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**An Exploration of Teacher Motivation:  
A Case Study of Basic School Teachers in  
Two Rural Districts in Ghana**

**Chisato Tanaka**

**Submitted to the University of Sussex for  
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**May 2010**

**I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree. However, this thesis incorporates to the extent indicated below, material already submitted for the degree of:  
Master of Science in Social Research Methods  
which was awarded by University of Sussex.**

**Chisato Tanaka**

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This research is for basic school teachers in rural areas in Ghana, whose contributions to quality education are, I strongly believe, invaluable.

University of Sussex  
Chisato Tanaka for Doctor of Philosophy  
An exploration of teacher motivation: a case study of basic school teachers  
in two rural districts in Ghana  
Summary

Retaining motivated teachers is a major concern across countries. Ghana, like other Sub-Saharan African countries, has been trying to address challenges, such as the lack of teachers, particularly in rural areas, and the low levels of motivation among them. On the other hand, teachers in developing countries are not necessarily trained and, even if they are, they may not be competent, effective and efficient (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991). Mere enthusiasm and good intentions may not be enough to improve the quality of education. Nevertheless, motivation is necessary, since without it, teachers – especially those facing difficult circumstances – cannot persevere; and, no matter how skilled, without drive, teachers are unable to perform in the long term. As a consequence, without well-motivated teachers, children are less likely to attain the desired level of education. Moreover, if parents/guardians do not believe that education equips their children with the necessary skills and knowledge for a better life, access to and completion of basic education will not increase and government efforts to achieve EFA and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) may be in vain.

Teacher motivation is not a new area of research. Extensive quantitative and qualitative research has been carried out, especially in the UK and the US, but not in Sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, in the case of Ghana, most of the research is based on surveys and one-shot interviews and tends to describe why teachers have low job satisfaction and motivation. As working and living conditions for most teachers are challenging, studies into ‘motivation’ have tended to be superficial. More specifically, little research has been carried out into investigating why some teachers are able to stay motivated in conditions that others do not consider to be conducive to effective practice – or how they are able to manage. In addition, what research has been done has been concentrated in the southern part of the country, which is considered to be better off compared to the northern part according to many gauges.

This study has aimed to investigate how basic school teachers' perception of teaching as a career is shaped by social and professional environment in rural Ghana. It has also intended to explore local realities with respect to the policy and its implementation for basic education. One-year field research from 2007 to 2008 was conducted by using a mixed-methods approach in two 'deprived'<sup>1</sup> districts – one from the north and the other from the south – which are geographically, socio-culturally, and economically different. The methods of data collection involved survey, ethnographic research, interviews, and teacher focus group discussions.

This research echoes previous research findings that physical disadvantages – such as the lack of conducive infrastructure, the shortage of teaching and learning materials, and poor salaries – are factors that contribute to a lower commitment to the profession. However, this research also suggests that two other key stakeholders at micro-level – in addition to the teachers themselves – play a role in teacher motivation. These are: colleague teachers, including head teachers; and the communities in which teachers live and work. Support at this level – both material such as the provision of accommodation and food and non-material like morale support – can not only enhance teachers' well-being and self-esteem but also help them to see their current positions as a part of their goals.

On the other hand, at macro-level, local authorities – the main implementers of policies and strategies formulated at central level and of teacher management – are particularly influential, as it affects teachers' long-term vision. They tend to discourage teachers in their operation, mainly due to its organisational culture that teachers perceive neither fair nor rational. With the same reason, strategies put in place to motivate teachers do not always produce the expected outcomes. Moreover, teachers are more likely to be subordinates to the authority even in school management and to feel powerless in the system. Too much emphasis on teacher motivation at school level may overlook the important role of the District Education Offices (DEOs), since teachers' lives are much more related to how the DEO manages them than is the case with similar hierarchical relationships in the West.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Deprived' Districts were identified by the Ministry of Education using educational indicators. Details are in chapter 3.

## Acronyms

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| BECE   | Basic Education Certificate Examination               |
| BTA    | Best Teacher Awards scheme                            |
| CG     | Capitation Grant scheme                               |
| CS     | Circuit Supervisor                                    |
| DA     | District Assembly                                     |
| DBE    | Diploma in Basic Education                            |
| DCE    | District Chief Executive                              |
| DDE    | District Director of Education                        |
| DEO    | District Education Office                             |
| GES    | Ghana Education Service                               |
| GNAT   | Ghana National Association of Teachers                |
| EMIS   | Education Management Information System               |
| HT     | Head Teacher  |
| JSS    | Junior Secondary School                               |
| KG     | Kindergarten  |
| ICT    | Information and Communication Technology              |
| INSET  | In-Service Training                                   |
| MoESS  | Ministry of Education, Science and Sports             |
| NSS    | National Service Scheme                               |
| PBME   | Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation, MoESS |
| PRESET | Pre-Service Training                                  |
| PTA    | Parent Teacher Association                            |
| SMC    | School Management Committee                           |
| SSSCE  | Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination       |
| TLM    | Teaching and Learning Materials                       |
| TQ     | Teachers Quarters                                     |
| TTC    | Teacher Training College                              |
| UTDBE  | Untrained Teacher Diploma in Basic Education          |
| YEP    | Youth Employment Programme                            |

## Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>1. Introduction .....</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework .....</b>                         | <b>11</b> |
| 2.1. Introduction .....   | 11        |
| 2.2. Motivation Theories .....  | 11        |
| 2.3. Defining Teacher Motivation .....  | 14        |
| 2.4. Basic School Teachers in Developing Countries .....                            | 16        |
| 2.4.1. The General Situation of Basic School Teachers in Developing Countries ..... | 16        |
| 2.4.2. Basic School Teachers in Rural Areas of Developing Countries .....           | 19        |
| 2.4.3. Teachers' Job Satisfaction.....  | 21        |
| 2.4.4. Approaches to Attracting and Retaining Basic Teachers in Rural Areas ..      | 23        |
| 2.5. Conceptual Framework .....   | 25        |
| 2.5.1. School Environment and Teacher Motivation .....                              | 26        |
| 2.5.2. Community Support and Teacher Motivation .....                               | 28        |
| 2.5.3. The Effect of Policy and Its Implementation on Teacher Motivation.....       | 29        |
| 2.5.4. Teachers' Identities, Personalities and Motivation.....                      | 31        |
| 2.6. Conclusion.....  | 34        |
| <b>3. Context of the Research.....</b>  | <b>36</b> |
| 3.1. Introduction .....   | 36        |
| 3.2. A Brief Background of the Country .....  | 36        |
| 3.2.1. Geographical and Socio-Cultural Context .....                                | 36        |
| 3.2.2. History of Ghana .....   | 37        |
| 3.2.3. Regional Disparities in Ghana .....  | 39        |
| 3.2.4. Educational Situations in Ghana .....  | 41        |
| 3.3. Education System of Ghana .....  | 44        |
| 3.3.1. Basic Education Establishment.....   | 44        |
| 3.3.2. Educational Management.....  | 45        |
| 3.3.3. Basic Teacher Development and Deployment .....                               | 46        |
| 3.4. Incentives for Basic School Teachers .....                                     | 53        |
| 3.4.1. Incentive Packages .....   | 53        |
| 3.4.2. The Best Teacher Awards scheme .....   | 54        |
| 3.4.3. Study Leave with Pay .....   | 55        |
| 3.4.4. Upgrading Programmes .....   | 55        |
| 3.4.5. District Sponsorship for Trainee Teachers.....                               | 56        |
| 3.4.6. The Capitation Grant Scheme for Basic Schools .....                          | 56        |
| 3.5. Conclusion.....  | 57        |
| <b>4. Methodology and Methods.....</b>  | <b>59</b> |
| 4.1. Introduction .....   | 59        |
| 4.2. Focus of the Research .....  | 59        |
| 4.3. Research Strategy.....   | 60        |
| 4.4. Ontological and Epistemological Considerations.....                            | 62        |
| 4.5. My Stance.....   | 64        |
| 4.5.1. My Identity .....  | 64        |
| 4.5.2. Outsider and Insider .....   | 66        |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 4.6. Case Study Research Design .....                                   | 66  |
| 4.6.1. Case Study Strategy .....  | 67  |
| 4.6.2. Selection of Cases .....   | 67  |
| 4.7. Data Collection .....  | 76  |
| 4.7.1. Quantitative Approach .....                                      | 76  |
| 4.7.2. Qualitative Approach .....                                       | 79  |
| 4.8. Ethical Considerations .....                                       | 81  |
| 4.9. Major Concerns about Data Handling and Analysis .....              | 82  |
| 4.9.1. Quantitative Data .....  | 82  |
| 4.9.2. Qualitative Data .....   | 84  |
| 4.10. General Description of Case Study Districts .....                 | 85  |
| 4.10.1. District Profile .....  | 85  |
| 4.10.2. Education in the Two Districts .....                            | 89  |
| 4.11. Conclusion .....  | 95  |
| 5. Teachers' Profiles, Job Satisfaction, Perceptions and Goals .....    | 97  |
| 5.1. Introduction .....   | 97  |
| 5.2. The Profile of the Basic School Teacher .....                      | 97  |
| 5.2.1. Teachers' Personal Characteristics .....                         | 97  |
| 5.2.2. Teachers' Professional and Educational Characteristics .....     | 100 |
| 5.2.3. Reasons for Becoming a Basic School Teacher .....                | 102 |
| 5.3. Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Perception of the Job .....         | 104 |
| 5.3.1 Teachers' Job Satisfaction .....                                  | 105 |
| 5.3.2. Teachers' Perceptions of the Job .....                           | 112 |
| 5.4. Teachers' Goals .....  | 116 |
| 5.5. Conclusion .....   | 118 |
| 6. Teachers Lives in the Five Case Study Communities .....              | 120 |
| 6.1. Introduction .....   | 120 |
| 6.2. The Case Study School Communities .....                            | 120 |
| 6.2.1. General Characteristics of the Case Study Schools .....          | 120 |
| 6.2.2. Jamune, Ponkujaku District .....                                 | 123 |
| 6.2.3. Lesanyili, Ponkujaku District .....                              | 134 |
| 6.2.4. Key Findings from the Case in Ponkujaku .....                    | 142 |
| 6.2.5. Nakaose, Aumisoe District .....                                  | 144 |
| 6.2.6. Manekanto, Aumisoe District .....                                | 153 |
| 6.2.7. Asonbwa, Aumisoe District .....                                  | 162 |
| 6.2.8. Key Findings from the Case in Aumisoe .....                      | 173 |
| 6.3. Conclusion .....   | 174 |
| 7. Micro-level Motivating and Demotivating Factors and Conditions ..... | 175 |
| 7.1. Introduction .....   | 175 |
| 7.2. Teachers' Living and Working Conditions .....                      | 175 |
| 7.2.1. Accommodation .....  | 175 |
| 7.2.2. Food .....   | 180 |
| 7.2.3. Salary .....   | 181 |
| 7.2.4. School Facilities .....  | 185 |
| 7.2.5. Teaching and Learning Materials .....                            | 188 |
| 7.2.6. Teacher Composition and Allocation .....                         | 191 |
| 7.2.7. Teacher Absenteeism .....  | 194 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 7.3. Relationship with Colleagues .....  | 196 |
| 7.4. Relationship with the Community .....   | 198 |
| 7.5. Teachers' Identities and Personalities.....   | 205 |
| 7.5.1. Religion .....  | 205 |
| 7.5.2. The Role as Leaders .....   | 207 |
| 7.5.3. Previous Hardship.....  | 209 |
| 7.6. Coping Mechanisms .....   | 211 |
| 7.7. Conclusion.....   | 213 |
| 8. Macro-level Motivating and Demotivating Conditions and Factors .....                    | 215 |
| 8.1. Introduction .....  | 215 |
| 8.2. Implications of Policy on Teacher Motivation.....                                     | 216 |
| 8.2.1. The Ghana Education Service Upgrade Programmes.....                                 | 216 |
| 8.2.2. The Introduction of ICT into Primary and Junior Secondary School<br>Curricula ..... | 222 |
| 8.2.3. Recognition Schemes.....  | 224 |
| 8.2.4. The Youth Employment Programme .....  | 233 |
| 8.2.5. The Capitation Grant for Basic Schools .....  | 236 |
| 8.3. Implications of the Operation of the District Education Office.....                   | 241 |
| 8.3.1. Teacher Deployment and Transfer.....  | 242 |
| 8.3.2. Information Dissemination.....  | 247 |
| 8.3.3. Promotion .....   | 249 |
| 8.3.4. The Attitude of the District Education Office .....                                 | 251 |
| 8.4. Conclusion.....   | 254 |
| 9. Conclusion.....   | 257 |
| 9.1. Key Findings and Contribution of the Thesis .....                                     | 257 |
| 9.2. Implications for Policy .....   | 265 |
| 9.3. Some Lessons Learnt from the Research Process .....                                   | 267 |
| 9.4. Areas for Further Research .....  | 267 |
| 9.5. The Last Word .....   | 269 |
| Bibliography .....   | 270 |

