTA have better prepared you intellectually to accomplish

your mission?

6.   What changes to the ACOTA approach, if any, would pass the common

sense test?

7.   What can ACOTA do to better train future peacekeepers for PSO?

8.   What situations did you experience on your PSO mission that ACOTA did

not prepare you for?

9.   How did culture influence the training?

10.   How does the difference in culture between American instructors and the

Ghanaian students impact ACOTA training?

Supporting Subordinate Questions

Supporting subordinate questions posed during the course of the interview, if

needed, elicit further information on the topic.

11.   Were presentations appropriate in preparing you for your PSO mission?

12.   How did the ACOTA workbooks help your learning experience?

13.   How did the computer assisted exercise enhance your learning?

14.   How you utilize the skills taught in the command and staff skills course on

the mission?

15. How you use the Military Decision Making Process on the mission?

16. How did ACOTA command and staff training influence your leadership skills?

17. How did ACOTA command and staff training influence your problem solving skills?

18. How did ACOTA enhance your communication skills?

19. How did ACOTA command and staff training influence team development prior to your deployment?

20. How did the ACOTA program deal with issues of concern to you?

21. Tell me the questions I ought to be asking and then answer them for me.

Conclusion

Ask the interviewee if there is anything to add, then thank the interviewee for participating in the study and provide a copy of the note to participants, the consent form and the interview worksheet.

APPENDIX H - Bona Fides of Authors of African References

The purpose of this dissertation is to satisfy the requirements of Kansas State University for the award of the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Adult, Continuing, and Occupational Education. The literature review includes extensive citations from the field of African studies. In order to provide readers with a sense of the qualifications of the African studies authors used in this document, their bona fides follow.

Adeti, S.K., is a lieutenant colonel in the Ghanaian Armed Forces. He has a Master of Arts Degree from the University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana, and is the author of the thesis, *The United States of America's Support for Ghana Armed Forces – Focus and Projections*.

Agwuele, Augustin, Ph.D., University of Texas, Austin, is with the Department of Linguistics, University of Texas at Austin.

Afrim-Narh, Abraham T., was a graduate student (2008) at the University of Oslo, Norway, where he worked on his M. Phil. in the Theory and Practice of Human Rights. A Ghanaian, he is the author of *Gender Integration and International Peacekeeping: The Case of the Ghana Armed Forces*.

Asante, Molefi Kete, (born August 14, 1942), is a contemporary and progressive American scholar in the field of African studies and African American Studies. He is currently Professor in the Department of African American Studies at Temple University, where he founded the firstPh. D. program in African

American Studies. Asante is known for his philosophy of Afrocentricity and transracial, intercultural, and international communication. He is the founding editor of the *Journal of Black Studies* and is the author of more than 65 books.

Bittrick, M. J., has served as Deputy Director of Security Affairs for the Office of Regional and Security Affairs in the Africa Bureau of the State Department since 2002. In this role, his work has focused on the issues of conflict management, U.S. regional security policy toward Africa, program planning and oversight, budget justification for security assistance programs in Africa, peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations, disarmament and demobilization activities, humanitarian programs and operations, de-mining, and assisting with ongoing conflict resolution efforts in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa. His previous positions include: Military Advisor, Africa Bureau, State Department, December 1999-October 2002; Defense Attaché, U.S. Embassy, Luanda, Angola, 1998-1999; Battalion Executive Officer and Brigade Operations Officer in 501st Military Intelligence Brigade, 1995-1997, Seoul, Republic of Korea; and Country Director for Central Africa and Somalia/Rwanda, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington DC, 1993-1995. He has also held staff and command assignments in various military organizations in the U.S., Africa, and the Republic of Korea. Mr. Bittrick received a BS in Engineering from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point (United States) in 1982, and an MS in Strategic Intelligence (Africa Concentration) from the Defense Intelligence College (United States) in 1987. He has fluent command of French and Portuguese.

Boafo-Arthur, K., PhD, is the head of the Politics Department at the University of Ghana,

   Legon, where he has been lecturing since 1985. He attended the University of

   Ghana, Legon; Carlton University, Ottawa; and the Ghana Law School. He holds

   a BA, MA, and Ph.D. in political science. His areas of specialization include

   Africa's international economic relations, political economy of Africa's

   development, international politics and foreign policy analysis. Boafo-Arthur has

   consulted for major organizations such as the UNESCO, Commonwealth Human

   Rights Initiative, International Foundation for Electoral System, International

   Centre on Transitional Justice and Fredrich Ebert Foundation. He has published

   extensively in his field. http://www.nyu.edu/studyabroad/ghana/faculty.html.

Booker, S., is a Fellow for Africa Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations.

   http://www.africaaction.org/docs96/bur9610.htm.

Boulama, I., is a colonel assigned as the Senior Communications Staff Officer for the

   ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria. He was one of the

   key planners of the December 2006 ESF Multinational Command Post Exercise.

Collier, M. J., Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1982; areas of research

   specialization are the following: negotiation of intersecting cultural identifications

   (including national, ethnic, racial, gender and class-based) in communicative

   discourses; the role of culture and communication in conflict and conflict

   transformation with critical attention to community building; and negotiation of

   intercultural relationships and alliances in projects related to social change and

   social justice. She received the Feminist Scholar Award in 2006 from the

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Organization for Research on Women and Communication for an article in *Women's Studies in Communication*. http://www.unm.edu/~cjdept/department/profiles/collier.html.

Cooke, J., is director of the Africa program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. She is coeditor, with J. Stephen Morrison, of *Africa Policy Beyond the Bush Years: Critical Choices for the Obama Administration* (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009).

Devlin, M. R., is the Director of International Programs, Northrop Grumman Technical Services, and was directly involved in the support of the African Crisis Response Initiative and the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Programs from 1999-Present.

Ellis, S., Ph.D., received his doctorate from Oxford University and currently serves as a senior researcher at the Africa Studies Center, University of Leiden. In January 2008 he served as an expert witness on African Studies and Affairs at the International Criminal Court Trial of Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia. http://allafrica.com/stories/200801170308.html.

Francis, D., is an independent consultant and Fellow at the Robert Strauss Center for International Law and Security, where she focuses on the role of civil society in democracy promotion. Previously, she was a Program Officer at the International Republican Institute in Washington, DC, where she designed and managed programs on local governance, election preparations, civic participation and conflict mitigation in sub-Saharan Africa. MA , International Relations,

International Economics , 2002 - 2004, The Johns Hopkins University - Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies. http://www.linkedin.com/pub/dara-francis/3/95a/a80.

Gilbert, L. D., was a doctoral candidate, School of Politics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. lysiasg@yahoo.com

Gocking, R., is an emeritus professor at Mercy College in Westchester County, New York. He has a Ph.D. in history from Stanford University, and taught history with a specialization in African history. His main area of interest is colonial West African history, with most of his work being on Ghana. He is the author of two works on Ghana: *Facing Two Ways: Ghana's Coastal Communities under Colonial Rule* (1999), and *The History of Ghana* (2005), in the Greenwood Histories of Modern Nations Series.

Gordon, A. A., teaches women's studies and sociology at Winthrop University (http://faculty.winthrop.edu/gordona/).

Gordon, Donald L., Ph.D., University of Florida, is Professor and Director of the Richard W. Riley Institute of Government, Politics and Public Leadership and the recipient of the Alester G. Furman, Jr., and Janie Earle Furman Award for Meritorious Teaching, 1989.

Gyekye, K., (born 1939) is a Ghanaian philosopher and an important figure in the development of modern African philosophy. Gyekye studied first at the University of Ghana, then at Harvard University, where he obtained his Ph.D. with a thesis on Græco–Arabic philosophy. He has been a Fellow of the

Smithsonian Institution's Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and is a lifetime Fellow of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences. Gyekye is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Ghana, and a Visiting Professor of Philosophy and African-American studies at Temple University.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kwame_Gyekye

Henk, D., currently serves as a member of the faculty of the U.S. Air War College, where he teaches strategic leadership and ethics. He has also served as Chair, Department of Security Strategy, Africa Center for Strategic Studies. He holds a doctorate in anthropology from the University of Florida. Professor Henk was raised by American missionary parents in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He was commissioned into the Regular Army of the United States in 1970, retiring at the end of a 29-year military service, having attained the rank of colonel. In the early 1970s, he served in the United States and Vietnam as an Armored Cavalry platoon leader. He subsequently served in the United States and Germany and participated in the U.S. invasion of Grenada in 1983. Henk's duties included service as Defense Attaché in Zimbabwe in the early 1990s and accreditation as U.S. Army Attaché to Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia. He has also served as an instructor at the United States Military Academy, West Point, and as the Director of African Studies at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In his final military assignment, he was appointed Director of African Studies at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

http://www.uz.ac.zw/units/cds/occasional/paper1/index.html

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Herskovits, M. J., (1895 1963) was an American anthropologist who firmly established African and African American studies in American academia. He received his Ph.D. in anthropology from Columbia University in New York under the guidance of the German-born American anthropologist, Franz Boas. In 1948, he founded the first major interdisciplinary American program in African studies at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. The Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies at Northwestern University, established in 1954, is the largest separate collection of Africana in the world.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melville_J._Herskovits

Isike, C., was a doctoral candidate, School of Politics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. fykeman3@yahoo.co.uk

Joseph, R., is a political science professor at Northwestern University.

Kew, Darren, is an assistant professor at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, and has served as an election monitor in Nigeria.

Khapoya, V. B., Ph.D., Political Science, University of Denver, was born in Kenya, where he attended Catholic mission schools prior to coming to the U.S. to attend college. He has taught at Metropolitan State College, Denver, the University of Nairobi in Kenya, the Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver, the graduate faculty at Wayne State University, and Oakland University. His principal research interests are in African politics and foreign policy, with special reference to South Africa and Kenya.

http://www2.oakland.edu/polisci/faculty.cfm?ID=5379#

Klare, M. T., is a professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College and

author of *Blood and Oil: The Dangers and Consequences of America's Growing*

Petroleum Dependency.