## List of Tables

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Table 1 Economic, health, and water and sanitation status by region..... | 41 |
| Table 2 Number of districts by region .....                              | 42 |
| Table 3 Enrolment rate and gender parity index by region .....           | 43 |
| Table 4 Educational indicators of national and deprived districts .....  | 44 |
| Table 5 Number of school by level.....                                   | 45 |
| Table 6 Categories of basic teachers.....                                | 47 |
| Table 7 Teachers' rank.....  | 48 |
| Table 8 Employment conditions by category of basic school teachers.....  | 51 |
| Table 9 Characteristics of Northern and Ashanti Regions .....            | 68 |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Table 10 Overall number of districts compared with number of deprived districts in the Northern and Ashanti Regions .....</b> | <b>68</b>  |
| <b>Table 11 Summary of ethnographic research .....</b>   | <b>80</b>  |
| <b>Table 12 Characteristics of Ponkujaku and Aumiose Districts .....</b>   | <b>88</b>  |
| <b>Table 13 Location of (public) basic schools .....</b>   | <b>90</b>  |
| <b>Table 14 Enrolment and pupil teacher ratio at primary level .....</b>   | <b>91</b>  |
| <b>Table 15 Enrolment and pupil teacher ratio at JSS level.....</b>  | <b>91</b>  |
| <b>Table 16 Numbers of primary school teachers.....</b>  | <b>92</b>  |
| <b>Table 17 Number of JSS teachers.....</b>  | <b>92</b>  |
| <b>Table 18 Percentage of public trained teachers at primary and JSS level (2006/07) ..</b>                                      | <b>93</b>  |
| <b>Table 19 Teachers' ethnicity, language and religion .....</b>   | <b>98</b>  |
| <b>Table 20 Teachers' professional and educational qualifications.....</b>   | <b>101</b> |
| <b>Table 21 Reasons for becoming a basic school teacher .....</b>  | <b>103</b> |
| <b>Table 22 Rotated component matrix showing factor loadings and degree of variance explained .....</b>                          | <b>105</b> |
| <b>Table 23 Six satisfaction factors .....</b>   | <b>106</b> |
| <b>Table 24 Satisfaction factor 1: physical environment.....</b>   | <b>107</b> |
| <b>Table 25 Satisfaction factor 2: organisational support system and social representation.....</b>                              | <b>108</b> |
| <b>Table 26 Satisfaction factor 3: safety and security .....</b>   | <b>108</b> |
| <b>Table 27 Satisfaction factor 4: job characteristics .....</b>   | <b>109</b> |
| <b>Table 28 Satisfaction factor 5: relationship with the community.....</b>  | <b>110</b> |
| <b>Table 29 Satisfaction factor 6: relationships within the school .....</b>   | <b>111</b> |
| <b>Table 30 Overall satisfaction.....</b>  | <b>112</b> |
| <b>Table 31 Responses to general statements 1 .....</b>  | <b>113</b> |
| <b>Table 32 Responses to general statements 2 .....</b>  | <b>114</b> |
| <b>Table 33 Responses to general statements 3 .....</b>  | <b>115</b> |
| <b>Table 34 Teachers' goals .....</b>  | <b>117</b> |
| <b>Table 35 Community characteristics.....</b>   | <b>122</b> |
| <b>Table 36 Details of teachers of Jamune L/A Primary School .....</b>   | <b>124</b> |
| <b>Table 37 Details of teachers of Lesanyili R/C Primary School .....</b>  | <b>135</b> |
| <b>Table 38 Details of teachers of Nakaose Basic School .....</b>  | <b>147</b> |
| <b>Table 39 Details of teachers of Manekanto Primary School .....</b>  | <b>155</b> |
| <b>Table 40 Details of teachers of Manekanto JSS .....</b>   | <b>155</b> |
| <b>Table 41 Details of teachers of Asonbwa JSS .....</b>   | <b>164</b> |
| <b>Table 42 Details of teachers of Manekanto Primary School .....</b>  | <b>165</b> |
| <b>Table 43 Types of teachers' accommodation.....</b>  | <b>175</b> |
| <b>Table 44 School blocks.....</b>   | <b>186</b> |
| <b>Table 45 Classrooms .....</b>   | <b>186</b> |
| <b>Table 46 Teacher composition at case study schools .....</b>  | <b>191</b> |
| <b>Table 47 Teachers' attendance rate .....</b>  | <b>194</b> |
| <b>Table 48 Community support .....</b>  | <b>201</b> |
| <b>Table 49 Percentage of trained and female teachers by circuit in Ponkujaku.....</b>   | <b>243</b> |
| <b>Table 50 Percentage of trained and female teachers by circuit in Aumisoe.....</b>   | <b>243</b> |

## Map

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Map 1 Regional map ..... | 40 |
|--------------------------|----|

## Table of Diagram

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Diagram 1 Conceptual framework ..... | 33 |
| Diagram 2 Cases under study .....    | 75 |

## Table of Figures

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Figure 1 Categories of basic school teacher in Ponkujaku by percentage ..... | 93 |
| Figure 2 Categories of basic school teacher in Aumisoe by percentage .....   | 94 |

## Table of Pictures

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Picture 1 National Best Teacher Awards ceremony in 2007 ..... | 54  |
| Picture 2 Main roads in Ponkujaku .....                       | 86  |
| Picture 3 Settlements of the two case study districts .....   | 89  |
| Picture 4 Jamune .....  | 123 |
| Picture 5 Lesanyili community .....                           | 134 |
| Picture 6 Lesanyili .....                                     | 136 |
| Picture 7 Nakaose .....                                       | 145 |
| Picture 8 A teacher working in his cocoa farm .....           | 147 |
| Picture 9 A gold mine in Manekanto .....                      | 153 |
| Picture 10 Asonbwa .....                                      | 165 |
| Picture 11 A female teacher in her maize farm .....           | 167 |
| Picture 12 School facilities .....                            | 187 |

## List of Boxes

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Box 1 Life of teachers living in the TQ in Jamune ..... | 126 |
| Box 2 A female teacher's life in Lesanyili .....        | 136 |
| Box 3 The JSS HT's daily life .....                     | 158 |
| Box 4 The JSS HT's daily life .....                     | 169 |

## 1. Introduction

The research topic is rooted in my personal interests as a former teacher and in my work experiences in developing countries. Although I started my career as a high school science teacher in Japan, after finishing my first degree in science, as a member of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) programme, my two-year teaching experience at rural primary and junior secondary schools in Nepal extended my interests beyond science and beyond education in Japan. I realised that the basic education I received in my tiny rural community of 500 people had exerted a significant influence on my personal and professional development, appreciating that I had no less opportunity in terms of quality of education. I became interested in education in developing countries and pursued a master's degree in international education in the US. I then worked in development mostly in Sub-Saharan Anglophone countries for several years.

My last work experience in Ghana from 2003 to 2005 had the greatest influence on this study. Having an advisory position on an in-service (INSET) project for basic (primary and junior secondary) school teachers, supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), I had the opportunity to meet basic school teachers in three project districts located in the northern, middle and southern part of the country.

In general, teachers said that they liked teaching, but they were not enthusiastic about remaining in the profession for the long-term. They seemed frustrated, complaining about their salary and poorly equipped schools. A survey conducted in one of the project districts in 2005 revealed a higher attrition rate of teachers<sup>2</sup> than expected. On the other hand, working for the Teacher Education Division of the Ghana Education Service, under the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, I saw that the Ghanaian government in collaboration with its development partners had been aiming at teacher development and making an effort to attract and retain basic school teachers in rural areas.

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<sup>2</sup> Primary and junior secondary school teachers in Akuapem North in southern Ghana showed an attrition rate of 18.5% and 23.1% respectively.

Why was there such a gap? Why were teachers seemingly not committed to basic teaching? What I encountered in Ghana was nevertheless not always discouraging. There were motivated basic school teachers, even in rural areas where life was generally more challenging and where many teachers did not want to be posted. There were accounts of students in rural areas inspired by their teachers. Why were some teachers committed and dedicated to teaching in rural areas, while the majority did not seem to be?

Teachers are the strongest influence on students' learning (UNESCO 2005 *EFA Global Monitoring Report* p80). Well-qualified, trained and motivated teachers have a positive effect on student motivation, hence performance (World Bank 2004; Towse et al. 2002). However, teachers in developing countries are not necessarily trained and, even if they are, they may not be competent, effective and efficient (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991). Mere enthusiasm and good intentions may not be enough to improve the quality of education. Nevertheless, motivation is necessary, since without it, teachers – especially those facing difficult circumstances – cannot persevere; and, no matter how skilled, without drive, teachers are unable to perform in the long term. As a consequence, without well-motivated teachers, children are less likely to attain the desired level of education. Moreover, if parents/guardians do not believe that education equips their children with the necessary skills and knowledge for a better life, access to and completion of basic education will not increase and government efforts to achieve EFA and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) may be in vain.

Extensive research – both quantitative and qualitative – especially in the UK and the US (Ingersoll 2001), has been carried out in order to identify patterns of teacher turnover and/or transfer, and to attempt to understand the conditions and factors that motivate and/or demotivate teachers, since teachers' attitudes are at least partially linked to their levels of job satisfaction. In sub-Saharan Africa, with the emphasis on the quality of education mentioned above, teachers have increasingly become the focus of attention. However, not enough attention has been given to research on this subject. Moreover, the complexity of the context, which results not only from socio-cultural diversity but also the heterogeneity

of the teaching force – untrained teachers are also a major teaching force – has rarely been the focus in previous studies.

In the case of Ghana, most of the research has been based on surveys and one-shot interviews in which culture and context have been detached from those researched. As a result, such research tends to describe why teachers are not satisfied or motivated, since their working and living conditions are challenging. But it has looked at ‘motivation’ superficially. What cannot just satisfy but motivate teachers has not been explored deeply. More specifically, little research has investigated why some teachers are able to stay motivated in conditions that others do not consider to be conducive to effective practice. In addition, what research has been done has concentrated on the southern part of the country, which is not only considered to be geographically and socio-culturally dissimilar to the northern part, but also financially and materially better off according to many gauges.

This study aims to investigate how basic school teachers’ perceptions and attitudes towards teaching as a career are shaped by social and professional environments in rural Ghana. These contexts may be addressed in different layers (Ellmin 1995): school, community, district and central government. Additionally, individual differences in terms of motivation are explored, as previous research suggests that teachers in the same setting do not necessarily perceive or behave similarly.

Therefore, the research questions set for this study are:

1. What are the characteristics of basic school teachers in two ‘deprived’<sup>3</sup> districts that are socio-culturally and economically different?
2. How do they perceive their jobs?
  - 1) What aspects of the job are they most satisfied with?

---

<sup>3</sup> ‘Deprived’ districts were identified by the Ministry of Education using educational indicators. The details of this classification can be found in chapter 3.

- 2) Are teachers in the north and south respectively satisfied with the job to the same degree? Similarly, what of trained and untrained teachers, and male and female teachers?
- 3) How do they perceive the job in relation to their future careers, professional aspirations and lives in general?
3. What physical and socio-cultural conditions do teachers live and work under in rural Ghana?
4. How and why do policy and its implementation, and local authorities' teacher management affect teachers?
5. How and why do basic school teachers' identities and personalities influence their perception and attitude as teachers in rural areas of Ghana?
6. How and why does social support affect basic school teachers' level of commitment?

In order to explore these questions, two 'deprived' districts were selected – one in the north of the country and the other in the south. A one-year field study from August 2007 to August 2008 was conducted using a mixed-methods approach. The results of my survey provide mainly descriptive analyses of teachers' characteristics, job satisfaction, goals and attitudes. Additionally, ethnographic research into five school communities, including interviews with some of their members, furnishes a 'thick-description' of teachers' lives. Interviews with teachers in other schools, and other stakeholders – including district education officers – teacher focus group discussions, and observations provide an insight into teachers' living and working conditions and organisational culture. Finally, secondary data, such as national and district education reports and statistics, were sought to complement my time-bound investigation. Thus, this study aspires to holism in order to provide a deeper understanding of basic school teacher motivation in rural Ghana.

The thesis begins by reviewing the literature on motivation theories and teachers in developing countries in chapter 2, and in the specific context of Ghana in chapter 3. Chapter 4 discusses the methodology employed in this research and provides context at district level. Chapter 5 discusses teachers' job satisfaction and perceptions with a broader picture of teachers' profiles. The following three chapters discuss factors and conditions

which affect teacher motivation in order to explore underlying factors of teacher job satisfaction interpreted by using factor analysis in chapter 5. Chapter 6 discusses micro-level motivational and demotivating factors in relation to teachers' living and working conditions, relationship with colleagues, relationship with the community, and their personalities and identities in five case study school communities. Chapter 7 resumes the discussion on the same themes but at the district level. Teachers' coping mechanisms – why some are able to maintain commitment in challenging conditions while other struggle – are also explored. Chapter 8 continues the discussion by addressing macro-level factors and conditions, focusing on the implications of policy and the operation and attitudes of local education authorities. The final chapter concludes, identifies points of concern for policy-makers and proposes areas for further research.

## 2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. Introduction

Teacher motivation is not a new area of research, since it is vital not only for teachers but also pupils: teachers are the key to quality education. However, the general concept of motivation has been established in developed countries and most research on teacher motivation has also been carried out there. This chapter begins with the major motivation theories in play that set the overall framework of this study. The discussion continues with a consideration of the definitions of the terms ‘teacher motivation’ and ‘basic school teacher’ in a developing country context. It then moves on to an exploration of the key themes of the thesis: working and living conditions, with particular focus on the social and professional environment at school level; policy and its implementation; and teachers’ identities and personalities. Finally, some conclusions are drawn.

### 2.2. Motivation Theories

Motivation is a complex concept, as Dunnette and Kirchner (1965) suggest, in that motivation can only be inferred and it is difficult to observe motivation with much certainty. Motivation involves needs, desires and expectations, changes and even conflicts. Moreover, considerable differences can exist among individuals (*ibid*). Finally, it is not only definitions – which are discussed in the next session with regard to teachers – but also theories of motivation that are various.

There are several theories that seem relevant to setting a research framework. The first is Maslow’s hierarchical motivation theory, which describes five types of need in motivation. The most basic are *physiological needs*, then *safety needs*, *belongingness needs*, *esteem needs*, and, the highest level, *self-actualisation needs* (Maslow 1954). The first three are *deficiency needs*, while the last two are *growth needs*. Lower-level needs must be satisfied before the higher-level ones can be.

Hedges (2000) used the findings of Apt and Grieco (1994), through a largely questionnaire-based study in Ghana, to support Maslow’s theory: “poor pay and working conditions leave

many teachers apparently stuck on the first rung of Maslow's ladder" (p12). Bennell (2004) also suggests that pecuniary motives are likely to be dominant among teachers in low-income developing countries, which is not surprising in nations where poverty is still prevalent. Maslow's theory has been criticised on the grounds of limited empirical support (Wahba and Bridwell 1983), but it is nevertheless useful as a theoretical framework. It thus seems clear that teacher motivation factors in developing countries are probably different to those in developed countries, where most motivation research has been conducted.

Aldefer's (1972 cited in Steers and Porter 1983) hierarchical theory based on Maslow's work suggests that there are not only satisfaction-regression but also frustration-regression processes, and when an individual is continually frustrated in his or her attempts to satisfy higher needs, he or she may redirect his or her efforts to satisfying lower-order needs. It is possible that teachers attribute their unmotivated situation to the inadequate conditions of the lowest *existence needs* rather than to *relatedness* needs and the highest *growth* needs. This suggests that the quantitative approach may overrepresent the lower levels of motivating factors.

Herzberg's two-factor motivator-hygiene theory (1966) – based on an empirical study of engineers and accountants – has been used for research in the area of motivation at work. Hygiene factors, which are largely extrinsic, such as *salary*, *supervision*, *interpersonal relations* and *company policy and administration*, can create a neutral state but not satisfaction. Rather, satisfaction occurs only as a result of motivators such as *achievement*, *recognition (for achievement)*, *responsibility*, *advancement* and the *work itself*. He also suggests that both motivator and hygiene factors should be accorded equal attention in order to achieve worker satisfaction. Nias (1989) and Evans (1998) used Herzberg's theory as a framework for their longitudinal qualitative research into primary school teachers in the UK.

Emerging from a study of people's motivation at work, Murray's theory (1938 in Steers 1983), unlike that of Maslow, suggests that needs are not hierarchical but that people have different need priorities. According to Murray – and also advanced by Atkinson and

McClelland (1967 and 1976 respectively cited in Steers and Porter 1983) – there are four main types of people, who have the need for *achievement*, *affiliation*, *autonomy* or *power* accordingly. Steers (1983) suggests that people with the need for *affiliation* tend to choose jobs with a high amount of interpersonal contact, such as teaching, sales, public relations and counselling.

Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory suggests that motivation is the combined function of the individual's values, *valence*; of particular outcomes; and of probability, *expectancy*, and that effort will lead to the desired outcome. It involves a rational choice process, which is a conscious attempt to maximise benefit and avoid pain. Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) acknowledge that this theory is relevant to the context of developing countries, where teachers' efforts are rarely linked to rewards, giving the example of the infrequent assessment of teachers' merits.

In goal-setting theory, determinants of the individual's course of action are *values* and *intentions* (goals), rather than expectancy (Locke 1969). Goal-setting also affects satisfaction. Locke (ibid) suggests that satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what one wants in a job and what one has in a job. The individual will be less satisfied when the situation does not yield as much as expected and more satisfied when it yields more than expected (Ilgen and Hamastra 1972 cited in Steers and Porter 1983).

As individuals compare goals they have set to outcomes they obtain, they also make comparisons between themselves others. In his social comparison theory, Adams (1961 cited in Steers and Porter 1983) suggests that individuals compare their ratio of inputs and outputs to those of others, and if inequality is observed, they will attempt to reduce it. On the one hand, if they perceive their work to be overrewarded, they tend to work harder to keep the job; on the other hand, if they see they that it is underrewarded, they may effect fewer inputs or outcomes, or even leave the work situation altogether. The latter situation is more illustrative of individuals' behaviour, as others in the organisation or system will act as points for comparison (Steers and Porter 1983).

Motivation is a highly complex element of human behaviour. The principal motivation theories discussed above focus on a few selected key aspects, including concepts and processes. As a result, they have common themes, although the differences are actually more pronounced. Dörnyei (2001) argues:

[T]he main difference between various competing theories lies in the selection of the principal factors to anchor the theory around. This can be compared to lifting a large, loosely knitted net (which symbolises human behaviour). If we lift it up by holding different knots, very different shapes will emerge, even though the actual net is exactly the same... Various motivation theories have proposed different key 'knots' to be lifted, claiming that the selected central components subsume or mediate all the other main motives (p12).

Moreover, all these theories put together may not be sufficient to fully address the intricacies of the real world and teachers' lives in actual rural settings.

In their study of work motivation, Steers and Porter (1983) suggest that there are three levels of organisational setting: individual characteristics, job characteristics and work environment characteristics. They further argue that the abovementioned major theories do not address motivation variables in all settings, as such theories are more complementary than contradictory. Given that my intention is to adopt a holistic approach, I thus adopt Steers and Porter's organisational settings as my framework for this study.

### **2.3. Defining Teacher Motivation**

The general concept of work motivation has been developed in the context of the theory of organisation – understanding how to manage and encourage workers in terms of productivity and efficiency. In their definition of motivation, Steers and Porter (1983) argue that, “what is needed is a description which sufficiently covers the various aspects inherent in the process by which human behavior is activated” (p3). To illustrate the point, they offer the following quotations:

...the contemporary (immediate) influence on the direction, vigor, and persistence of action (Atkinson 1964).

...how behaviour gets started, is energised, is sustained, is directed, is stopped, and what kind of subjective reaction is present in the organism while all this is going on (Jones 1955).

...a process governing choices made by persons or lower organisms among alternative forms of voluntary activity (Vroom 1964).

...motivation has to do with a set of independent/dependent variable relationships that explain the direction, amplitude, and persistence of an individual's behaviour, holding constant the effects of aptitude, skill, and understanding of the task, and the constraints operating in the environment (Campbell and Pritchard 1976).

Before defining teacher motivation, it seems useful to briefly look at job satisfaction, as motivation and satisfaction are complex and pragmatic concepts, and are often applied interchangeably: motivation could lead to satisfaction and vice versa. Herzberg (1968) identifies satisfaction–dissatisfaction as consequence factors in his two-factor theory of influence. Evans (1998) defines satisfaction as “a state of mind determined encompassing all those feelings by the extent to which the individual perceives her/his job-related needs to be being met” (p12).

On the other hand, in her quantitative analysis of six francophone countries, Michaelowa (2002) defines job satisfaction as “an indication of teachers' well-being induced by the job” and motivation as “their willingness, drives or desire to engage in good teaching [to examine] whether job satisfaction does or does not translate into motivation” (p5).

Similar to job satisfaction, the concept of teacher motivation is not uniform. Evans (1998), who researched teachers in a primary school over five years in the UK, defines motivation as a condition that encompasses inclination towards engagement in activity. Hoy and Miskel (1991 cited in Bennell and Akeampong 2007 p4) define motivation as a combination of factors that “start and maintain work-related behaviours toward the achievement of personal goals.” Alternatively, Bennell and Akeampong (2007) emphasise motivation as a teacher's state rather than the set of factors themselves that influence such a state. However, since my intention is to investigate why some teachers are committed and dedicated to teaching in more challenging conditions, I define ‘motivation’ as the conditions and factors that promote commitment in basic education teachers, allowing them to enjoy teaching and thus fulfil their goals. I argue that job satisfaction is a state of mind influenced by motivation. Although I am aware that there is no simple equation whereby

motivation leads to satisfaction, a brief exploration of teachers' job satisfaction is included in this study in order to provide some insight into teacher motivation.

## **2.4. Basic School Teachers in Developing Countries**

### **2.4.1. The General Situation of Basic School Teachers in Developing Countries**

“Everybody values education, but nobody wants to be a teacher” (Towse et al. 2002 p637). Teaching – especially at basic level – is not considered to be an ideal job in developing countries, including Sub-Saharan Africa. There is a tendency for teachers not to stay long in the profession (Guarino et al. 2006; Inman and Marlow 2004; Hanushek et al. 2004; Bennell 2004), as it is not perceived to be a long-term career (Hedges 2000; Akyeampong and Furlong 2000; Bennell 2004).

One of the reasons why developing countries have difficulty in retaining teachers is that their salaries are low and continue to deteriorate (Towse et al. 2002; Bennell and Akyeampong 2006). Along with the expansion of education and an enormous rise in enrolment, teachers' salaries put immense strain on the economy, which inevitably leads to poorer pay (Hurst and Rust 1990). Indeed, Bennell and Akyeampong (2006) suggest that in some countries in Africa – including Ghana – a teacher's salary does not meet basic household needs. As a consequence, teachers are often forced to take a second job (Lambert 2004; Hurst and Rust 1990; Kadzamira 2006).

Lambert (2004) argues that the low level of pay is a hangover from colonial administrations. Basic school teachers in Anglophone countries, unlike francophone ones, have relatively low salaries, while education coverage (i.e. enrolment) is high. In Anglophone countries, missionary education was considered to be part of the education system but teachers' salaries were not pinned to a government scale (Lambert 2004). This suggests that there could be a wide range of salaries among teachers within a single Anglophone country; and such a factor might equate to different levels of teacher commitment, as payment is the most basic form of reward for a teacher's work.

Another reason is the low status of basic school teachers. Due to the expansion of the teaching force, the profession has lost the elite status it enjoyed in the 1940s, 50s and early 60s simply because teachers are now no better educated than rest of the community (VSO 2002; Hurst and Rust 1990).

Moreover, with rapidly expanding basic education sectors, the entry requirements for teacher training college have been lowered and the general educational competence of trainee teachers has deteriorated (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991). Governmental efforts to enhance enrolment – especially at the basic level – have also resulted in a massive demand for the recruitment of a large number of unqualified and untrained teachers, often on temporary and poorly remunerated contracts (VSO 2002). Finally, there is a marked difference in the status of primary and secondary school teachers (Hurst and Rust 1990); basic level teaching is a semi-professional profession.

Basic school teacher's prospects of low salary and status do not attract the most educationally accomplished trainees. In a study of trainee teachers in Tanzania, Towse et al. (2002) suggest that one of the main reasons why students choose the profession is their poor academic background, which does not allow them to pursue university education.

The Multi-site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER) studies conducted from 1997 to 2002 also found that trainee teachers had low educational qualifications in terms of the secondary school leaving certificates of the countries under study – Ghana, Malawi and Lesotho. Studies in South Africa and the Gambia (Jessop and Penny 1998), and in Tanzania (Towse et al. 2002) have reached similar conclusions.

Many teachers themselves tend to regard going to teacher training college as a second best option to university entrance; it is a last resort or a stepping stone to a teaching career in secondary or higher education, or to other better paid jobs (Hedges 2002; Akyeampong and Lewin 2002).

The general situation of teachers depicted in previous studies is often actually that of trained teachers. Although untrained teachers are a big teaching force in developing countries, especially in rural areas (VSO 2002), little attention has been paid to their living and working conditions. Untrained teachers do appear in some studies (WB 2004; Mulkeen and Chen 2008; Mpokosa et al. 2008) but only as a subgroup in educational statistics. Akyeampong and Asante (2005) studied basic school teachers' motivation and incentives in Ghana with the use of a mixed methods approach, but conducted their analysis in terms of a comparison between rural and urban contexts. Thus, the manner in which untrained basic school teachers perceive the job has not yet been explored.

There is great variation in the proportion of female primary school teachers in developing countries, being highest in Latin America and lowest in sub-Saharan Africa. However, there is wide variation throughout sub-Saharan Africa, as well as within individual countries. Mulkeen and Chen (2008) suggest that more than 70% of teachers in rural Lesotho and Mozambique are women, while Tanzania and Uganda have few female teachers in rural areas. Female representation has generally tended to increase over time, as more women have benefited from secondary and tertiary education; and because teaching was perceived to be an appropriate occupation for educated women long before other modern sector jobs, owing to its status, security and short working hours (Cummings 1990).

In his study of trained Ghanaian elementary school teachers, Bame (1991) suggests that the predominance of men in the profession may be attributed to lower rates of female recruitment resulting from the resistance to girls' education and a tendency for women to leave teaching after getting married. On the other hand, he also points out that female teachers are more likely to be from higher socio-economic backgrounds compared to their male counterparts; and that their parents tend to have higher levels of education and more skilled and professional occupations. This also suggests that female teachers might perceive the job differently to their male counterparts.

However, although female teachers' deployment patterns are acknowledged to be closely related to a country's cultural context (Mpokosa et al. 2008; Hedges 2002), gender is often

cited as a feature around which to frame educational settings and issues such as qualifications, that is, in terms of trained and untrained personnel. The manner in which female teachers – especially in rural areas – appreciate their jobs needs to be researched much more (gender as an aspect of the teacher’s identity will be discussed later in this chapter).

The present study intends to contribute to an understanding of basic school teachers’ motivation, exploring the perceptions of trained and untrained as well as male and female (serving) teachers in the context of rural Ghana.