Lute, J. H., currently serves as the Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security. Previously,

Lute was the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peace building

Support. Before that, she was Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support in

the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Born in 1956, Lute holds a

doctorate degree in political science from Stanford University and a J.D. from

Georgetown University. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Holl_Lute

Melber, Henning, went to Namibia as a son of German immigrants in 1967, where he

joined the national liberation movement SWAPO in 1974. He studied political

science and sociology in West Berlin and obtained a Ph.D. and a venia legendi in

Development Studies at the University of Bremen. From 1992 to 2000, he headed

the Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU) in Windhoek and was a

member of the President's Economic Advisory Council. Since 2000, he has been

the Research Director at The Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala, Sweden.

http://www.nai.uu.se/publications/books/book.xml?id=25173

Ottaway, M., studied at the University of Pavia, Italy, and earned a Ph.D. from Columbia

University. She is a senior associate in the Democracy and Rule of Law Project, a

research endeavor that analyzes the state of democracy around the world and the

efforts by the United States and other countries to promote democracy. Ottaway

is an expert in civil society, democracy, rule of law reform, political reform, non-

governmental actors, foreign and humanitarian aid, human rights, Islam, Middle
East, Iraq, Africa, Afghanistan, and the Balkans. http://www.carnegieendowment
.org/experts/index.cfm?fa=expert_view&expert_id=24#.

Pakenham, T., is an Anglo-Irish historian and arborist who has written several prize-
winning books on the diverse subjects and who is a 1955 graduate of Magdalen
College, Oxford. Pakenham has traveled to Africa and is the author of a
definitive history of the Boer War.

Pollard, A., USN, JITF-CT Director of Operations, Joint Intelligence Task Force for
Combat Terrorism.

Power, S., John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, is the Anna
Lindh Professor of Practice of Global Leadership and Public Policy, based at the
Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. Her book *A Problem from Hell: America
and the Age of Genocide* was awarded the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for general
nonfiction, the 2003 National Book Critics Circle Award for general nonfiction,
and the Council on Foreign Relations' Arthur Ross Prize for the best book in U.S.
foreign policy. Power's *New Yorker* article on the horrors in Darfur, Sudan, won
the 2005 National Magazine Award for best reporting. In 2007, Power became a
foreign policy columnist at *Time* magazine. A graduate of Yale University and
Harvard Law School, she spent 2005 to 2006 working in the office of Senator
Barack Obama. http://www.hks.harvard.edu/about/faculty-staff-
directory/samantha-power

Prunier, G., is a French academic and historian specializing in the Horn of Africa and

East Africa. Prunier received a Ph.D. in African history in 1981 from the

University of Paris. In 1984, he joined the CNRS Scientific Institution in Paris as

a researcher. He later also became Director of the French Centre for Ethiopian

Studies in Addis Ababa. Prunier has published over 120 articles and five books.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G%C3%A9rard_Prunier

Ramsay, F. J., is Deputy Permanent Secretary for Media, Ministry of Communications,

Science, and Technology at Government of Botswana and is the past Coordinator

Government Communications System, Office of the President at Government of

Botswana; Deputy Senior Private Secretary and Press Secretary to the President at

Government of Botswana; Principal at Legae Academy. He was educated at

Boston University and the University of Pennsylvania. Besides being responsible

for overseeing public service media institutions and the chief communications

coordinator for Government of Botswana, Dr. Ramsay is a noted authority of the

history of Botswana. He has also written on African politics and media policy

and was active as a Botswana-based columnist, commentator, and occasional

news reporter before joining the public service. He has served on various public

policy bodies including Botswana-Namibia Sedudu Boundary Task Force,

Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Sections 77, 78, and 79 of the Botswana

Constitution, Vision 2016 Education and Information Forum, the High Level

Consultative Council, and the Private Sector Media Policy Task Force. He played

a significant role in the negotiation of Botswana's Broadcasting Act, the Southern

African Development Community Protocol on Information and the establishment of the Media Advisory Council and the Press Council of Botswana. He is a founder of Livingston Kolebeng College and Kgosi Sechele Museum. As Chairperson of the Senior Secondary Schools History Panel he helped to draft the BGCSE History Syllabus. Dr. Ramsay's publications include six books, as well as numerous articles. http://www.linkedin.com/in/ramsaybotswana

Shanahan, M. K., served as a research assistant on the Future of Peace Operations program at the Stimson Center from 2002-2004. Ms. Shanahan's primary research interests include U.S.-UN relations and U.S.-Africa policy. She holds a BA in political science from Williams College and has studied international security at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. She is currently a senior analyst at RGS Associates, a government consulting firm based in Virginia. http://www.stimson.org/fopo/pdf/African_Capacity-building.pdf

Southall, R., is a Distinguished Research Fellow of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and was formerly Professor of Political Studies, Rhodes University. He has also researched in academic institutions and think-tanks in Lesotho, Uganda, the UK, and Canada. He has a Ph.D. in West African Studies/Social and Economic History from the University of Birmingham, England, and an M.A. in Economics from the University of Manchester. He has published widely on African and South African politics. He is a co-editor of the HSRC's highly acclaimed *State of the Nation* volumes, collections of original

articles upon South African politics and society, and is General Editor of the
Journal of Contemporary African Studies.

Uzodike, U.O. ,was an Associate Professor of International Relations and Head, School
of Politics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, South
Africa. uzodike@ukzn.ac.za

van Niekerk, P., is a managing director of G3 (the Good Governance Group), a strategic
advisory company. He is the former editor of the *Mail & Guardian*, a newspaper
based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Volman, Daniel, is a writer specializing in African security issues.

Wariboko, N., Ph.D., Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, is the inaugural
Katherine B. Stuart Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at Andover Newton
Theological Seminary, Newton Center, Massachusetts. He has written
extensively on social ethics, economic history, anthropology, sociology and
political science. http://www.ants.edu/faculty/bio/wariboko-nimi

APPENDIX I - ACRI Training Programs

ACRI Battalion Training Program

Course	Duration
Initial training (IT)	4 weeks peacekeeping training at the basic level.
Follow-on Training-1 (FT-1)	2 weeks classroom, 1 week CPX, 1 week CAX.
FT-2	A limited field training exercise in which the battalion used a company sized unit using the operations order from FT-1.
FT-3	1 week classroom, 1 week CPX, and 1 week CAX, including introduction to civil-military operations, media relations, etc.
FT-4	Field training exercise.
FT-5	1 week classroom, 1 week CPX, and 1 week CAX, including a senior leader's seminar and review of material. This may be a multinational exercise in which the battalion works for a brigade undergoing a BFT.

ACRI Brigade Training Program

Course	Duration
BIT-0	4 weeks field training, 2 weeks classroom training, 1 week CPX, and 1 week CAX.
BFT-1	1 week classroom, 1 week CPX, and 1 week CAX. The first BFT-1 conducted for a Senegalese brigade in July 2001 was a multinational exercise and included a Malawi battalion which was undergoing its FT-5.
BFT-2	Training beyond BFT-1 never occurred. (Humphries, 2001, pp. 7-8)

APPENDIX J - The Military Decision Making Process

The Military Decision Making Process (Wade, 2005)

Step I. Receipt of Mission

    Input   Mission received from higher headquarters (HQs) or deduced by commander and staff

    Output   Commander's (Cdr) Initial Guidance Warning Order (WARNORD)

Step II. Mission Analysis

    Input   Higher HQs order/plan, Higher HQs Intelligence Preparation of the Area of Operations (IPAO), Staff estimates

    Output   Restated mission, Initial Cdr's intent and planning guidance, Initial Crd's Critical Information Requirements (CCIR), Updated staff estimates, Initial IPB products, Initial Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR), Plan preliminary movement

Step III. Course of Action (COA) Development

    Input   Restated mission, Cdr's intent and initial planning guidance, and CCIR, Updated staff estimates, IPAO products

    Output   Updated staff estimates and products, COA statements and sketches, Refined Crd's intent and initial planning guidance

Step IV. COA Analysis (War Game)

    Input   Refined Crd's intent and planning guidance, Enemy COAs, COA statements and sketches

    Output   War game results, Decision support templates, Task organization, Mission to subordinate units, Recommended CCIR

Step V. COA Comparison

    Input   War game results, Criteria for comparison

    Output   Decision Matrix

Step VI. Approval

Input   Decision Matrix

Output   Approved COA, Refined Cdr's intent, Refined CCIR, High pay-off target
list

Step VII. Orders Production

Input   Approved COA, Refined Cdr's intent, Refined CCIR

Output   Order Plan (OPLAN), Operation Order (OPORD) published

APPENDIX K - Command Post Exercise

Command Post Exercise Scenario of Major Events

Day 1

Brigade issues operations order (OPORD) with overlay
Brigade conducts a movement, recon and reports, fragmentary order (1100)
Brigade intelligence summary (INTSUM) on displaced persons
Battalion mission analysis brief

Day 2

Brigade issues policy on sexual misconduct
Brigade INTSUM with former warring faction locations
Battalion OPORD preparation
Brigade sends message on supply point locations

Day 3

Battalion recon plan to brigade (1500)
Brigade INTSUM
Media article on food shortage
Battalion OPORD brief to commanders

Day 4

Conduct battalion advance recon of their area
Brigade INTSUM with minefields and bandit activity
Company briefs to battalion
Battalion movement. Order brief to commanders. Sick woman and children (cholera)

Day 5

Battalion begins movement to AO (1400)
Propaganda pamphlet
Shrine damaged
Bandits attack police station. Woman kidnapped

APPENDIX L - Computer Assisted Exercise

Computer Assisted Exercise Events
_____

Day 1   Oil workers express concern for their safety
               Young girl injured. MEDEVAC required
               Contaminated fuel reported in subordinate company
               Cholera reported in IDP camp
               IPDs will not leave the camp
               Initial NGO meeting (1500)
               VIP visit (1500)
               Brigade INTSUM

Day 2   Civilians demand action against bandits
               Militia ammunition dump discovered
               Bandit weapons cache and base reported
               Initial FWF meeting
               Detention camp discovered
               Ambush of NGO convoy
               Brigade message on child soldiers
               Brigade message on resupply convoy
               Brigade INTSUM

Day 3   WARNORD that battalion plans operation against bandits
               Mass grave discovered
               Woman escapes, gives info on her situation
               Report that local women are being enslaved
               Car bomb discovered
               NGO meeting
               Oil company vehicles vandalized
               Brigade issues cordon and search FRAGO
               Brigade INTSUM

Day 4   Battalion conducts modified MDMP
               Battalion reinforced with Benin Co if requested
               Brigade INTREP meeting on bandit leadership meeting location
               Road obstruction
               Attempted weapons sale
               Battalion briefs OPORD against bandits (1600)
               Brigade INTSUM

Day 5   Cordon and search operations against bandit camp
ENDEX (1000-1200?)
Commander's discussion (1500)
Graduation ceremony

APPENDIX M - Command and Staff Operational Skills Courses

Number	Course Title
CSOS 01	**COMMON STAFF SKILLS**
CSOS 01-01	Introduction to Peace Support Operations/Course Overview
CSOS 01-02	Command and Control, Command Post Organization, Staff Organization, Staff Coordination, Information Management
CSOS 01-03	Planning Consideration for Logistics, Administration, and Terms of Reference
CSOS 01-04	Interoperability
CSOS 01-05	Reception, Staging, Onward Movement, and Integration
CSOS 01-06	Force Protection
CSOS 01-07	Legal Aspects, Rules of Engagement, the Mandate, and Human Rights
CSOS 01-08	Civil Affairs
CSOS 01-09	The Media
CSOS 01-10	Introduction to Psychological Operations
CSOS 01-11	Military Briefings
CSOS 01-12	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
CSOS 01-13	HIV/Aids Prevention
CSOS 01-14	Conduct of United Nations Peace Support Operations
CSOS 02-01	Introduction to Primary Staff Officer Skills
CSOS 02-02	**S2-INTELLIGENCE, INTELLIGENCE PREPARATION OF THE AREA OF OPERATIONS (IPAO)**

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APPENDIX N - Database Description of the Interviews Transcriptions

Construct	Duration
Total Length of Interviews	1,847 minutes
Average Length of Interviews	77 minutes
Shortest Interview	14 minutes
Longest Interview	118 minutes
Word Count of Transcriptions	229,714 words
Line Count	21,851 lines
Page Count	491 pages

This appendix complements Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 by providing selected perceptions of the participants in greater context. The chapters use extracts of the participants statements to present their perspectives in relation to the themes. Here the participants complete statements on the matter are included.

Participant Interviews in Support of Chapter 4 - Results.

Theme 1. Student officers perceived the teaching and learning as effective.

MacGarrett:

Because, they have gone through their training, they have practiced it, they practice it…so when they get in there and the same situations, are the situations they are confronted with, then they go out there so it's like, 'Oh! This, I know about. So let me do the same thing that I did here, to solve the problem.' So we easily solve problems and we gain, because of the training that we receive.

Azima:

And when it came to forming the force mandates, and mission, or the force estimates, we had to come up with estimates and come up with operational orders…it was lessons that were learned. We had to come up with contingency plans; we had to come up with force protection missions. We had to come up with rules of engagement. All of this was formed based on my experience with ACOTA.

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Agbolema:

> Handling situations in class that you are likely to face in the mission area prepares you for the real situation. After going through ACOTA, you know that most of your questions that are possible, situations that you are going to face, we have already solved them and that is good. The skill you acquire here actually leads you to perform and do better.

Grenade Rock:

> The good thing is that you should be able to have an open mind to adapt to changing situations. Because you never have a training that will situate things for you. All these things may vary when it comes to its applications. There are no serious inherent weaknesses in the training.

Ricardo:

> It (ACOTA training) has prepared us to react to situations in the area of operations (AO) when it happens. That was my expectation. I was expecting ACOTA to prepare me effectively to plan, to react to situations in the best possible way, whilst maintaining my domination in my area of operation, while being able to respond to any unlikely events, demonstrations, accidents, helping the local police effectively.

Newman:

Rwanda, that was the first experience I had. Rwanda, peace enforcement. Even if
you got to a stage that it was critical. The international committees asked us to
withdraw, to put down, to scale down the number, because when we leave the
faction to fight, that is where the, what you call it, force commander was blamed
at a certain point. Why did he leave? Why did they, the peacekeepers, scale
down? Why did the peacekeepers withdraw and allow a massacre to go? That
was a time when we went initially and saw that we would incur casualties because
we did not prepare much for peace enforcement, our equipment and our resources
were not that much.

Agbolema:

ACOTA's main objective is to give staff training skills to potential officers and
men to be launched in peace support operations and in my own perspective it has
given us the basis and background to be launched into such operations. With the
skills aspect, development of our minds before going there, I think ACOTA's got
everything right.

Lemat:

There are a lot of positive things about ACOTA. Our proficiency has been
enhanced, our Army has been enhanced as a military force because of the staff
training that we have received. I think that we have become more proactive

because of ACOTA training. We have also become problem-solvers instead of being the problems ourselves. We used to have our own problems but ACOTA training has opened our eyes to so many things and on the whole I want to say that it has made us more professional than we used to be.

Toba:

Sir, the ACOTA program has got a lot of strength, but if I am to go into specifics I think it really gives you a broad perspective on how a peace support operation can really be like, from the day you are deployed 'til the day you come back, it really covers everything: operations, even media, how to relate to the media, how to plan convoys and everything; it's all in the ACOTA program. It is very beneficial because in peace support operations that's what you really need.

Agbolema:

My final comment is that now a lot of officers are eager to attend ACOTA training based on what others have achieved from ACOTA and I must, if I can tell you, that most Ghanaian officers are prepared now to attend ACOTA training because it can be carried on to our way of doing things especially for the officers in our practical exams, and even the dealings in the teachings, and in our various training schools because as I said the MDMP program is almost the same..
The training provided knowledge of what to expect on a peace support operation.

Xasese:

…is always an asset to an individual. So, at any point in time, any additional

knowledge you get, gives you an edge over whoever you were previously. Just

like, we had exposure to most of the things: how to use supply system, getting

your transport requirements, getting the other responses you need to be effective,

really. …so I think that was a very good learning experience.

Theme 2. ACOTA instructors were perceived to have done a good job.

Suhuyini:

…had the experience. They are officers who have been in the system for twenty

and more years, so they have a lot of military experience and it didn't really make any

difference whether they are still serving officers or retired officers.

Naapo:

I went to the GHQ, it was in one of my recommendations that we should have

more of our retired officers and NCOs in our training schools and other areas so

that when a person is talking, he is talking from experience. He is talking about

what he has gone through, or what he has known for a fact.

Lemat:

Most of our younger officers have not seen high intensity conflict in the area

before, so you bring in somebody who has been in active duty and served in so

many areas. He comes down and is better able to shape certain issues and pass

down his experiences.

Doks:

It's okay. I like it that way. I would suggest it is continued because you realize

that the retired officers are more experienced. They try to bring experience and

they are more practical, so it brings that understanding to the lesson.

Agbolema:

But with you guys, the instructors who have gone through all this and we have

now gained experience from the African perspective, the U.S. perspective become

blended. You have taught in Senegal, you have taught in Mali, you have taught

here, so you probably put everything together for a better way of presenting it

than… you do under an exchange program.

Agbolema:

You bring Mali, you bring Senegal, you bring Zimbabwe (he meant Zambia as the

U.S. currently has strained political relations with Zimbabwe (U.S. Department of

State, 2010b) and all those things so you have a broader view instead of getting on

one particular thing, you have a broader view of what happens in Mali what I'm

missing in Senegal and you want to bring it all, is a very good matter.

Agbolema:

> Based on their experiences, they achieve in the various ACOTA programs, the
> great need to share, and you also put our experience on the drawing board. This
> exchange of ideas makes us to understand the peace support operation that you
> are going to be on. That exchange of information is very, very good.

Amkofis:

> Because one of the problems, sometimes along the line, when the lecturer leave
> the room, I have to take my time to explain some of the areas to them, because I
> could read from their faces. Not that they don't understand, but it's like the guy
> was too fast…talking… even though they prompted us and I always draw their
> attention when they are moving, talking very fast the but troops felt very reluctant
> to ask that too.

Grenade Rock:

> Maybe a few people who might speak a bit faster initially some soldiers complain
> they can't hear anything. And I suggest to them they should try and they will get
> used to it. But whatever happened, whichever instructor is in, also always tells
> the student that if I'm speaking fast, draw my attention to it…but that will not
> take away the fact that there are some people who also find difficulty in hearing
> them properly.

Eagle:

Yes, I mean knowledge is power. Once you know what you are doing in any

environment. The peace support operations are done in an international

environment. You can…you feel confident that you can deliver.

Naapo:

Yes, for me, I do not have any problem because I understand virtually everything

you speak or everything you talk about because of my small experience in the

U.S. Initially that was my problem when I went to the U.S., they talk and talk and

talk and I understand, yes 20% of it, but I also talk and they also understand just a

bit of it, so it was just kind of say it again, can you say it again, can you say it

again. So, at a point, I also, in fact, I learned very fast. I learned very, very fast

and I was able to cope within a very short time. So talking, on behalf of some of

my colleagues, what I can see as a bad aspect of ACOTA is the accent, the

American accent.