#### **2.4.2. Basic School Teachers in Rural Areas of Developing Countries**

There is a disparity in many respects between urban and rural areas of developing countries. Some of the challenges faced by teachers in rural areas include lack of housing and general facilities; the poor condition of school buildings; minimal teacher support; a general shortage of learning materials owing to transportation and distribution difficulties; and a centralised curriculum and related examinations that are not commensurate with everyday life in such places (Iredale 1993).

Mulkeen and Chen (2008) posit further difficulties associated with education in rural areas: less interest of children in attending school due to higher opportunity costs and the rigid school timetable; the lower value placed by families on education; and parents’ difficulty in supporting their children’s schooling as the former are less likely to be educated themselves (ibid). Additionally Towse et al. (2002) note that trainee teachers perceived that some pupils have behavioural difficulties or are inordinately ‘stubborn’ in rural areas.

There is a strong preference for urban postings among teachers. In Tanzania and Ghana, it has been observed that trainee teachers are ‘afraid’ of rural postings (Towse et al. 2002; Dull 2006). Additionally, a survey in Ghana indicates that more than 80% of trainee teachers show a strong preference for postings in urban areas (Akyeampong and Lewin 2002). Moreover, newly trained teachers in Ghana tend not to choose regions with high proportions of rural schools, and even in the fifth most popular region, Central Region – located in the south of the country – between 10 and 40% of teachers do not accept a rural

posting (Hedges 2000). Teachers in the northern Ghana have a similar tendency (Casely-Heyford 2000). Some trained teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa may choose unemployment, refusing rural postings – as the deployment system allows – as they wait for desirable posts (Mulkeen 2005). Teachers may accept rural postings out of necessity, but they are more likely to seek an early transfer or leave the profession altogether (Ankrah-Dove 1982). In his research into a district in the Ghanaian Central Region, Cobbold (2006a) suggests that, “trained teachers are unwilling to accept posting[s] to the rural areas and those who [do] accept do not normally stay more than two years” (p458).

Admittedly, as Towse et al. (2002) suggest, trainee teachers tend to have a fair degree of commitment to the job. However, once they are posted – especially to rural areas – newly trained teachers seem to become quickly ‘disillusioned’ and lose their motivation to teach (Akyeampong and Asante 2005). Moreover, Hedges (2002) argues that young teachers are not willing to stay in rural areas and become ‘village man’ (p364).

As a consequence, while urban schools are comparatively well staffed, the shortage of trained teachers in rural areas is widely acknowledged. Rural–urban differences in terms of relative percentages of trained teachers have been observed in Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda (Mulkeen and Chen 2008); and, additionally, in Ghana, Sierra Leone and Zambia (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007). Basic school teachers leave the profession not because of retirement or for unavoidable reasons such as sickness, but due to opportunistic career moves (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991). In general, the turnover of teachers in rural areas is high (Keith 1989; VSO 2002).

Even if teachers accept rural postings and remain in the profession, they may not teach full time. Teacher absenteeism and lateness are common in many developing countries, especially in rural areas (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991; Coombe 1997; Kadzamira 2006). Indeed, absenteeism, in particular, is widely recognised as a serious problem (Chapman 1994). Rates among primary school teachers run at 18% in Malawi (Kadzamira 2006); 20% in Kenya (Glewwe et al. 2003); and 27% in Uganda (Chaudhury et al, 2006). A study of 120 rural primary schools in 12 geographically scattered districts of Ghana found that on

average, 30% of instructional time was lost by various forms of teacher withdrawal from the classroom, notably absenteeism and lateness (Educational Assessment and Research Centre 2003).

While the frequently negative aspects of rural postings and rural teachers are cited, the implications of such situations may not be fully appreciated. Pryor and Ampiah (2003) suggest that in Ghana, working and living conditions for basic school teachers, especially in rural areas, have remained relatively unchanged for the last 30 years, while the country as a whole has experienced a steady 4% annual economic growth rate for the last two decades, with higher economic growth in the last five years (World Bank 2007). Rural areas have not benefited from this economic expansion and, on the contrary, tend to be regions where poverty is concentrated. The challenges of rural postings may be more serious, as the urban–rural contrast has become more apparent, and teachers’ “quality of life is rarely considered” (Garrett 1999 p6).

#### **2.4.3. Teachers’ Job Satisfaction**

A study of 12 low-income developing countries<sup>4</sup> in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia that utilised interviews and small-scale surveys concludes that primary school teachers, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, have low levels of job satisfaction (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007). These countries witness high rates of teacher attrition as well as transfer and increasingly frequent strike action, which are signs of growing levels of dissatisfaction with regard to pay and other conditions of service.

On the other hand, some studies suggest that teacher job satisfaction is not exceptionally low. For example, a study in Mozambique indicates that 87% of participants were satisfied with their jobs as teachers (VSO no date). Moreover, research in five francophone countries suggests that on average, slightly more than half of all teachers would choose the same profession again, although 40% of them would like to change schools (Michaelowa 2002).

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<sup>4</sup> Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Zambia, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

The factors that influence teachers' job satisfaction and motivation vary, and there are differences between developed and developing countries. Dinham and Scott (2000) conducted a large-scale survey of over 2,000 teachers in England, Australia and New Zealand. Their findings indicate that the statement, 'I always wanted to become a teacher' was the one most frequently endorsed in all three countries, with 45–49% of teachers agreeing with it.

Similarly, a review in the UK suggests that 'working with children' is the most popular aspect of teaching associated with satisfaction, while dissatisfaction is primarily attributed to work overload, poor pay and society's perception of teachers (Spear et al. 2000 cited in Bennell and Akyeampong 2007).

In developed countries, the intrinsic rewards of teaching – working with children and experiencing the changes in pupils' performance and attitudes, and further enhancing teachers' own skills and knowledge – are considered to be the most satisfying aspects of the profession (Dörnyei 2001). Deci et al. (1997 cited in Dörnyei 2001) argue:

Guiding the intellectual and emotional development of students, whether in nursery school or graduate school, can be profoundly gratifying for teachers, satisfying their psychological needs and contributing to their growth as individuals (p57).

Nevertheless, Deci and Ryan (1985) postulate three factors for motivated behaviour: autonomy, relatedness and competence.

In developing countries, teachers tend to value factors that are more extrinsic, such as non-salary benefits, working conditions and professional status, many of which are inadequate in these countries (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991); while they also tend to be strong in the conviction that they can make a significant contribution to society (Cyprus in Zembylas and Papanastasiou 2006). A survey in Mozambique suggests that the most common factor that can improve teachers' performance and happiness is salary, followed by material working conditions, training and administrative procedure (VSO no date). Another survey in Ghana indicates that the most influential factors that prompt both elementary male and female

teachers to leave the job are inadequate salary, lack of opportunity for promotion and low prestige in elementary teaching (Bame 1991).

Through 40 years of experience in placing volunteers to work alongside local teachers in disadvantaged schools in the developing world and reflecting on the views of these teachers, in a qualitative research report, *What Makes Teachers Tick?* VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) concludes:

Teachers, especially in rural areas, are frequently paid little and late, their education and training needs are neglected, and they are mired in bureaucracies that support neither their effective performance in their job nor their career progression (VSO 2002 p4).

Attention is consistently focused on the issue of salary as a major factor in influencing teacher job satisfaction and motivation. However, a lower salary is not always associated with lower satisfaction. By means of a quantitative analysis of teacher satisfaction in six francophone countries, Michaelowa (2002) finds that in countries where teachers are relatively well paid, such as Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, they seem to be less satisfied with the situation. Conversely, taking the case of Madagascar, she argues that a very low salary might paradoxically be compatible with relatively high job satisfaction.

At some level, salary, working conditions and status all seem to play key roles in teacher job satisfaction and motivation. However, due to mainly the quantitative approaches employed by the abovementioned studies, little attention has been paid to individual differences or contextual complexity. An exploration of teachers' realities is necessary in order to provide a context in which to examine how they manage their lives and work, and to gain an insight into how they shape their perceptions about the job.

#### **2.4.4. Approaches to Attracting and Retaining Basic Teachers in Rural Areas**

##### ***2.4.4.1. Rural Deficit Model and Rural Challenge Model***

Basic teachers tend to be reluctant to accept and remain in rural postings. This situation calls for policy intervention. Ankrah-Dove (1982) describes approaches to address the problem with two models.

In the ‘rural deficit model’, it is recognised that life in remote rural areas lacks all the qualities that would normally attract teachers to live and work in them. Therefore, two major strategies are proposed. The first is the compulsory posting of young, frequently newly trained teachers to serve in rural posts for a specified number of years. The other is the provision of incentives to compensate for the hardships of remote schools. Common incentives include: salary bonuses; subsidised accommodation; travel allowances; medical and other subsidies; favourable opportunities for study leave; and accelerated promotion.

The second intervention is the ‘rural challenge model’, in which life and work in rural areas benefit the “*teacher who is able to cope,*” providing “intrinsic professional challenge and interest” (Ankrah-Dove 1982 p15 emphasis in original). This is to take the form of further training and educational opportunities over the teacher’s whole career. However, this assumption depends on the support of two other stakeholders – members of the community and the authorities:

If, as this model implies, the teachers have the skills to get their pupils to learn, if they have supportive and rewarding relationships with local people, and if they have the facilities to enrich their classroom teaching, then they will not apply for transfer at the earliest opportunity (ibid p15).

The support of the authorities includes the improvement of school facilities, teaching and learning materials, and professional ‘incentives’ for the professional development of teachers.

#### ***2.4.4.2. Incentives and Its Implications***

‘Incentive’ is defined as that which includes “all the direct and indirect monetary and non-monetary benefits offered to teachers as extrinsic motivation” (Kemmerer 1990 p139). Kemmerer (1990) identifies four categories of incentive: remuneration, including in-kind salary supplements and benefits; working conditions such as facilities and co-operation with colleagues; instructional support, consisting of teaching and learning materials, supervision and training; and career opportunities. He also suggests the possible role of the community in supplementing teachers’ remuneration in lesser-developed countries.

Chapman et al. (1993) employ Kemmerer's study as a framework for their quantitative research into the relationship between junior secondary school teachers' job satisfaction and incentives in Botswana, adopting community support as an independent variable. They suggest that teachers' job satisfaction is positively correlated with level of training; supervision; assessment of possibilities for career advancement; and community support, recognition and approval. This confirms that there are two influential stakeholders in teacher motivation: the government and the community. In line with Chapman et al.'s argument, in this thesis, I deem incentives to be those benefits primarily made available by the government before any additional support offered by the community.

Incentives for rural teachers are an important element of the educational systems in developing countries (McEwan 1999), and Ghana is no exception. The benefits implemented here comprise incentive packages, including the provision of accommodation and a means of transport; the Best Teacher Awards scheme; and upgrade programmes. Yet, as the trend in the decline of trained teachers in deprived districts continued, the 2007 *MoESS Education Sector Performance Report* suggested that the teacher incentive package and the district sponsorship<sup>5</sup> scheme needed to be critically examined to further improve the efficacy of the policy (MoESS 2007a).

Few studies have been carried out that focus on teacher motivation and incentives in developing countries (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007). Therefore, the present study assesses the impact of incentives as well as community support on teachers in order to explore the factors and conditions that may make the 'rural challenge model' possible.

## **2.5. Conceptual Framework**

Teachers are surrounded by different layers of environment – school, community and government. They shape their identities as teachers in relation to such environments, as well as through their own self-perception. In this section, these three surrounding environments – school, community and organisational authority (various levels of government) – and teachers' identities and personalities, are reviewed briefly in relation to

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<sup>5</sup> District (assembly) sponsorship is discussed in chapter 3.4.5.

teacher motivation, in order to set a framework for this study (a diagram of this conceptual framework is included at the end of this section).

### **2.5.1. School Environment and Teacher Motivation**

As described above, the physical environment at school level is often mentally and physically challenging. The professional and social aspects of the school environment are focused here.

Teachers' professional relationships with colleagues play a key role in shaping how they perceive the job. When teachers recognise that they are supported, they seem to remain in teaching. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) studied more than 3,000 new teachers in the US and found that those who experienced induction and mentoring support in their first year were less likely to leave the profession or change schools. In their study, Johnson and Birkeland (2003 cited in Guarino et al. 2006) also suggest that those who left felt they had not been supported adequately, and those who changed schools had similar feelings but attributed them to their particular school settings rather than to the teaching profession. They also found that teachers in schools with an 'integrated professional culture', where, for example, teachers could take part in decision-making and school-based in-service training in a participatory manner, tended to stay. Moreover, research carried out by the OECD in 1994 suggests that a combination of tenacious commitment to helping others learn and support from colleagues in the workplace keeps teachers in the profession, even if they do not receive adequate remuneration (Sivers et al. no date).

The method by which schools provide support to teachers appears to be linked to the personalities of head teachers. Evans (1998) elaborates on this, suggesting that teachers are motivated by the recognition of their talent or efforts and demotivated by insufficient recognition. In addition, head teachers' personalities and consideration for their teachers are important (Nias et al. 1989). However, although good interpersonal skills in head teachers are necessary, they are insufficient in themselves. Nias (1989) and Evans (1998) suggest that teachers can become frustrated by head teachers who do not share their missions or give feedback. According to Goleman's (1996) definition, leadership involves *self-*

*awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills*; and a head teacher who does not possess these qualities could be a potent demotivator (Nias 1989; Evans 1998).

The importance of the role of head teachers is not underestimated in developing countries. Teachers are more likely to try and adopt new pedagogical practice with the support of their head teachers (Taylor and Mulhall 2001; Chapman et al. 2002; Dyer 1996). From their case study in four developing countries in Africa and Asia, Taylor and Mulhall further suggest that a collegial atmosphere, in which teachers can voice their opinions freely, regardless of hierarchical position in the school, encourages them.

On the other hand, a situation has recently arisen in which head teachers are expected to manage their schools and take on more responsibility and power, in line with decentralisation and community involvement. In the case of Ghana, Chapman et al. (2002) ironically suggest that greater responsibility is shifted to “the group of educational administrators least ready to accept it” (p187). In reality, head teachers may not be equipped with the necessary skills – such as planning and mobilisation – as they are used to a centralised system. Nevertheless, how head teachers operate in their actual contexts and how they might motivate their teachers need to be explored further.

Yet, general classroom realities also affect teachers’ perceptions of the profession and thus, their identities (Osborn et al. 1997). One classroom reality concerns students’ academic performance. Hanushek et al. (2004) suggest that teaching lower-achieving students is a strong factor in teacher turnover. Pryor and Ampiah (2003) give the example of a female teacher who chose to move from an urban area to a primary school in rural Ghana but regretted it because the children were less receptive to her teaching.

However, the style of teaching and learning might affect students’ responsiveness. A child-centred approach, for example, emphasises students’ participation and understanding, hence receptiveness. Akyeampong et al. (2006) suggest that there are some experiences that teachers themselves identify as interactive processes with students. However, the relationship between the style of teaching and learning, and teachers’ satisfaction has not

been explored in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, especially Ghana; and other classroom realities also need to be explored.

In summary, previous research suggests that teachers' professional as well as collegial relationships affect their perceptions and attitudes. However, few studies have been conducted on this aspect as it relates to developing countries. In addition, the context of the developing world is quite different from that of the West, as in the former, trained and untrained teachers commonly work side by side in the same school. Therefore, there is a need to explore this area, placing teachers firmly in the context. On the other hand, the general poorer performance of rural pupils compared to those in towns tends to be considered as a demotivating factor for teachers. Do those teachers committed to working in rural areas perceive the situation in this way? This study attempts to determine the school environment that again makes the 'rural challenge model' possible.

### **2.5.2. Community Support and Teacher Motivation**

Bray (1996) considers three types of community to be relevant to school management: geographic communities, defined according to members' place of residence such as a village or district; ethnic and religious communities; and communities based on shared concerns such as children's education or the aims of the parent teacher association (PTA). The present study is mainly concerned with geographic communities, being rural, with clear geographical boundaries and small populations.

Ankrah-Dove (1982) and Chapman (1994) suggests that the high turnover of teachers in rural communities is partly due to weak relationships with communities. Moreover, Roberts (1975) shows that community relations with rural teachers are central to teachers' lives in Ghana. More recently, Hedges (2000) has argued that teachers tend to feel valued by the community when they are provided with foodstuff and accommodation, as some do. However, he raises a further question in asking why some communities are willing and able to provide these services while others are not. Indeed, there is a need to investigate teacher-community relations in order to reach some understanding of why they are shaped in varying ways.

### **2.5.3. The Effect of Policy and Its Implementation on Teacher Motivation**

Previous research suggests that policy and its implementation affects teachers. Before reviewing such literature, let us consider what is meant by policy. A number of disciplines, including political science, attempt to define policy. Some definitions are comparatively narrow, in holding that policies are developed and implemented through state bureaucracies, as Taylor et al. (1997 p22) suggest, quoting Dye's definition of 'whatever governments choose to do, or not to do'. Others opt for broader designations, such as the 'authoritative allocation of values' (Ball 1990 p3). In this study, I adhere to a narrower definition, since I explore the role of the organisational authority as an environment that influences teachers.

One of the policy changes implemented in many developing countries is decentralisation: "An unprecedented wave of decentralization has swept the continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America since the late 1980s" (Crawford 2008 p235). The rationale for such a policy is to become more responsive to local needs; to utilise limited resources efficiently; and to deliver services effectively (Rondinelli 1981; Lauglo 1995; McGinn and Welsh 1999; Prinsen and Titeca 2008; Crawford 2008).

Rondinelli (1981) argues:

Decentralisation is necessary to accelerate the pace and spread the benefits of growth, integrate diverse regions in heterogeneous countries and use scarce resources more efficiently to promote development in poverty stricken or economically lagging areas (p133).

In addition, local empowerment is also advocated (Conyers 2002 in Conyers and Matove 2002).

Decentralisation is another concept that is understood in different ways. It refers not only to a process but also a structural condition – how government is managed. In general, however, decentralisation is defined as the transfer of authority, responsibility and resources held by central government to its lower levels (Prinsen and Titeca 2008). Conyers (2002 in Conyers and Matove 2002) identifies three basic levels to which authorities are transferred: state (e.g. province or region), district and community. She argues that the

district level is the most important for administrative efficiency and effectiveness, but its power and influence may be concentrated on a small ‘elite’ that does not necessarily represent the views or interests of the majority. Therefore, she goes on to posit that the community is in fact the most crucial level in terms of actual local empowerment and development.

In decentralised education management, school level administrative systems have been adopted to enhance school autonomy, devolving decision making to teachers in collaboration with parents, community members and others (Behrman et al. 2002). There are three areas of school level management control: budgeting, personnel and staffing, and curriculum/programme – although normally, school committees can only control the use of funds allocated by the central government (ibid). Interestingly, decentralisation – including training at school level – is perceived by some sub-Saharan Anglophone educators<sup>6</sup> to motivate teachers, as their level of participation tends to be increased and empowerment takes place (Commonwealth Secretariat 1995).

Alternatively, in their research into 17 school management committees in three districts of Uganda, Prinsen and Titeca (2008) suggest that in practice, the District Education Office (DEO) has overall control in matters of school management, as it has more power and resources. This implies that autonomy, one of the motivating factors of teachers – especially that of head teachers – might not be ensured or is even undermined in the school’s association with the DEO. Therefore, the relationship between the teacher and the DEO needs to be explored.

The other major development within the sector is educational reform, including curriculum restructuring. In education, there seems to be an emphasis on policy as process in addition to policy as text (Taylor et al. 1997; Ball 1994). As policy involves actual practice with agency, teachers as agents are subjected to the influence of policy implementation. Ball (1994) argues:

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<sup>6</sup> Including ministry officials, teacher training college principals and secondary school head teachers of Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, Zanzibar/Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

Policy is both text and action, words and deed, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended. Policies are always incomplete insofar as they relate to or map on to the 'wild profusion' of local practice. Policies are crude and simple. Practice is sophisticated, contingent, complex and unstable. Policy as practice is 'created' in a trialectic of dominance, resistance and chaos/freedom (p10–11).

The implications and impact of policy – often in the context of education reform, including curriculum changes – on teachers' work have been researched as a part of the evaluation process, exploring teachers' perceptions (Taylor and Mulhall 2001; Chapman et al. 2002; Dyer 1996). This has led to some understanding of teacher motivation in relation to policy implementation. On the other hand, little research has been carried out in developing countries in particular. One of the few such studies is Dyer's (1996) research into teachers' response to the new policy initiatives around a child-centred approach in India. She suggests that the negative perceptions of teachers were shaped by a lack of training and materials provision, thus irrelevant to the teaching context. She goes on to argue that, "many teachers felt they were fighting a battle with [a] government that formulates policies which bear little relation to their situation" (p38).

In Ghana, decentralisation has been in place for two decades and a new education reform act was implemented in the academic year 2007/08 – the year I conducted my field research. In addition, as discussed in 2.4.4.2., the government has been offering 'incentives'. The actual implementers of these policies are the local authorities. Therefore, this study provides an insight into teachers' professional lives in relation to these authorities.

#### **2.5.4. Teachers' Identities, Personalities and Motivation**

Evans (1998) suggests that motivators might be school-specific, but that the way individual teachers feel and perceive them, even in the same school, is not the same; in this sense, motivation is highly individual. Individual characteristics – one of the three settings that Steers and Porter (1983) suggest motivation is dependent on – is interpreted in this study as identity and personality.

Identity is another concept with no common conceptualisation, while there is a substantial literature on identity. Nevertheless, Castanheira et al. (2007) suggest:

In some studies, *identity* is defined as being *of a person within a group or the group itself*, as a member of nation, state, family, class, peer group, social group, ethnic group, language group, and/or racial group. In others, *identity* is referred to *as a characteristic of a person*, as in academic identity, competent person, friend, scientist, mathematician, artist, and learning disabled/special needs student among others. Recently, some studies have begun to explore the concept of multiple identities, or identities as constructed and mutable (p173 emphasis in original).

Teachers' identities may be influenced by membership of groups and regarded, for example, in terms of ethnicity, class and gender – and as a teacher.

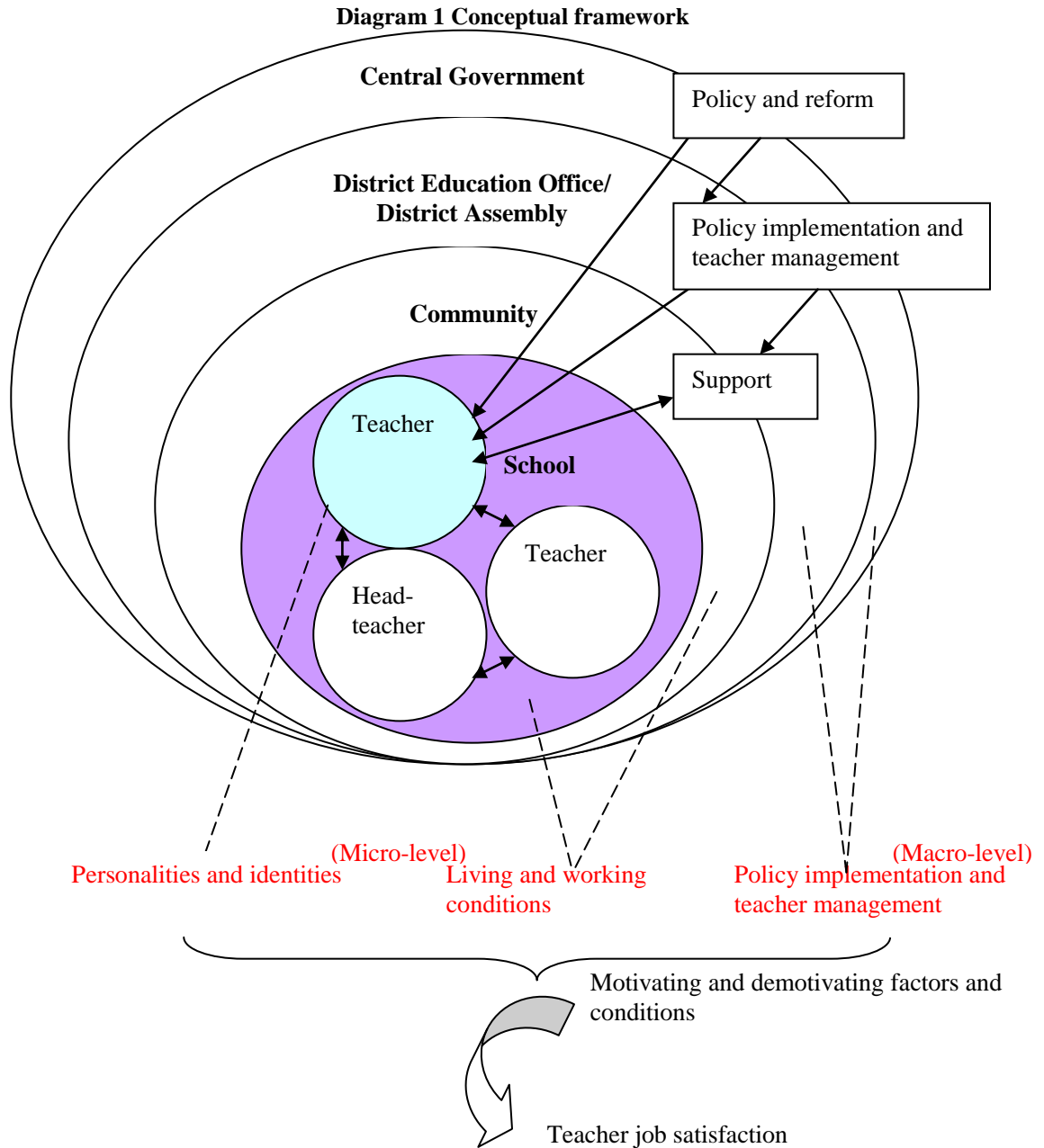
Ethnicity might play a role in teacher motivation. From research into primary school teachers in the state of Texas from 1993 to 1996, Hanushek et al. (2004) suggest that less experienced white teachers – unlike African-American or Hispanic teachers – are more likely to leave the profession altogether when they are posted to schools with high concentrations of minority group students. Akyeampong and Stephens (2002) suggest that in Ghana, teachers tend to come from higher socio-economic backgrounds than the average for the country as a whole. Young teachers' 'disillusionment' in rural areas of Ghana might thus be related to their background, including social distance from rural areas.

Teaching might be a gendered occupation. Towse et al. (2002) suggest that in Tanzania, women are more like to choose caring professions such as teaching and nursing. Kibera (1997 cited in Towse et al. 2002) claims that in Kenya, women "prefer to enter low level service-oriented occupations like nursing, secretarial service, clerical and teaching jobs that are perceived as low status and have poor remuneration as well" (p647), although he does not offer an explanation for this. Fallon (1999) argues differently. Through her study of an Akan rural community in Ghana, she suggests that one group of more highly respected women in the community is that of teachers.