Entsie:

I only know and hope that, occasionally, there is some kind of upgrading course

for the instructors. Apart from that, I think it is good because I was really

enthused. I was interested when you come to the class and give us your years in

service. I was, wow! Your years in service is even more than my age.

Agbolema:

Operational wise, what they're likely to face in terms of religion and all those things the likely questions…so it presents an issue and you can pick something from it and build up a lecture for the future because you can pick something from what the person who see it…so it can invite one or two guys who have experience—Ghanaians—to who may come and give a lecture.

Theme 3. Time allowed for the course was insufficient.

Agbolema:

As a commander what the I would say that, being officers and the NCOs who attend this ACOTA training, I think the time is a little bit short and if possible if it can extended because if I've gone through before then it means I'm coming to revise, but most of the time the new people are introduced to this ACOTA training and if you've not gone through it before, everything seems to be rushed, because the time period is very short.

Newman:

But some captains have gone through the junior staff course. They may have done all these things, but the major decision making process is a new concept we are adopting. So many officers have not done that, have not done it, but for the other ranks (NCOs) they have not done it at all. So, it was a bit relevance, bit relevant, but as the timings, the time was not enough for many of the young ones to grasp it, so then I think that is something maybe you have to look at.

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Suhuyini:

The duration of the course, especially the lecture period, some of the lessons need a lot of time. More time to play into detail because some, not all the troops that come on, have been on the course, and some of them, some have problems with the accent so they need to… more time on the lessons that are being taught to be able to get whatever is learnt and the only change I would suggest for the ACOTA training is the duration for the classroom lectures.

Theme 4. Contingency training versus predeployment training.

Newman:

ACOTA, as I said is a contingency thing, and you're training us for a contingency, it's not training for an immediate mission. Then we have to look at what pertains to that particular mission and gear the training toward it. But this is like a contingency, so it should prepare us for the hardest. It is my observation that then ACOTA should look at what pertains in that particular mission and fuse in some things that we expect to experience.

Fifth Interview:

My expectations were that it was going to prepare me as a battalion commander adequately. As an example, we were going to deploy in DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo). We have no knowledge at all what the topography looks like, what the general area even looks like. So, it really didn't prepare us for Congo. What we saw was, in the command post exercise, the map of Puerto Rico

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or somewhere that we used for that particular problem. So I thought that to make it very relevant and applicable to mission specific soldier training you should get something, some material from the intended mission area. It will help a lot.

Agbolema:

As I've stated, with this last one, is very good to have the map exercise because from the word go everybody knows that the names of towns, the village names, the movement, and all those things. Instead of giving us map of South America while we are going to Côte d'Ivoire, so the names become so familiar. When I got there it's just a matter of OK this is the guy… this the group and all those things and I can easily bring my experience, I've got it from ACOTA. So I think getting the map for the various countries you're going to be launched, during ACOTA training should be something that you should focus on.

Grenade Rock:

So…the first time training, it was built on Darfur, we had a chance to use Darfur maps and the rest of it. Obviously some of the things that we do may not conform to exactly what is on the ground. But I was very impressed they (the instructors) tried to get information from Darfur, OPORDER (operations order) from Darfur, briefing from the Force Commander; it brings some realism into it. But when we are dealing with specific missions, where the troops are going, then it brings some realism into it.

Ricardo:

More relevant; using incidents which just have occurred two or three months in the AO before we deployed. This is the situation, so what should be done about this, so you know that if you also go to the area you will be confronted with similar situations.

Lemat:

They think ACOTA is doing very well now, but I think that we really need to study peace operations as they unfold. If we take ACOTA training for Liberia and we take ACOTA training for the DRC we have to ensure that training for Liberia is not the same as training for the DRC. Because no two operations are the same. So if we are able to study various operations seriously and see what troops really need for that mission then we focus on that one.

Amkofis:

Very positive, because that was… I think I liked the way they course package was arranged. Because Camponia (Haiti scenario) was a new ground altogether. Nobody knew Camponia. All of a sudden here is a map of Camponia. We can give you something else you can do a mission analysis on that aspect. We took our time. We have never seen that map before. I've never been to Haiti before. We took the trouble to put everything into detail. And I remember the words of

the instructor told us, we have gone too detailed into that aspect. And that was the

challenge. And it was what made the Liberia Scenario very easy.

Grenade Rock:

Relating the training to the mission…direct to the mission area. But I will not say

it is negative, but I also know that it is not easy putting all the material together

and getting everything started. So if previously it was based on Haiti, Puerto Rico

scenarios, now gradually it is getting better and bringing it to the specific African

situation or specific missions.

Theme 5. Team building was a perceived strength.

Grenade Rock:

Yes, uh, in ACOTA training, we are looking at the staff and their relationship

with the commander. Emphasis are built on the input of the staff into the

commander's plan for it to be successful. A lot of coordination goes on. The S-1

must know what the S-2 is doing, the S-2 and the S-3 coordinate, S-4 will

know…so with this, it emphasizes the need for teamwork. It also brings into the

point that every single staff is very important. And for the UNAMIL (Liberia)

one in particular, going into a mission area as a task force, which is not a standard

unit; people are being taken from various units and they will come together…

grouped in this room per the ACOTA training. It gives us the opportunity to

know ourselves, know the way everybody does things in a different way.

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Agbolema:

> The team building is very good here. From the word go we know that Okay...this
> is my staff...this is my commanding officer. Yes, I've not operated with them
> before and the ACOTA training actually brought me together with all these staff
> officers… I would assess their capabilities in terms of staff work before going to
> the field. I know that this guy can perform well based on what he has acquired
> from ACOTA and I get to know them well and also let them know I'm their
> commander.

Railstation:

> It encourages team-work; team building, making the commander to know his staff
> officers better, not just in the field, but intellectually. That is the only opportunity
> for the commanding officer in our present circumstance to really know his officer,
> apart from the old knowledge of his officers, if he even knew them at all. Then it
> challenges us to read more, to learn more, to prepare. It gives us more
> confidence.

Grenade Rock:

> At least going into the basic duties of staff officer, whichever area, and then
> knowing the staff responsibility to the commander, it was a very useful thing to
> me, especially the point of looking at who becomes the commander's 2IC (second
> in command), the alter-ego stuff that is something that I really like.

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Pablo:

For us, who were not coming from one battalion, we're a task force and I think

that introducing us to that before embarking on a mission was great because we

got to know each other. We got to know how to work as a team. We got to know

how to communicate.

Naapo:

We are not a formed unit. We are a task force. The CO comes from a different

place, the XO comes from somewhere there. This is the time we get to know each

other, although we have known each other as individuals; this is the first time we

learn to work as a team.

Suhuyini:

He benefits because it gives him the opportunity to try to reach the staff officers

that he is going to work with, and for him, the program or the exercises that are

given on ACOTA, he's able to determine the ability or the performance of his

staff officers.

Doks:

We realized that during the group work, group exercises, it wasn't one man. It

wasn't one man work. It's kind of, everybody got involved. People were

bringing in their ideas and that brought out the best in us, because you might think

of something and somebody tries to counter it by coming up with a better

solution. Another person comes out and at the end of the day we were able to

make very good decisions. We worked as a team; we worked as a team because

there wasn't really one man who could do all of that we went through.

Theme 6. Student notification and preparation needs improvement.

Railstation:

The only problem sometimes was with the timing of the training. The timing of

the training and probably we had nominations for the training for officers who

were not really prepared for the training or who had other commitments and so

they couldn't fully participate.

Kekeli Senam:

One, you need more time to plan ahead. We did not have more than three weeks

to prepare for the course. We also, as of the time we were supposed to start, we

did not have more than thirty people nominated. We were supposed to have eight

hundred and fifty but we did not have more than thirty people. Out of the thirty

nominated, just about seven, eight of us could attend the course.

Ricardo:

Most of the officers, the OC's couldn't turn up because notification was not done

far in advance to notify them to turn up for this training on time. So, I would have

wished that battalion commanders, who will be participating in future operations,

are given the officers who are to participate in the operation so that they can

inform them in advance, to get them ready to come from the first day.

Theme 7. The training benefits junior officers more than senior officers.

Suhuyini:

I think the junior officers benefit because the two…the 2IC (second in command)

and the commanders, we have been on a lot of courses. We have…some of them

have been in the United States and on various courses, so whatever has been

taught: military decision, the process and analysis, other things, they already

know them because they've been to various trainings. Some have gone on special

peacekeeping training and the UN organized peacekeeping training in other

countries and other missions, so the senior officers, they already have the

knowledge in this training. So the junior officers benefit more because… some of

them this is their first training… training they are having with this, their first

ACOTA training they've been on, so they benefit more.

Newman:

Senior officers by Ghana Armed Forces (are) major and above. But some

captains have gone through the junior staff course. They may have done all these

things but the major decision making process is a new concept we are adopting.

So many officers have not done that, have not done it but for the other ranks

(NCOs) they have not done it at all.

Newman:

The ACOTA training, I see it as a refresher course for some of us and a new preparatory course for young officers and other ranks. I'm saying so because some of us, some of the officers who had appointment for this, have gone through similar courses in their career. But, young officers and other ranks may not have gone through the course. So I see it as a preparatory course for a mission. It was a necessary step for us to revise, for some of us a revision, a reminder of things that we know, and before we were launched into an operation.

Pablo:

The ACOTA training basically is not new to me, being a very experienced peacekeeper and a Ghanaian Army officer for that matter. So I think that the training is a very good model that refreshes us and exposes us to current military skills. That enables us to really participate in the peace support operations.

Doks:

Because, at the young officer's commanders course, we did estimate, alright, but we didn't have a chance to do it as we did during the ACOTA training. ACOTA was more detailed and it gives us a picture that it was difficult for one person to do.