Teachers' identities are developed in different stages through their experience of family, schooling and place of work (Knowles and Holt-Reynolds 1991). Similarly, motivation is not static but changes as time goes by and, as Nias (1989) suggests, what satisfies teachers in their second decade of teaching is different from their first decade. From a comparative study of English and French primary school teachers, Osborn et al. (1997) also suggest that

the concept of professional responsibility is deeply rooted in particular traditions. Therefore, in order to understand teacher motivation, it seems important to research teachers according to their particular contexts and the stages of their careers.

This concept, as my conceptual framework below indicates, may be regarded in terms of three additional aspects: living and working conditions; policy implementation and teacher



Adapted from Ellmin (1995)

management; and teachers' personalities and identities. In other words, these are the motivating and demotivating factors and conditions that are related to teacher job satisfaction. Living and working conditions are more likely to be extrinsic and the individual may not be able to control them. Moreover, such preconditions could be the same for all teachers but the degree of comfort and/or difficulty may vary, as urban– rural disparities exist. Policy implementation, such as reform and incentive provision, and teacher management may influence all teachers equally, but teachers are different not only in terms of their qualifications but also with regard to their identities and personalities, which are shaped by values and beliefs, and even the places in which they live and work. Finally, the manner in which teachers perceive their jobs appears to be highly complex, as they live and work in physical, social and professional environments that are interrelated.

## 2.6. Conclusion

Teacher motivation – the conditions and factors that promote commitment in basic education teachers, allowing them to enjoy teaching and fulfil their goals – in developing countries may not be the same as that in developed countries. Living and working conditions, such as salary and educational infrastructure (largely extrinsic) could play a bigger role in countries where teachers struggle with one or more additional jobs in order to meet the basic needs of their families, and where education may take place under a tree.

Moreover, teachers are subject to environments that are shaped by the community, local authorities and the central government. There is a tendency to blame teachers – they are not capable, effective, regular, punctual and so on – for the unimpressive performance of pupils. There has also been little research into the ways in which these environments affect teachers. An observation made by VSO in the report, *What Makes Teachers Tick?* is pertinent and convincing:

Despite the pivotal nature of teachers' contribution to education, there is a tendency on the part of national and international policy-makers to bypass teachers in decision-making, and to neglect their needs when considering new policy directions. Teachers are rarely regarded as partners within education planning and reform, and are frequently treated as passive implementers of decisions, or even as technical inputs. Academic and policy debates focus on teachers' deficiencies, and seldom take into account the difficulties under which they live and work (VSO 2002 p1).

This study sets out to recognise the importance of the role of teachers in the effectiveness of education, taking into account the varying contexts in which they live and work.

### **3. Context of the Research**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Ghana is a geographically, socio-culturally, and economically diverse country. It is important to understand the context, in order to narrow down how research can be conducted. This chapter describes the wider setting in which the research was carried out, including the background of the country, the education system in Ghana, and the existing support system for basic school teachers.

#### **3.2. A Brief Background of the Country**

##### **3.2.1. Geographical and Socio-Cultural Context**

Ghana, which covers an area of 238,537 km<sup>2</sup> (similar in size to the UK), is located in West Africa, facing the Gulf of Guinea in the south, with a coastline of 560 km. It is surrounded by francophone countries: Togo, Burkina Faso, and Cote d'Ivoire in the east, north and west respectively.

There is no very high land – the highest hills are around 900m above sea level – but hills situated in the southern part of the country influence rainfall and vegetation. There are two major zones – savannah and forest (Ward 1966 p28) – although the country is divided into five principal vegetation zones (Boahen 1975 p2). The savannah covers all the northern part of the country, while the south and west parts are densely forested. There is only one rainy season in the north – which means one farming season – while there are two rainy seasons in the south. Although the major industry in Ghana is agriculture, the north depends on ‘food crop farming’ like yam and cassava (World Development Report 2006 p1), while the south engages in ‘cash crops’ such as cocoa and oil palm. The forest zone also has minerals, including gold, manganese, aluminium and diamonds, in addition to timber.

Like most countries of Africa, Ghana consists of numerous linguistic and ethnic groups, although the country is small in terms of population (Boahen 1975 p1). The largest group, Akan-speaking people, constitutes about 45% of the entire population, followed by Mole-

Dagbanli, which represents 15% (ibid p1-2). Forty four indigenous languages have been identified in Ghana (Hall 1983 p6) and the government has recognised nine of these for the development of educational materials, for use in institutions of secondary and higher education, and for use in the media (ibid p8).

People who differ linguistically also have different cultures, including systems of inheritance, marriage and the naming of children – as well as state governance of the people (Boahen 1975 p2). This means that people living in specific areas or geographical regions will have a different way of life, probably conditioned by the geographical environment (ibid).

### **3.2.2. History of Ghana**

Even before the influence of European countries began in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, there were already states in present day Ghana. They include Dagomba-Mamprusi in northern Ghana and the Akan states of Bono-Manso in southern Ghana, both of which emerged during the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, as a result of long distance trade, especially in gold, between the Sudan zone and Adansi in the south of Ghana, where gold is found (Songsore 2003 p27). This trade formed the basis of the wealth and power of the ruling classes (Amin 1981 cited in Songsore 2003 p28).

The Europeans' arrival on the Guinea Coast influenced the long association between the north and forest area of Ghana. The southern states came to act as middlemen for Europeans, who were confined to their forts on the coast, due to communication difficulties, disease, and the tight control of local rulers (Garret 1976 cited in Songsore 2003 p36-37). As a result, the trade in gold, ivory and, to a lesser extent slaves, became reversed, and was directed southwards (Boahen 1975 p17). Eventually, the trade with Europe converted mainly into slave trade, because of the new demand for cheap labour in the West Indies by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Songsore 2002 p35). The proliferation of firearms happened at the same time and helped bring about the forcible incorporation of weaker states into more powerful ones.

The Ashanti Kingdom, one of the Akan states in the forest, became dominant by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. It built an empire state, thanks to its rich goldmines (Songsore 2003 p29-30) and its advantageous geographical position, which gave it control over major trade routes between the coast, forest and savannah, as well as enough distance to prevent European interference. On the other hand, the north was exploited for slave trade (WDR 2006 p12). King-less ethnic groups were raided and traded in the south by groups of kingdoms in the north, including Dagomba and Gonja. The hierarchal dominance of Akan (south) over Mole-Dagbani (north), and the dominance of kingdoms over king-less ethnic groups in the north, both existed in pre-colonial times (WDR 2006 p2).

The British extended their colonial rule beyond the coastal area in 1874, when they won the war against Ashanti – converting their forts and settlements in Ghana into a Crown Colony and the states south of the Pra River into a Protectorate (Boahen 1975 p55-56). However, British interests were concentrated along the coastal port towns and their immediate hinterland. It was not until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the British expanded its control over the Northern Territories, the northern Ghana. While the forest areas became the main centres of production for major export products, gold mines and crops such as cocoa – new to Ghana in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century– the north had to be the source of cheap labour for the south – the British Colony and Ashanti (Songsore 2003; WDR 2006). For this reason, colonial administration ruled the north differently from the south. Infrastructure development such as extension of the national railway line and formal education in the north was “denied” (Botchway 2004). Botchway (2004) says:

By 1919 there were only 4 Government Schools for the Northern Territories’ population of 694,000, as against 4 Government Schools and 19 Government-Assisted Schools for the Ashanti Region’s population of 448,000. The rest of the country, which comprised the Gold Coast colony, including the East, West, and Central Provinces, had 11 Government Schools and 175 Government-Assisted Schools for a population of 1,396,000 (p37).

Missions, who played a key role as formal education providers in the south, were limited in their educational activities “in areas where Mohammedanism is strong”– the north (Scott 1942 cited in Assimeng 1999). Ghana is a country where “colonial economic policies

created multiple nations in one country” (Konadu-Agyeman 2000 p475 cited in WDR 2006 p13).

### **3.2.3. Regional Disparities in Ghana**

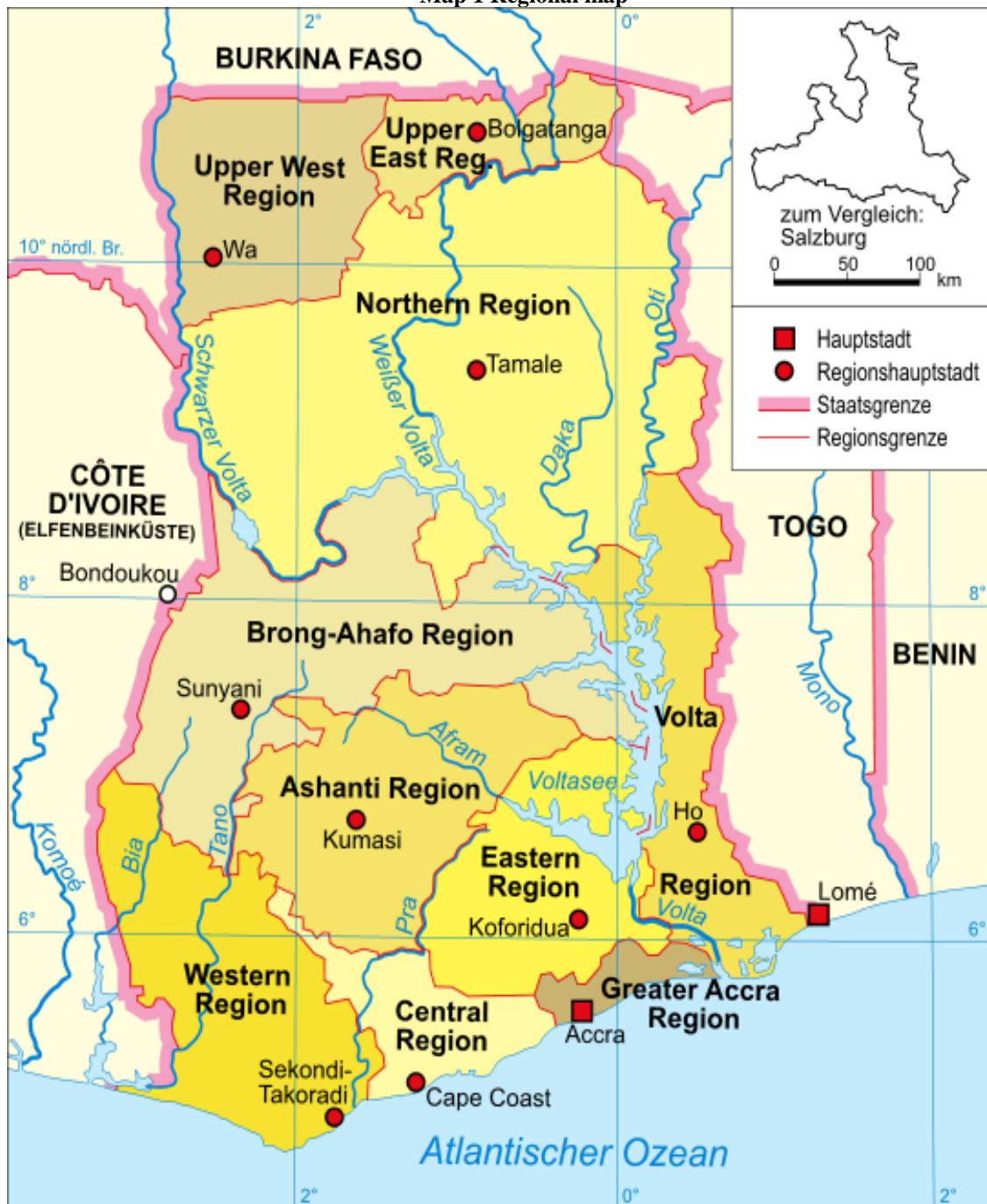
Regional inequality in economic conditions is substantial and much of the research into Ghana suggests disparities between the North and the South in terms of economic development and the quality of life. Songsore (2003) describes the former as ‘depressed’ and ‘periphery’, while the latter as ‘resource frontier’ and ‘centre’ (ibid p77-79). Out of 10 regions in total, the North consists mainly of three: Northern, Upper East and Upper West Region (map 1).

National poverty has reduced consistently. The percentage of Ghanaians described as poor and extremely poor has dropped – from 39.5% in 1998/99 to 28.5% in 2005/06; and poor from 26.8% in 1998/99 % to 18.2% in 2005/06 (National Development Planning Commission 2007 p16). However, there is relatively smaller improvement in the three northern regions, where poverty is still concentrated (see table1). In 2005/06, more than half of the population of the three northern regions was living in poverty and the percentage of those living in extreme poverty was much higher than the rest. Daily Graphic, the most popular newspaper in Ghana, on February 19<sup>th</sup> 2008 indicated a worse situation, saying:

The poverty level in the three northern regions, as well as the north eastern Brong-Ahafo Region, ranges from between 69 and 88 percent, making these regions the poorest and most vulnerable in the country.

There is also significant inequality among the regions, in terms of human development (the education sector will be discussed in the next section), as table 1 indicates. In the health sector ‘the most deprived regions’ are worse off (NDPC 2007), although in general the level of healthcare has improved – as, for example, the Doctor to Population Ratio and the Nurse to Population Ratios suggest. Slightly more than half of the population can access safe water. The regional figures, particularly in rural areas, show marked differences. The southern regions tend to have higher potable water coverage rates than the northern regions (ibid p112).

Map 1 Regional map



Source: Wickmedia Commons.

**Table 1 Economic, health, and water and sanitation status by region**

| Region        | Economic    |         |                     |         | Health |       | Potable Water     |                   |
|---------------|-------------|---------|---------------------|---------|--------|-------|-------------------|-------------------|
|               | Poverty (%) |         | Extreme Poverty (%) |         | DPR    | NPR   | Urban Covered (%) | Rural Covered (%) |
|               | 1998/99     | 2005/06 | 1998/99             | 2005/06 | 2006   | 2006  | 2006              | 2006              |
| Ashanti       | 27.7        | 20.3    | 16.4                | 11.2    | 7,169  | 2,579 | 63.06             | 43                |
| Brong Ahafo   | 35.8        | 29.5    | 18.8                | 14.9    | 24,337 | 3,007 | 51.69             | 17                |
| Central       | 48.4        | 19.9    | 31.5                | 9.7     | 24,178 | 1,729 | 48.55             | 44                |
| Eastern       | 43.7        | 15.1    | 30.4                | 6.6     | 19,125 | 1,707 | 50.54             | 18                |
| Greater Accra | 15.2        | 11.8    | 2.4                 | 6.2     | 3,706  | 727   | 48.86             | 73                |
| Northern      | 69.2        | 52.3    | 57.4                | 38.7    | 63,614 | 2,684 | 58.13             | 30                |
| Upper East    | 88.2        | 70.4    | 79.6                | 60.1    | 28,670 | 2,092 | 51.27             | 36                |
| Upper West    | 83.9        | 87.9    | 68.3                | 79.0    | 44,317 | 1,458 | 67.20             | 12                |
| Volta         | 37.7        | 31.4    | 20.4                | 15.2    | 20,720 | 1,620 | 48.58             | 35                |
| Western       | 27.3        | 18.4    | 13.6                | 7.9     | 22,413 | 2,199 | 41.85             | 44                |
| ALL           | 39.5        | 28.5    | 26.8                | 18.2    | 10,641 | 1,636 | 53.18             | 56                |

DPR=Doctor Population Ratio.

NPR=Nurse Population Ratio.

Source: *Annual Progress Report 2006 of Implementation of the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2006-2009*, NDPC 2007.

While regional disparities, particularly north-south disparities, are significant, there is a distinct gap between urban and rural areas in Ghana, as with other developing countries. There are inequalities within the regions that account for the greatest degree of inequality (WDR 2006).

Significantly, the southern parts of Ghana and the Akan areas of the country are relatively more developed than three northern regions, though there are pockets of deep underdevelopment in regions of the country (WRD 2006 p16).

It is clear that discussions of regional disparities, using the administrative regions as the basic units, is not adequate to show the situation at lower level, as they “tend to hide the basic contradictions that exist between rural and urban centres” (Songsore 2003 p136).

### **3.2.4. Educational Situations in Ghana**

There was, and still is, a distinct gap between the north and the south in the education sector, as Sefa-Dei (2004) confirms:

The concentration of schools in the South during colonial times has tended to favour the Akan of the South while other ethnic minorities in the North have struggled to ‘catch up’ (p344).

Regional comparisons by the Ministry of Education, Science Sports (MoESS) show this gap. However, there are also pockets of underdevelopment in the south, as discussed earlier. For better understanding of district situations, the MoESS has classified districts as ‘deprived’ or ‘non-deprived’.

Forty ‘deprived’ districts were originally identified (out of 110 districts) by the MoESS in 1999, by using three criteria; Input Criteria<sup>7</sup>, Access Criteria<sup>8</sup>, and Achievement Criteria<sup>9</sup> (Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, MoESS no date). It aimed to allocate proportionally more funds<sup>10</sup> to them, so that equity in the education system would be enhanced, addressing some of challenges of ‘hard to reach and post terrain’ (MoESS 2007a p15). As of the academic year of 2007/08, there are 53 ‘deprived’ districts out of 138, following the creation of new districts in 2005.

‘Deprived’ districts are concentrated in three northern regions, as table 2 indicates, although there are deprived districts in all regions except the Greater Accra Region.

**Table 2 Number of districts by region**

| Region        | Number of 'Deprived' Districts | Total number of Districts |
|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ashanti       | 4                              | 21                        |
| Brong Ahafo   | 6                              | 19                        |
| Central       | 5                              | 13                        |
| Eastern       | 2                              | 17                        |
| Greater Accra | 0                              | 6                         |
| Northern      | 17                             | 18                        |
| Upper East    | 7                              | 8                         |
| Upper West    | 2                              | 8                         |
| Volta         | 3                              | 15                        |
| Western       | 7                              | 13                        |
| ALL           | 53                             | 138                       |

Source: A list provided by the PBME, MoESS.

<sup>7</sup> Seating place per pupils, core textbooks per pupil; % of qualified teachers; per student budget at primary level; and pupil teacher ratio at primary level

<sup>8</sup> Gross enrolment rate; % girls enrolled

<sup>9</sup> Pass rate BECE English; pass rate BECE mathematics. BECE is a basic school leaving examination.

<sup>10</sup> The deprived district has been given preference to implement some of programmes. It includes the Pilot Project Scheme supported by the World Bank since 2004 and pilot programme of capitation grant scheme in 2005/06, which has been implemented in all districts since 2006/07.

Educational indicators below show both regional disparities and deprived/non-deprived differences. In terms of regional disparities, based on the Education Management Information System (EMIS)<sup>11</sup> data, the northern regions are generally worse off, including lower pupil enrolments and greater gender disparity.

**Table 3 Enrolment rate and gender parity index by region**

|               | Primary |     |     |     |    |    |      | JSS |    |    |     |    |    |      |
|---------------|---------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|------|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|------|
|               | GER     |     |     | NER |    |    | GPI  | GER |    |    | NER |    |    | GPI  |
|               | B       | G   | T   | B   | G  | T  |      | B   | G  | T  | B   | G  | To |      |
| Ashanti       | 90      | 87  | 89  | 80  | 78 | 79 | 0.97 | 85  | 75 | 80 | 56  | 52 | 54 | 0.88 |
| Brong Ahafo   | 97      | 92  | 94  | 84  | 81 | 82 | 0.94 | 70  | 68 | 72 | 52  | 49 | 51 | 0.88 |
| Central       | 109     | 104 | 107 | 98  | 95 | 97 | 0.96 | 95  | 88 | 91 | 68  | 66 | 67 | 0.93 |
| Eastern       | 93      | 90  | 92  | 81  | 79 | 80 | 0.97 | 75  | 71 | 73 | 51  | 50 | 51 | 0.94 |
| Greater Accra | 82      | 80  | 81  | 75  | 74 | 75 | 0.97 | 81  | 74 | 77 | 53  | 50 | 51 | 0.90 |
| Northern      | 93      | 82  | 87  | 71  | 64 | 68 | 0.89 | 65  | 52 | 59 | 38  | 32 | 35 | 0.80 |
| Upper East    | 91      | 93  | 92  | 72  | 74 | 73 | 1.02 | 53  | 60 | 58 | 34  | 40 | 37 | 1.06 |
| Upper West    | 88      | 93  | 91  | 68  | 73 | 70 | 1.06 | 64  | 67 | 65 | 39  | 45 | 41 | 1.04 |
| Volta         | 90      | 84  | 87  | 76  | 72 | 74 | 0.93 | 75  | 67 | 71 | 51  | 49 | 50 | 0.89 |
| Western       | 97      | 92  | 94  | 85  | 82 | 83 | 0.95 | 83  | 76 | 80 | 55  | 52 | 53 | 0.91 |
| ALL           | 93      | 89  | 91  | 80  | 77 | 79 | 0.96 | 78  | 71 | 75 | 52  | 50 | 51 | 0.91 |

GER=Gross Enrolment Rate. NER=Net Enrolment Rate. GPI=Gender Parity Index.

Source: EMIS 2006/07.

Pupils' performance also shows regional disparities. The results of the School Educational Assessment (SEA) in 2006 – the bi-annual national assessment of primary grade two and four pupils in English and mathematics since 2006 – suggest that the northern regions perform worse than average, while the southern regions, namely, the Ashanti, Eastern, and Greater Accra, perform better than average (Adu et al. 2006).

The *Education Sector Performance Reports 2007* (MoESS 2007a) highlight deprived/non-deprived differences (table 4). On average, indicators for the deprived districts show lower performances than national ones. Fewer children enrol in and complete basic schools and more untrained teachers work in deprived districts.

<sup>11</sup> In the EMIS, school census data are annually consolidated as profiles at district, regional and national levels. School census is discussed in chapter 4.7.1.1.

**Table 4 Educational indicators of national and deprived districts**

|         |          | GER | NER | GAR | NAR | Comple-<br>tion | GPI  | % of<br>Trained<br>Teachers |
|---------|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------------|------|-----------------------------|
| Primary | Deprived | 91  | 75  | 111 | 71  | 76              | 0.95 | 43                          |
|         | National | 94  | 81  | 103 | 69  | 85              | 0.96 | 64                          |
| JSS     | Deprived | 62  | 42  | 66  | 20  | 49              | 0.88 | 62                          |
|         | National | 77  | 52  | 80  | 29  | 65              | 0.91 | 77                          |

GER=Gross Enrolment Rate. NER= Net Enrolment Rate.

GAR=Gross Admission Rate (for entry to year 1). NAR=Net Admission Rate.

GPI=Gender Parity Index.

Source: *Education Sector Performance Report 2007*.

### 3.3. Education System of Ghana

#### 3.3.1. Basic Education Establishment

The system of formal pre-tertiary education in Ghana consists of 6-year primary, 3-year junior secondary school (JSS), and 3-year senior secondary school (SSS) education. Since the Education Reform in 2007/08, 3-year secondary education has been expanded to four years and JSS and SSS have become junior high school (JHS) and senior high school (SHS). However, in the research carried out in the first year of the reform, the old system and names— JSS and SSS – were used. This was because the reform had not affected the entire system yet – only the first years are students of JHS and SHS.

Alongside the reform, the level of education that basic education involves has also changed. Kindergarten has been added to basic education, which used to mean primary and JSS education. Again, in this research, I use basic education primarily for the primary and the JSS levels of education.

There is a major expansion of basic education, in terms of the number of establishments and the level of enrolments. In the academic year 2006/07, the total number of primary schools was 16,418 (12,888 public schools and 3,530 private schools). This represents an increase of 7% when compared to the 15,307 in 2005/06, with the following enrolment growth rates (MoESS 2007a p8):

|                    |                                |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2005/06 to 2006/07 | 4.3% (3,239,462 to 3,473,229)  |
| 2003/04 to 2006/07 | 17.4% (2,957,491 to 3,473,229) |

Similarly, there are 9,054 JSS (made up of 7,122 public schools and 1,932 private schools) in 2006/07. The enrolment growth rates are:

|                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2005/06 to 2006/07 | 4.4% (1,121,887 to 1,170,801) |
| 2003/04 to 2006/07 | 20% ( 984,111 to 1,170,801)   |

The expansion of the number of primary schools and JSS in current years could be attributed to the fact that kindergartens have become part of free and compulsory basic education since 2005/06, and received the capitation grant<sup>12</sup> since 2006/07. The fundamental trend is that basic education is expanding (table 5).

**Table 5 Number of school by level**

|         | Kindergarten |         | Primary |         | JSS     |         | SSS     |         |
|---------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|         | 2005/06      | 2006/07 | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2005/06 | 2006/07 |
| Public  | 8,659        | 10,008  | 12,227  | 12,888  | 7,130   | 7,122   | 354     | 473     |
| Private | 3,272        | 3,742   | 3,080   | 3,530   | 1,619   | 1,932   | 82      | 127     |
| Total   | 11,931       | 13,750  | 15,307  | 16,418  | 8,749   | 9,054   | 436     | 600     |

Source: EMIS 2006/07.

### 3.3.2. Educational Management

In Ghana, there are two systems for the management of basic education at district level: the District Education Office (DEO) of the Ghana Education Service (GES); and the District Assembly (DA). The former is under the Ministry of Education, Science, and Sports (MoESS) and the latter is under the Ministry of Local Government.

Overall responsibility for policy, planning and monitoring (relating to the education sector) lies with the MoESS, while the Ghana Education Service (GES), established as a public service agency, is in charge of the implementation of policies and programmes for pre-tertiary education (Teacher Education Division/GES handout 2004). The GES has 10 Regional Education Offices and 138 District Education Offices (DEO).

The District Assembly (DA), under the decentralization policy of government, is the Local Planning Authority, as provided in the Local Government Act 462, 1993. The District Chief Executive (DCE), the political head of the district, is responsible for the management of the District, supported by the heads of departments and agencies, including the District

<sup>12</sup> Capitation grant is discussed in chapter 3.4.6.

Director of the DEO. There were discussions that the GES would be dissolved and its DEO function would be absorbed into the DAs. However, the GES has survived and officers of the DEO are still staff of the GES. There are many letters from GES headquarters (and a few from GES regional offices) posted on the notice board of the DEO. DEO is, in practice a part of the GES, not the DA: the District Director of the DEO is more likely to be answerable to the head of the GES, the director general, than the DCE of the DA. Crawford (2008), from his field research in two rural districts in Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo region – both in the southern part – suggests:

Although the DA's roles and responsibilities may appear significant on paper (*Local Government Act 462, 1993*), major service delivery remains in the hands of their line departments. For rural communities, the key departments are those of health, education, and agriculture. Interviews with directors of these departments confirmed that their lines of control and accountability are vertical to their respective line ministries, not horizontal to the DA (p252).

“A situation where the District Director is torn in between two authorities is hampering growth and administration of the district” (GES former Ponkujaku 2005 *Ponkujaku School Mapping Report* p75).