Doks:

Sir, as I was telling you, you get to the young officer's course and one person is asked to write the whole estimate process from mission analysis to the plan. With ACOTA we realize that each stage is done by each cell. You don't get one person doing everything. If you are with a, if you are S-2, the mission analysis you do for only S-2. S-3 does for S-3 alone, in that order. But with what we did with the young officer's course, you realize that one person is doing mission analysis; he's doing course of action, whatever; he's the IO; he's the ops, operations; he's logistics, everything. So, you don't do it in detail. With this, you are specialized in a cell and you take your time, do it, and do it well for the cell, so that is the difference.

Naapo:

As an officer, I do not see this training as only…preparing me for peacekeeping operations. I see it as going to develop me in my career development. I now know how to do these things, whether in a combat situation, in a peacekeeping environment, or even for promotion exams. So, for me, I think it's a very good experience.

Lemat:

I have realized from the previous experience that because officers and non-commissioned officers are mixed and because of the level of education, level of most of the officers, I think the non-commissioned officers, most of them are

intimidated in the classroom. So I believe that if a separate course is run for them they will be able to openly express themselves. I believe that some of them in the classroom may not understand certain things and because they have officers with them, they are not able to come up and ask. So I believe that if a forum is created for them only, they should be able to express themselves more freely in the classroom, and I think they will learn more in so doing.

Doks:

You see, for me, I think you learn principles as guidelines, or guiding materials. They are to guide you. You don't necessarily have to adapt to it, so if a scenario is given, you go to the theatre with what you have learned. You try to adjust. That makes you an officer, but for some of the senior NCOs and the NCOs, I don't know if it's because of their educational background, they found it a bit difficult.

Entsie:

Well, for them (NCOs) it was quite challenging and interesting, especially to have found themselves in the same classroom being taught the same thing, doing the same thing with the officers. They really felt honored. But the challenge, especially with those I talked to, the challenge was, some of them, especially the military decision making process, this was the first time they had it. We are privileged, at the military academy we are introduced to the British way, so we

have a fair idea, but they have nothing. So, for some of them, that was the first

time of coming across such a thing. So, you can imagine. With that

understanding, I think that we assisted them with things that we understood. We

just put all hands on deck and we worked together as a class, as a team. They

really enjoyed it. It was quite well for them.

Theme 8. U.S.-Ghanaian cultural differences were not perceived as effecting

training.

Agbolema:

ACOTA should be able to get this background from potential countries that you

are supposed to be launching to and we teach potential peacekeepers, and that

should be included in your program because Africans most of the time believe in

tradition and culture and that is where I think ACOTA is lacking a little bit

because African culture is different from the Western world. For example

traditionally, if you're a peacekeeper and you don't respect the traditions and

customs of an African from the word go, though you are a peacekeeper, he may

not accept you in his country because you don't respect his culture.

Xasese:

'Cause you need to get the cultural differences, get maybe the language

difficulties, then interaction by other ways, and it's the theater by which you are

operating. It might get maybe some climatic information out of it, your

operations as a team, maybe get some human relations; the interaction between

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you, the peace-keepers and the locals or the populace, which of course, you might

not be able to experience during the CAX training.

Agbolema:

Culture and traditions that they are supposed to respect, for the people to respect

them and accept them. ACOTA should be able to bring such resources specialists

… from countries or wherever they can get, who knew about their culture and

traditions so that wherever, before the troops are launched to the peacekeeping

theater then, know what they're supposed to do in terms of culture and traditions.

I think two days can be OK because that will encompass traditions and culture.

Grenade Rock:

Ummm….not specifically, but in the training, lay emphasis on the need to respect

culture; they need to train your people; know the specific area where you are

going, so they know how they behave, and then you'll be having that situational

awareness as you go in.

Logum:

I think my problem more like, is with the scenario, okay. Peacekeeping you have

to relate to the locals. If you don't have quite a good relation with the locals you

may have more problems, for especially with Congo where naturally, because of

the mindset of the locals, they see the peacekeepers as…as enemy. So if you

don't relate with them well you will just be jeopardizing what they think of you.

Agbolema:

All the programs are very useful, very, very useful except that I've said that you

should digress a little bit into the civil affairs so that with our experience as

peacekeepers we know the techniques, and all those techniques of how to, based

on the mission and all those things, but how to relate more with the civilians, is

still a lot, because as Africans we do things as if the military has all power and

when you get to the theater you see, hey your power is just related to just push,

push but when you come to this theater because you're supposed to be more… in

their civilian minded way of doing something instead of going there to use force.

Pablo:

I don't think culture played any role here. The Ghanaian soldier has been

exposed to an American instructor, or American instructors, for a long time now.

I just want to intimate that some of the soldiers that have done ACOTA training

before look at the turnover of the time at which a Ghanaian soldier goes on a

peace support operation, some of them are doing it for their tenth time in our

system. Yeah, so they are exposed to the Americans. We have known Americans

for a long time, yeah. I don't think culture played any role.

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Toba:

Sir, personally, to tell you the truth, I don't understand culture. I don't understand culture. I'm not a very keen culture person. I don't imbibe myself in a lot of culture. I just take things as they really are and then I check whether what is good and bad to me.

Ricardo:

Most of the people who are participating, they're key appointment holders who attend ACOTA, have one way or the other gone on a peacekeeping operation before, so most of them have interacted with other people from other countries before. So, it was not a big deal. And even in our training school we had a foreigner who was teaching there, so it was not a problem. Culture was not a problem.

Dzakpata:

Ghanaians are very well-exposed people you know, you know, they are a bit high up there. Ghanaians are, if you may have realized, they are very friendly people. Any average person in the army, the culture of any average person in the army is not diametrically opposed to any… any other person all around the world. Maybe because of the way our training institutions, what we do in our basic training institutions, so I don't think there are any cultural diversities that may pinch

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negatively on the interaction between U.S. Army personnel or their colleagues who help us in the ACOTA training packages.

Eagle:

Maybe, one reason why there isn't, is what I've just said about your culture and the other reason is the fact you both are military officers, have a past in military training. Military is the same everywhere actually. Basic training and all that. Staff training. Command training and all that. Having passed through all that your perspectives are close with each other.

Eagle:

It's good. You are open, very approachable, friendly. You want to learn other countries. The fact that you are like a melting pot. Where you come to Ghana you want to see what the Ghana culture is like. You try to learn which is very good. It makes us…puts us at ease. It makes us feel comfortable. If you were aloof, then it would be a different thing. But you are very open.

Grenade Rock:

No, the…the instructors have so far demonstrated an understanding of the culture. I want to say they quickly acclimatized and you know they can…you know, the good thing is that the Ghanaians don't have a very complex culture. It is very easy to move along…no serious peculiarities in terms of Ghanaian culture. So

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you enter that country with that openness, hospitality, ready to welcome

everybody so is not very difficult getting along and I think that is something that

would let people feel at ease.

Theme 9. The teaching methodology instilled confidence to perform the

mission.

Amkofis:

I think, I think basically all the methods for teaching were employed here. I saw

demonstrations, I saw presentations, I saw discussions, and I saw lectures. Which

is very good. These are the four pieces we offer for instruction, and all these four

were available as far as the ACOTA training was concerned. Which I think is

very good.

Eagle:

Your methods, you use to teach. It's quite good. It makes it easy. And it's very

beneficial because these staff officer's will go on the staff knowing what to do

and doing it well and therefore to enhance the command and control of the

brigade headquarters or any other headquarters for that matter. So, it will be very

beneficial to the whole battalion.

Doks:

I think the presentations weren't bad. Most of the presentations by the instructors

were okay. They give students a chance to also speak and to also ask questions,

and most of them in a form of discussion, so I think, as a professional teacher, it is

a very good way of teaching.

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Azima:

If you know what you are about, you have confidence. And we have been taught staff procedures when we talk about force protection, the legal aspect of peace missions. We have been taught media relationship too. Extensively on human rights, HIV/AIDS, and interoperability; which are the major core issues of our peace support operation.

Eagle:

I find it very progressive. Where you learn the basics—learn the general staff training—the general staff training to specific staff training. S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4, S-5 training and then you progress until you are able to go into do the Military Decision Making Process. You start using those tools to plan a peacekeeping, or peace support operation. It's progressive and by the time you start planning you're very conversant with the skills that you need to use to plan effective peace support operations.

Agbolema:

I think all the lectures tended toward the achievement of the objective of the ACOTA training. It was all useful, very, very useful because you start with the skills training and that send you into another sphere of the training and before you get to that sphere you should have finished the first one and that compliments your thoughts on the matter the program that follows.

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MacGarrett

A lot, because like I was talking about the exercises, they relate to practical situations, you understand, it was not an abstract kind of thing, where you think some incidents somewhere, but it gives practical situations, and that is what, because you know that these are some of the things that you are expecting when you go on missions. So if you know it, then you have. Oh! You have foresight when you get in there it is the same thing…almost the same thing. So it builds a lot of confidence for you to get in there.

Grenade Rock:

I know the style of teaching of the United States. It is more of practice. A little teaching, you go in smaller groups, and then you go and do, and then you come back with a presentation. So I was expecting that it was going to follow the same thing. Especially in the MDMP class, 35 minutes there is a lecture, quickly, you have to put a presentation together, and come and deliver.

Fifth Interview:

For every student, and those of us who have been teaching for some time, the experience is that it is always good to give the lecture and put the soldier or the student to practice it. Lecture and practice. So you give the lecture, give the broad idea, the general idea of what it is how it should be applied; give this and then ask them how to do it. Then do a debrief.

Theme 10. Course reference material, books, and CD-ROMs were valuable.

Agbolema:

> For example the materials that you're giving us, the books and all those things, the CDs they are all reference material that without ACOTA some of us would be going to the internet going to look-up all this, but now, really now we have most of it to help us make decisions. I'm keeping all my workbooks because I know I will be called to be a resource person and that's why most of the time you see us with pen, writing, taking notes because one day, one time I recall, if ACOTA is not there.

Naapo:

> In fact, I was not surprised at all when I saw the student books. From my short experience in the U.S., that was what I went through. I was given a lot of student books, slide packages we called them. That is an aspect that we don't do in our army. It's usually difficult to get fresh materials and then you need your own books. The presentation books, or the slide packages, make it so simple, so if, for instance, slide one, if the comments I want to write pertains to slide one, I write a comment against slide one. So, when I am doing my reference, or my review, I have no problems understanding the points. They are very, very good things.

Railstation:

Well, the system that you used; what you present on slides, is what you hand over

to us as lesson notes, and most of the slides are in points form. And to get a very

good understanding of it, especially when you miss a presentation, you need to do

a lot of reading from other sources. But for some presentations I'm sure it would

be advisable if either you give us reference material, apart from what appears on

the slides, that you print for us, or give us comprehensive notes in addition to the

slides that you print out for us.

Doks:

Yeah, we were issued workbooks on almost everything we did. The workbooks

are okay. It's a reference material and, most of the time, if I am facing

difficulties, I just refer to it. I have all of them now there. Some of them I have

jotted down notes and, so anytime I need to make a reference I just refer to them.

Theme 11. Military decision making and problem solving are important

skills.

Lemat:

I think it enhanced my problem solving skills. Like I said, military decision

making process was a very good thing, and if you go through the military decision

making process very well, problems become simple for you because every factor

is considered over there.

Suhuyini:

Yes from my perspective as an individual it improved my knowledge in the

decision making process because I didn't know much about the decision making

process - like the estimate process. What I knew, what I was trained at the Ghana

Military Academy, was the estimate process…when I came on ACOTA we

moved from the appreciation process. I came on the course and learned the

decision making process from the ACOTA course, so I benefited on that aspect.

Pablo:

The mission, the military decision making process itself is a problem solving tool,

it's a problem solving tool. So, when applied properly in whatever task you are

given it will help you, asking the questions and so what, so what, having done

that…after this then so what?

Dzakpata:

So then the MDMP, that is ACOTA…is a very useful medium for making

decisions, command and control, looking as if there is an evolution that has to be

done, even on the ground. You are well-prepared to handle these ones perfectly.

Naapo:

This MDMP, the military decision making process, personally I think I've learned

a lot. I have acquired a lot of things and also learned a lot. So, especially when it

comes to the mission analysis, trying to get the implied tasks, the mission

essential tasks. I think I can now do better and also the course of action analysis.

I can now do better in those areas.

Doks:

What we did on the young officer's commanders course was quite different from

what we did during ACOTA. What we did was not that detailed and it also had a

four stage process, because we were following the British doctrine. But American

doctrine is made up of five stages.

Kekeli Senam:

Given my experience, I think it would be effective because it took us through

orders writing, course of action analysis, course of action selection. These are

things that we know but we usually don't go through it stage by stage.

Toba:

Because from the CO right down to the junior most officer, everybody is thinking

of this, everybody goes through this ACOTA sort of planning, so when you go to

your commanding officer, he gives you orders on a pending task, you come

back…to your guy….you see that you are on the ball because it is systematic and

it follows through. It's not a problem. You don't even really even have to find

your own ways. It's just systematic, it follows through.

Toba:

> After I went through the military decision making process, I found out there is a
> sequential way of going about making decisions, and then analyzing missions,
> which is very key because if you don't understand your mission then you are not
> doing anything. The MDMP taught us how to analyze our missions and it's great.

Agbolema:

> That is one thing that I like about this ACOTA training because in the military our
> decisions are always straight decisions. The commander says this and that's all.
> But the military, the MDMP that we went through, when you get to know the
> intent of your commander and what you want to achieve in the long run there are
> so many things that you go through as a staff officer. So it prepares you as a staff
> officer to think aloud…you narrow your scope of thinking. The MDMP gives
> you that. Finally what you arrive at is a decision that when it is implemented
> then, the task of being launched into that operation, you are going to succeed
> because it gives you all the variables, all the options.

Grenade Rock:

> Yes, if you look at the entire training, uh…you look at MDMP aspect of the
> training, it is very, very useful because you find yourself giving missions,
> analyzing them, and coming up quickly one way or the other to come up with an
> order, to be able to execute a particular task, so I think that the MDMP aspect is

very, very useful. And I think that is a good thought process and it's applicable in all instances especially in peace support operations.

Agbolema:

I said the MDMP program is almost the same like what you teach in our various institutions in the military and for ACOTA apart from getting the reference material, it widens your scope in a way to prepare you for the staff training, the staff training, yeah the skill you acquire here actually leads you to perform and do better.

Ricardo:

I think ACOTA training has made planning very easy, and because of that, you will go through using the MDMP process in analyzing situations or coming up with a decision. By doing so, you will not leave out details. When you go through the process, at the end of the day, you realize you have covered everything. By the time the commander come up with a decision, you have seen the other alternatives which are available to you.

Naapo:

Personally speaking, sometimes most of these things are, let me put it, abstract because we have no really being in similar situations. For instance, war gaming, until yesterday when I got deeply involved into the war gaming aspects, I never

understood what war gaming was. So because of that if you don't really

understand it, you see it as an abstract thing. You are learning something that you

think you will never apply or something that does not exist at all.

Agbolema:

So I think the MDMP is even more important, more important, because the

decision making you have to do a practical way not just do some wishy-washy

rush here… no, no, no, so that is what I think. The skills training is good but the

mission analysis MDMP is very important and that's what every commander and

everybody should understand.

Naapo:

Even the one week for the MDMP is too short. But for somebody who is not on

the course, who thinks that it's too long, because there is so much information.

There is so much information, unless the course is extended to, let's say, 17:00,

then maybe you can lose the duration from four weeks to three weeks. That is

another option. That is another option that could be taken. So, increasing 14:00

to 17:00, that is another option.

Lemat:

MDMP I think should be two weeks. Because especially for NCOs who don't;

who are not used to MDMP. Most of our NCOs don't go through the process at

all. Fortunately for the officers, they start at the Military Academy, but our NCOs no. If we really want to train all the staff to be able to think through a problem, then we need to learn them the MDMP purely a bit, So at least they will understand. Even for our officers, more practical exercises and MDMP, most of them agree that they have gone through, but most of them are not too good at MDMP.

Agbolema:

Yes, as I said the MDMP should be given more. The military decision making process should be given more, maybe more periods, because the skills training, the staff training most of us have done staff you know. You know what to read to your commanders but the decision making is what we are lacking in a way… given the problem. How do you tackle it? And that's what the MDMP I think comes to help it.

Azima:

The Military Decision Making Process. I think it's, again, I have to emphasize how useful it is. Why? Because, it allows you to understand. We talk about mission analysis; we talk about course of action development. We are talking about course of action analysis and then you compare the course of actions and then you make a decision.

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Eagle:

I think it's very useful because of some of the skills we are just being introduced

to in the Ghana Armed Forces like the Military Decision Making Process. I find

the approach doctored it on this one very understandable. Very easy to grasp.

What we were taught has the conventional use of the Military Decision Making

Process, but here it's being used in a peace keeping environment, so the factors

this and other criteria... It's quite different than the conventional approach. So I

find it very useful, indeed.

Theme 12. The command post exercise and computer assisted exercise

brought out the skills studied in the command and staff operational skills course.

Entsie:

I was very privileged. As I was saying, I doubled as the S-1, S-4. Now, even

though I am not a logistics officer I have some basics about logistics how to

handle logistics, especially in the last exercise, the CAX, computer assisted

exercise. I really enjoyed it and the role as an S-4. I really enjoyed it. I learned a

lot.

Fifth Interview:

Well, it's a military course, most military courses, the tactical ones, you do most

of this in map exercises, and command post exercises and all that. You do

presentations and that is it. The only difference that I've said that ACOTA dwells

on the NATO system, the staff system. Some of other courses, that I've done or that I've been to the staff procedures are different –that is all.

Newman:

Moving materials from one point to another, escort duties, those things. And so that is what we were expecting. But here we come, the scenario, it was a new conflict, somewhere where we were suppose to go and tackle. So there wasn't a direct link.

Agbolema:

Yes, because initially, for example, the S-2, when he comes on the staff training during ACOTA they get to know the no-go areas…a map is given to him, for him to basically…a scenario, to mark the map and that's going to put his mind in the theater that he is going to launch into and based on the markings and the scenarios, going into theater, the weather the environment and all those things, give him a more open mind. So from the basics they are going to know what he's supposed to do.

Railstation:

That's quite some time, but at least I knew about the various factions to the conflicts, the signatories and the non-signatories and the Janjaweed factor, and

some of the atrocities that they caused - were clearly spelled out in the scenario;

in the scenarios, and they were confirmed with the happenings.

Railstation:

If they are going into Congo, the training they receive should be based on Congo.

It would be more helpful, so they would not just be looking at the generic military

decision making process, but then also whilst they are looking at that, to take

advantage and learn about the mission area, the backgrounds and the conflicts,

and practice, and rehearse it, and play it, and it will be more helpful.

Amkofis:

The strength…is the ability for the instructors to paint scenarios. Yeah, ability to

paint scenarios that pertain to peace support operations. Which is basically one of

the cornerstones of this ACOTA system. That is where the strength lies. You

realize that the scenarios, narratives, examples, both given from the troops, our

own troops and from the instructor, mostly from the instructor, depicts the likely

occurrences that one will encounter in a peace support operation and that is really

a very strong side.

Kekeli Senam:

Considering cases of time, you would have had more time for the scenarios in

Lebanon even though the Haiti scenario made it such that you do the Lebanon

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scenario just perfect. Because your training from something else and using the

knowledge from that onto what you are actually going to do. If you, I believe if

you made the mistakes on where you are going to, you would remember some of

the mistakes and correct them.

Agbolema:

Most of the time the military focuses on achieving military objectives and

forgetting about the civil affairs aspect of it…so we are not now that expert. I

think that's where you should draw…how to relate more with the NGO's and the

civilians in the theater is where I think we are lacking and that's where I think

ACOTA should digress more. Open up because in the military experience as

Africans we think the military has power and everything is by force and all those

things. I want to get to an operational theater in peacekeeping you get to know

that no, you got to put all this power, power doing things by force and really focus

with the civilians during meetings. The way you organize meetings with the

civilians, the way you have to talk to them.

Entsie:

Because I think that they are real issues that exist in the mission area and it is

good that we had full education on it before we get deployed, especially with

sexual exploitation. It's something that the UN frowns at. No soldier really ever

wants to get involved but once you are sensitized, as here, you can also pass on the education to the other troops.

Newman:

The operations training was more on the military decision making process. And as I said, it becomes more relevant when there is, how should I say, we didn't apply much because we were not confronted with issues, we didn't apply because we were not confronted with issues. There were, like we reached a stage in the mission in Liberia where, it's like…we were showing presence. Maybe there is even…before we left we there were instructions on our scaling down the force. So that is where we stayed with readiness. So they are near normalcy. So we did not apply most of the things we learnt.

Grenade Rock:

But when we are dealing with specific missions where the troops are going, then it brings some realism into it and it makes it…it makes it look… what we are doing …UNAMIL, you realize that map is Liberia alright, but what we are using for exercises would not be the exact location that the battalion is going to deploy, so maybe in the future we can have the thing being in the exact locations, so when you go, you go there exactly. But like I said, it should be flexible; if you were to transport whatever you are doing here and then superimpose it, even change it to situations.

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Newman:

> Banditry it maybe not just in case stealing it happen and like in Liberia because of unemployment, there's much robbery, people are armed robbers and we arrest armed robbers and we arrest thieves hand them over to the police and the next day or next few days the same people are on the streets and what is the reason they give they don't have the prison accommodation they don't have the resources to keep them so all that is to do is to warn them. So banditry, banditry was real and we have to tackle such issues.

Theme 13. Leadership and communication skills were enhanced.

Grenade Rock:

> ACOTA has an impact on leadership skills. As a leader, you might be knowledgeable… so you must first and foremost if nothing at all, you are given a tool, that not only becomes a tool for you as a leader. As a leader, you must know the type of service that you must render to your troops and in planning, what aspect you have to look at it from. So that it is not only looking at operational mission, you are looking at admin issues, you are looking at logistic issues, you are looking at health issues, so it has an impact, it improves on leadership skills. When you are thinking as a leader, you are thinking very broad, and you go through all these things.

Suhuyini:

In terms of leadership, ACOTA training really improved my skills and this analyzing of tasks and other things. Tasks, assignments other areas operationally so it has improved the way I look at tasks when I am assigned a task. How to analyze a task and resources that I need to accomplish the mission, questions I'm to ask myself the answers I get from them and the implementation… how to implement whatever decision that I suppose that ACOTA had improved on my skills but a in terms of leadership, leadership in the operational aspects that improved on it.

Naapo:

I think that ACOTA has improved on my leadership skills in the sense that if I am put in a group or in a syndicate, or I usually am in a particular syndicate, or a particular group, and because of my rank I am always a group leader. So, I know what a group leader, if you are the leader in a group, you are responsible for part of things, bad or good things that a group does. So, with ACOTA, I think it has improved my leadership skills, because, for instance, I don't just dictate on what we do, I also, you know, anytime I've been without my point. I ask my other group members to move through. I ask them of what they think. On a few occasions they decide to go with me and I go with them. Now for communication skills, communication skills, especially when it comes to oral communication, I

think it's good because I am able to have available discussions, do discussions

around the table. It improves the communications skills. That also is very good.

Toba:

Maybe a sergeant major says is what we have to do on this is what you have to

do….and they know that you really know all these things, so it boosts your morale

it raises your confidence and then you are able to teach others what you've been

taught. So it's really a morale booster and a confidence booster.

Dzakpata:

When you have a situation where you are not the only repository, you the

commander, you the leader, are not only the repository of the basic knowledge,

your confidence is highly boosted. You can trust, you can go into your room, rest

assured, and that the things that have been taught can be well implemented. And

so there is a higher level of confidence that the subordinates at whichever level

are capable of doing a good job.

Agbolema:

They say that, you see, communication, a lot of guys a little bit inward when it

comes to communication, talking and all those things, or communicate with your

commanders and all those things and with this ACOTA program it brings your

commander face-to-face with the troops you're going to work, so from the word

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go, the S-1 knows this is the way my commanding officer wants us to approach issues. This is the way I have to approach issues when I'm given a task by the commanding officer and you get to know it from this ACOTA training.

Kekeli Senam:

Well, it gave me an opportunity to exercise a lot of leadership skills, as the S-1, and I think I was the third in command, I had to do all the running around, all the background support. Before the commanding officer and deputy commanding officer gets there. It gave me an opportunity to get to know some of the people I was going to work with, some of those who are good, some of those are not good. Some of those were lazy, some were not lazy. At least it gave me an opportunity to know them beforehand, so some of them I know how to deal with.

Grenade Rock:

Yes, there were a lot of briefings. I…I…I actually forgot. A lot of briefings, so it gives you the confidence, how to organize your thoughts, how to present issues, and that was an improvement in communications skills. And in terms of communication as we said some time in the course of the interview, it improves your communication skills. It's very positive. If you're not used to preparing power point, delivering things, and the time that you're working is also a good practice. Within a short time you're supposed to do so much. So it's…you like to be mindful as to how you use your time. The realism brought into the command

post exercises, how messages flow and the reaction, and the rest, is also positive

for you to know that in the mission area or in realistic conditions, this is how

things will be.

Ricardo:

My communication skills? I think it gave me some level of confidence to talk, or

to brief. Because for every stage of the MDMP process, I was to brief as S-2. I

stood in front of the lecturers, my co-students, and had to brief the commander.

So, at this time, I realized my confidence levels as to briefing were very good.

As I said, due to the briefing, you have…it's like literally everyday there's a

briefing. After everything there is briefing. You have the confidence every time

you are facing a crowd, talking to them. Then you have to explain why you are

doing the words. And at the end of everything there are questions are asked. That

really shows your understanding of what you've done. You are not copying, you

are understanding. I remember one occasion I came up with some things, and a

commanding officer asked me why I did this and I have to explain it. That really

showed I understood it, not book work. So, everything I say I make sure I

understand why it is so, why I am doing this. Why not the other one? I have

reasons for taking a very particular course of action. And so it was beneficial.

Entsie:

One of the challenges was the daily briefings, the daily briefings. It was not, there

wasn't much pressure but, naturally, especially for the first time, there was some

kind of pressure but I think everything went down well. We did it for the first

time, you constructively criticized. We picked up from there and corrected on it.

I think from there it was okay. So, for me, I think it has improved on my briefing

skills, my confidence, and for coming and standing in front of a "big man", to

stand in front of the big men to brief them, and tell them about my plan, tell them

about something that I have come up with, how to present it.

Lemat:

As part of the troop training, we go through communication exercises, voice

procedure and I think we make sure that every soldier went through that, and

because of the communication equipment that ACOTA gives out, we have a lot of

equipment to play around with so I think it enhanced voice communication.

Interviews in Support of Chapter 5 – Analysis and Discussion

This section lists additional interviews that support Chapter 5.

Suhuyini:

I say this because when I trained at the Ghana Military Academy and in the

Ghana Armed Forces was the reason that I had appreciation of combat operations

systems until transition was achieved to the estimate process. So, my appearance

with the ACOTA training was my first time to be taken through the military

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decision making process. That is the estimate system. So I learned a lot which helped me in the mission area. And my operations in the mission area.

Toba:

I think firstly, I learned my confidence from the academy, from the military academy. The ACOTA training makes you to know what you are doing and it's not only you. Some of our soldiers who also come out for this ACOTA program, they also come out for some lectures on the ACOTA Program. Maybe a sergeant major says is what we have to do on this is what you have to do….and they know that you really know all these things, so it boosts your morale it raises your confidence and then you are able to teach others what you've been taught. So it's really a morale booster and a confidence booster.

Eagle:

Yes, I mean knowledge is power. Once you know what you are doing in any environment. The peace support operations are done in an international environment. You can…you feel confident that you can deliver. Other members of the staff from other countries will see that you know what you are about, so certainly your confidence level will go up.

Eagle:

It is. I only had a problem one night. Maybe my sight is going. I found some of the characters rather too small. Some of them were a bit too small. The boxes were too tiny. When I wear glasses when I read, I found them a bit too small. When get to class the next day, the lecture was given and the PowerPoint was on the screen. I was more than comfortable with that.

Lemat:

ACOTA was the staff kind of training that I underwent. I think it was excellent because we had…that was the initial steps that we were being introduced to the Military Decision Making Process, it made a lot of sense to us. We were used to the Appreciation. So the Decision Making Process became a bit detailed than what we used to do. We took a lot of things into consideration, and it opened our eyes to so many things.

Doks:

My communication skills? I think it gave me some level of confidence to talk, or to brief. Because for every stage of the MDMP process, I was to brief as S2. I stood in front of the lecturers, my co-students, and had to brief the commander. So, at this time, I realized my confidence levels as to briefing were very good.

Toba:

Most of the time we are broken into groups and then we are, we have a small army so everybody knows each other I know almost every officer apart from maybe my very juniors, but I think I know every officer. So the teamwork, ACOTA enhances our teamwork.

Fifth Interview:

I think the planning process was good. At least to the most of the staff who have not had any extensive training in this military decision making process – saw it for the first time because they are young in the service and they have not had the opportunity to go for staff training- it was good for them to understand at least... Getting to know about it the first time. Work with it and understand…for those of us who already have some insight it was more or less trying to reflect on what we have known in the past to see how applicable or how we can adapt that new system to what we already know, so it was useful.

Suhuyini:

It improved especially we those of us who came on the course as young officers especially a number of us have not yet been in the staff course at the staff college, so the ACOTA course sort of improve on the staff, staff work… like operating staff officers especially those young officers who were on the course with you- the lieutenants and the captains. That is how it improved on our staff working.

Like we have a lieutenant who is coming with you to work at the headquarters for

the first time as a staff officer as an information officer for the first time. He had

never been to any staff course at the staff college. ACOTA helps let him know

what his responsibilities are or what sort of how to coordinate with the other staff

officers at the headquarters, so that is the way it helped us at the headquarters. I

can remember where we had about six to seven young officers who had for the

first time moved to the headquarters in the mission area, so the ACOTA training

tried to fine tune them to operate effectively at the staff positions at headquarters.

Grenade Rock:

Yes, uh, in ACOTA training, we are looking at the staff and their relationship

with the commander. Emphasis are built on the input of the staff into the

commander's plan for it to be successful. A lot of coordination goes on. The S-1

must know what the S-2 is doing, the S-2 and the S-3 coordinate, S-4 will

know…so with this it emphasize on the need for teamwork. If they would

coordinate issues like that, then they will be able to work as a team. It also brings

into the point that every single staff is very important in a brigade, in a battalion.

Every single…there is also the need; who needs training? The soldier needs

training. It would also like to know that everyone is important. And for the

UNAMIL one in particular, going into a mission area as a task force, which is not

a standard unit; people are being taken from various units and they will come

together… grouped in this room per the ACOTA training. It gives us the

opportunity to know ourselves, know the way everybody does things in a different

way. And by so doing, you will soon be able to marry all these things together

and by the time you set yourself as a force, you parade on the same frequency,

with common understanding, the common personal picture so that is where the

team building comes in. And it brings esprit de corps.

Fast Guy:

Very, very beneficial. Very beneficial in the sense that it prepares you for you to

get focused; this is what you should expect. And once you get to the mission

area, as you go along, you really need instructions that are there…you reflect

what you went through. And that assists you in your…accomplishing your task in

your mission area.

Dzakpata:

I don't think so. I don't think so. Most of … after long… without seeming a

braggart, Ghanaians are very well-exposed people you know, you know, they are

a bit high up there… they may not be… but Ghanaians are, if you may have

realized, they are very friendly people whose conscience are not very high, any

average person in the army, the culture of any average person in the army is not

diametrically opposed to any… any other person all around the world. Maybe

because of the way our training institutions, what we do in our basic training

institutions, so I don't think there are any cultural diversities that may pinch

negatively on the interaction between U.S. Army personnel or their colleagues who help us in the ACOTA training packages.

Naapo:

Yes, for me, I do not have any problem because I understand virtually everything you speak or everything you talk about because of my small experience in the U.S.. Initially that was my problem when I went to the U.S., they talk and talk and talk and I understand, yes 20% of it, but I also talk and they also understand just a bit of it so it was just kind of say it again, can you say it again, can you say it again. So, at a point, I also, in fact, I learned very fast. I learned very, very fast and I was able to cope within a very short time. So talking, on behalf of some of my colleagues, what I can see as a bad aspect of ACOTA is the accent, the American accent. I bet you if a British comes to speak British English, we understand it faster because we are somehow known to the British accent, but the American accent is a bit off, it's a bit difficult to really understand. I think our viewpoint.

Azima:

Yeah, sure, sure. I was learning so much on HIV/AIDS, Command and Staff procedures, how to escort men to lead men to escort VVIPS. So, like I told you, and then we talk about negotiation and mediation. That aspect; at lower levels, was covered alright but it could have been more comprehensive. Also, bring in

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our mission, and start through the training, and when we come to our exercise it should aim at Liberia and not only Liberia, at the place where we operate. You see, we are second language learners, we use…second language users. We study the English language and for a minute we have to think in our own dialect before we converting it into English. That is how the mind works; so there is a lot there. So if you have to teach me something and then you explain it then I will relate it but there will be double delay. There will be delay in answering that in the future. It would be appropriate to bring examples down from Liberia. Like the map that we have, we have a map of Liberia but that map covers Honata it should have been Bokota.

Lemat:

If Ghanaians are not allowed to use our hands, it does not mean that when Americans come they should also. They should behave like an American. That is a difference we can recognize. I don't …we don't consider…I don't consider that one as very important. They you speak, you speak like an American, I speak like a Ghanaian that brings the difference between an American and a Ghanaian, because if I spoke like an American now nobody would know that I am Ghanaian if you express yourself like a Ghanaian nobody would know that you are an American. Those differences are there and we can't do anything about it..

Newman:

Most when you go to normal this training is geared to peace support operations and I think I realized you relied on our experience more you rely on our experience more than your experience because the instructors who came I think they were more battle experience than peacekeeping peace support operation. They have more battle experience than peace support operational experience, so they enjoyed our experience when we shared them, so I think if you can have a couple of them, couple of them who have served on peace support operations and it can impact their experience it would also help.

Grenade Rock:

Yes, I spoke about that in relation to the time for completing a particular course content. Because uh, you realize that you have to rush through a lot of slides, just to make it on time. So…either enough things are done to be able to extend the time within the day, to cover the things at a very much slower pace because there's a slang problem…or a language problem…in terms of pronunciation and in a way accent problem…

Entsie:

I think they are good and we are more enlightened or, we get a better understanding because we also have the same book as the presentation. The presentation is actually presented in the form of a book for every student so you

get a chance to follow and even before you come to the classroom, you get home
in the night and you read through. I was reading through before I come to class
the next morning so I can, whatever the instructor is teaching, I have a fair
understanding so that we can contribute. One thing that I want to commend the
ACOTA training on is the way they involve students in the training like ask
questions, ask for their opinion on how every student feels on the course. I think
it's very good. It involves so nobody gets to actually sit unconcerned because I
know, look, if I don't pay attention a question could be directed to me. So it gets
everybody on board. Everybody wants to pay attention and you get where you
want to read something and then, especially the warrant officers, some of them
found it difficult, a little difficult, with the understanding, like language
understanding with some of the instructors. I must be very frank, with some of
the instructors, some of them.

Naapo:

Sometimes, you know, it's not an easy thing to come and sit in a classroom from
eight to twelve or from eight to two. Personally, I have been suffering a lot
because of the period in which we are in. I am a Muslim and I have been fasting.
We are in the Ramadan period.

Entsie:

Very commendable because, even if you think you don't understand, you have to
come out with something. So with that, you are forced to pay so much attention
to the instructor teaching. Once thing I liked was the fact that the instructors were
just available to us to assist in anything. After the class, if I don't understand
something I can move into you and say I don't understand this. How do we do
this? You teach me and it was quite okay. It was quite okay and I think the
involvement, the practical exercises, was excellent, was excellent. It was
excellent. It really got us to move too. It was good. It was very good.

Entsie:

Oh that is a wonderful exercise. That is a very wonderful exercise. Actually, at
that point in time, I thought it was really reality. The way the exercise was
conducted, certain things that didn't go down too well, certain things that we
didn't perform too well, was pointed out to us and immediately redone. We
learned a lot.

Grenade Rock:

Yes, uh, in ACOTA training, we are looking at the staff and their relationship
with the commander. Emphasis are built on the input of the staff into the
commander's plan for it to be successful. A lot of coordination goes on. The S-1
must know what the S-2 is doing, the S-2 and the S-3 coordinate, S-4 will

know…so with this it emphasize on the need for teamwork. If they would coordinate issues like that, then they will be able to work as a team. It also brings into the point that every single staff is very important in a brigade, in a battalion. Every single…there is also the need; who needs training? The soldier needs training. It would also like to know that everyone is important. And for the UNAMIL one in particular, going into a mission area as a task force, which is not a standard unit; people are being taken from various units and they will come together… grouped in this room per the ACOTA training. It gives us the opportunity to know ourselves, know the way everybody does things in a different way. And by so doing, you will soon be able to marry all these things together and by the time you set yourself as a force, you parade on the same frequency, with common understanding, the common personal picture so that is where the team building comes in. And it brings esprit de corps.

Azima:

Yeah, louder and slower, exactly. Most officers went to the course abroad…they met the whites. So they listen to them, they listen to what they say. I wouldn't even say the whites because I have, my daughters were all born in the U.S. I have two daughters and they are African, they were born in the U.S. I find it difficult to understand them and easier to understand you. So, when it comes to accent it is not color, it's…

Railstation:

> Well sometimes the problem was not with prior notification but possibly a lot of officers have to combine doing, undertaking the ACOTA program and then with their regular duties in the office, so you could be given two months prior notification but yet you may not be released fully to participate in the program.

Doks:

> Some of them shared their experiences with us. They gave us pieces of advice and, I think, they had patience, the times you were late. You come to class and about half of the class was late. They had the patience and also egged us on to learn because it was going to be of use to us.

MacGarrett:

> Okay. I want to say that yes, because for the kind of training, you try to put them together, put them together and everybody knows their role he has to play as part of the team. And I'm also very particular about this kind of staff training that have been added. Because if it is a team, and all the members of the team know the role that they are playing. At the end, they work as a team. I used to say that if you talk about Real Madrid. Real Madrid has very good individual players but they don't have a team. So you can say that senior NCOs are good, the officers are bad, this is this, you don't have a team. If you say that they are, Oh, average, average, average and they work together as a team. That is better than saying that

Oh, the NCOs are doing better than the officers at the end, then you don't have a team. But where everybody has the same standard, and that is the kind of training you are giving…to bring all of us, both officers and senior NCOs at a standard where we can operate as a team, then we work as a team. That is where I am saying you have achieved a lot.