### **3.3.3. Basic Teacher Development and Deployment**

#### ***3.3.3.1. Categories of Basic School Teachers***

There are at least six categories of basic school teachers, based on their qualifications and affiliations (see table 6), although the MoESS/GES use only two classification – trained and untrained. There are two organisations other than the GES that are involved in the deployment of untrained teachers nationally: the National Service Scheme (NSS) and the Youth Employment Programme (YEP).

As with GES employees, there are two categories of teachers: trained teachers, who are also called professional or regular teachers, and untrained teachers, who are described as pupil teachers (GES and GNAT 2000 *Conditions and Scheme of Service and the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers*). Pupil teacher is sometimes used as synonym for untrained teacher, but I use pupil teachers in this study only for the GES's untrained teachers. Non-GES teachers, all of whom are untrained or unqualified, can be categorised

into the following four: the National Service Scheme (NSS) teachers who have finished tertiary education; retired teachers; the Youth Employment Programme (YEP) teachers, and volunteer teachers. Volunteer teachers are those supported by communities, PTAs, NGOs and other organizations like churches or nobody.

**Table 6 Categories of basic teachers**

| Qualification | Affiliation                            | Attribution             | Name used in this research |
|---------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Trained       | Ghana Education Service (GES)          | Trained                 | Trained teacher            |
| Untrained     | National Service Scheme (NSS)          | Untrained               | Pupil teacher              |
|               |  | Mandatory/<br>Voluntary | NSS teacher                |
|               |  | Retired                 | Retired teacher            |
|               |  | -                       | YEP teacher                |
|               | NGOs, Communities, PTA, etc. or nobody | -                       | Volunteer teacher          |

Source: field research.

#### 3.3.3.1.1. Trained Teachers

Trained teachers in basic schools are those with recognised professional qualifications, having completed teacher training programmes. There are two ways to obtain qualifications: pre-service training (PRESET) and in-service training (INSET). PRESET is a full-time training course offered by two of the universities and 42 teacher training colleges (TTCs), including four private TTCs. The universities award a diploma or degree and the TTCs used to be pre-tertiary institutions producing certificate holders (Certificate A teachers). However, TTCs have been upgraded to tertiary institutions and their first batch of diploma holders came out and started teaching in the academic year 2007/08. INSET, on the other hand, is a part-time programme provided by the same universities and the GES itself. The participants in these part-time programmes include: untrained teachers who would like to be qualified teachers; and serving trained teachers who are aiming to upgrade their qualifications. Most of trained teachers obtain their initial professional qualification through PRESET.

Trained teachers have a ‘rank’ which shows their position in the GES (table 7). A newly trained teacher with Certificate ‘A’ is the lowest, *Superintendent II*, and is the “entry

appointment” of the GES (GES and GNAT 2000 p7). A rank based on teachers’ qualifications and experiences determines teachers’ salaries as well as their duties, and hence, posting. The duty of a *Superintendent II* is to teach in basic institutions<sup>13</sup> (ibid p50)’. The duty of *Superintendent I*, who has a recognised diploma and/or has been promoted from *Superintendent II* after five-year teaching experience, includes: teaching in first<sup>14</sup> and second<sup>15</sup> cycle institutions; inspection in first and second cycle institutions; district/regional subject organisers; and administrative duties (ibid p55). Similarly, *Senior Superintendent*, who has a university degree and/or has been promoted from *Superintendent I*, has the same duties as a *Superintendent I* “with added responsibilities” (ibid p56).

TTC leavers<sup>16</sup> are the majority of trained teachers in basic schools. As teachers progress in their ranks, they tend to leave basic school teaching for secondary school teaching and/or administrative responsibility at the DEO. Basic school teaching has not only lower status than secondary school teaching but also the lowest status in the GES system. The rank and its duties are summarised in table 7.

**Table 7 Teachers’ rank**

| Rank                     | Qualification  | Experience (years) | Duties  |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------|---|
| Superintendent II        | Certificate A  | 0-4                | • Teaching at basic schools   |
| Superintendent I         | Certificate A  | 5-9                | • Teaching at basic and secondary schools   |
|                          | Diploma  | 0 -                |   |
| Senior Superintendent    | Certificate A  | 10-                | • Same as above with added responsibilities   |
|                          | Degree   | 0 -                |   |
| Principal Superintendent | Senior Superintendent with three years satisfactory service    |                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspection of basic and secondary schools</li> <li>• Teaching at secondary schools</li> <li>• Headship of primary schools with at least two streams and JSS</li> </ul> |
| Assistant Director       | Principal Superintendent with three years satisfactory service |                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative duties at headquarters/regional/district</li> <li>• Headship of secondary schools</li> <li>• Inspection of basic and secondary schools</li> </ul>       |
| Director II              | Degree and three years or more as Assistant Director           |                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District director</li> <li>• Headship of secondary schools/TTCs</li> </ul>   |
| Director I               | Three years or more as Director II                             |                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional/divisional heads</li> <li>• As Director II with added responsibilities</li> </ul>   |

Source: *Conditions and Scheme of Service and the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers*.

<sup>13</sup> They are same as first cycle institutions which cater for children in day nursery, kindergarten, primary and JSS.

<sup>14</sup> The first cycle means ‘basic schools’.

<sup>15</sup> Second cycle institution means a pre-tertiary institution other than a first cycle institution (ibid).

<sup>16</sup> The TTC produces approximately 7,000 to 8,000 teachers a year (GES 2004 p 30).

Although length of the service is important for promotion, that is, a higher *rank*, young teachers with higher qualifications can jump the queue. This may encourage basic school teachers to perceive upgrading as necessary not only for professional development, but to achieve a higher rank, which means teaching at a higher level and/or receiving a higher salary, as salary scale is linked to *ranks*.

#### 3.3.3.1.2. Pupil Teachers

Pupil teachers are the GES employed, untrained teachers, whose duties are teaching in basic institutions. Their qualification requires four passes, including English and mathematics, in the pre-tertiary education leaving examinations, such as Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE). If they fail to obtain admission to training college or a prescribed training programme by the end of five years teaching, they “shall be removed from the service” (GES and GNAT 2000 p36). The introduction of the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) has meant that pupil teachers will not be laid off as long as they are taking that programme. Pupil teachers are not entitled to annual leave, while the newly trained teachers have 30 days, as well as a 10 working-day casual/emergency leave. There is no career progression unless they obtain professional qualifications.

#### 3.3.3.1.3. National Service Scheme Teachers

Under the National Service Scheme (NSS) launched in 1973, all Ghanaian tertiary graduates must serve the nation for a year. Its objectives, set in 1970, are: nation-building through NSS personnel’s active participation; national unity; combat against “hunger, illiteracy, disease and unemployment in Ghana”; and provision of “essential services and amenities, particularly in towns and villages in the rural areas of Ghana” (*The Ghana National Service Scheme Rules and Regulation*, no date, no page).

The NSS teachers are categorised in two ways: mandatory NSS and voluntary NSS. The former is those who finish tertiary education as mentioned above and the latter includes those who decided to continue teaching after the 1-year mandatory NSS and those who wish to resume offering service, with prior experience of the NSS. Mandatory NSS

personnel are mainly posted to Ministries, Departments and Agencies<sup>17</sup>, while voluntary NSS personnel are restricted to the Ghana Education Service, more specifically to classrooms. The mandatory NSS teacher is entitled to 1-month's annual terminal leave, which normally falls in August (It coincides with the long vacation period of basic schools).

#### 3.3.3.1.4. Retired Teachers

The NSS has deployed retired teachers to basic schools since 2006/07 as voluntary NSS teachers. Those who used to be employees of the GES – both trained and untrained (pupil teachers) - are eligible for the scheme.

#### 3.3.3.1.5. Youth Employment Teachers (Community Education Teaching Assistance)

The Ghana Youth Employment Programme (YEP) started in October 2006, under a Presidential directive. It aims at addressing the problem of unemployment and underemployment among young people aged between 15 and 35 years<sup>18</sup> (Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment 2006 *Youth Employment Programme Implementation Guidelines* p1). It was intended to generate at least 500 jobs in each district<sup>19</sup> for the first six month period and then to increase the figure to over 600 (MoMYE 2006 p10). In 2006, 78,195 jobs were created under the YEP (NDPC 2007 p75).

Basic teaching is one of 10 suggested 'areas'<sup>20</sup> of operation. The Youth Employment Programme (YEP) teachers in this research, officially Community Education Teaching Assistance, are "young men and women with at least second cycle education who (will) help deliver a pre-and basic school level educational service in rural areas where there are not sufficient teachers" (MoMYE 2006 p40 ( ) added). There are two requirements to be a YEP teacher. Firstly, they (and other YEP personnel) "must reside within the community or localities in which the jobs...are set up" (ibid p7). Secondly, they must meet "the requisite educational qualifications such as *basic passes* at SSS level and be of good character and be

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<sup>17</sup> Interviews with NSS district coordinators suggest that some mandatory NSS have been posted to basic schools, mostly JSS.

<sup>18</sup> It constitutes 26% of the population, according to MoMYE.

<sup>19</sup> The target figures could vary on the high side for the bigger districts as well as Metropolitan and Municipal Assemblies.

<sup>20</sup> Each district chooses 'areas', considering relative comparative advantages possessed in the locality. Other major 'areas' include: agri-business, waste and sanitation management, health care, and community protection (policing).

committed to working with the programme for at least one year” (ibid p40 with emphasis in italics). The YEP teachers’ educational base is more likely weaker than that of pupil teachers, without any passes in English and mathematics in the SSSCE.

### 3.3.3.1.6. Volunteer Teachers

There are teachers who do not belong to any of the five categories mentioned above. They have been grouped as volunteer teachers, due to the nature of their status. They work voluntarily, receiving much smaller financial benefits. Volunteer teachers include those supported by NGOs, communities, the PTA, or other organizations, such as churches. Some volunteer teachers receive no financial rewards at all. Recruitment of volunteer teachers often depends on the respective schools’ head teacher. A volunteer teacher could be any of the following: middle school leaver, Senior Secondary School (SSS) leaver, university graduate, or higher.

### ***3.3.3.2. Employment Conditions of Basic Teachers***

Teachers’ employment conditions differ according to their categories, as the previous section suggests. Trained teachers are the only permanent teachers: untrained teachers do not have job security. Moreover, trained teachers receive the highest salary and other benefits, such as paid annual leave. In general, trained teachers’ employment arrangements are better than those of any other category of teachers (table 8).

**Table 8 Employment conditions by category of basic school teachers**

|           | Category  | Appointed by | Appointment          | Education                | Days for leave entitled | Salary (¢)                  |
|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Trained   | Trained   | GES          | Permanent            | Pre-tertiary to Tertiary | 40 days (total)         | 175* <sup>21</sup><br>423** |
| Untrained | Pupil     |              | 1 year up to 5 years | Secondary                | 0                       | 112***                      |
|           | NSS       | NSS          | 1 year up to 5 years | Tertiary                 | 1 month                 | 125                         |
|           | Retired   |              | 1 year               | Pre-tertiary             | Not Specified           | 150                         |
|           | YEP       | YEP          | 1 year               | Secondary                | Not Specified           | 70                          |
|           | Volunteer | School       | n/a                  | Secondary to Tertiary    | Not Applicable          | 0 ~ 20                      |

\* Newly trained teacher with certificate

\*\* Trained teachers with certificate who worked more than 26 years

\*\*\* Pupil Teachers with SSSCE

Source: field research.

<sup>21</sup> The salary of newly trained teachers of ¢175 was the equivalent of \$166, using 2008 exchange rate of ¢.95 to the dollar.

### **3.3.3.3. *Teacher Deployment***

The system of teacher deployment is complex, as there exist six categories of teachers at basic schools, and various organisations are in charge, as seen above.

The (GES) DEO is not necessarily wholly responsible for, nor does it have power over trained teacher deployment. Particularly, newly trained teacher deployment is in the hands of the central government. The GES headquarters allocate newly qualified teachers to regions, considering trainee teachers' preferences indicated in a form in which they list up three regions to which they would like to be posted. Then, the regional posting officers assign teachers to specific schools (Hedges 2002). Thus, the DEO can do little regarding recruitment of newly trained teachers: this is not a part of decentralisation.

Where the DEO holds power in terms of teacher deployment is in its recruitment of pupil teachers and the transfer of its employees, both trained and pupil teachers, from one institution to another within the district (GES and GNAT 2000 p11). However, along with the introduction of the YEP, quotas of pupil teachers have been frozen<sup>22</sup>: the DEO are allowed to recruit only new pupil teachers as replacements for existing posts. The DEO has limited power over its own teacher deployment in the centrally controlled system.

The DEO's limited power is much more obvious for non-GES teachers, as teacher deployment in basic schools is done by other organizations, namely, the NSS and YEP. The DEO could be consulted by these about vacancies; however, they have their own ways to justify their personnel deployment. For example, the NSS sets availability of accommodation as one of the conditions for its deployment.

In the case of volunteer teachers, except those who are supported by organisations like NGOs, whether they get a post or not is the respective head teachers' decision. As the appointment of volunteer teachers has no financial implications for the GES, no educational requirement is necessary. They could start or stop teaching at any time and for any reason.

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<sup>22</sup> From interviews with district officers and a note by a district director posted to at the DEO office as of 11/06/08, which indicated those who are interested to get appointments should apply to the YEP programme not pupil teachers.

The DEO is in charge of all basic schools in the district; however, its administrative authorities in terms of teacher deployment are limited not only regarding its employees, but also in its operation, especially for newly qualified teachers. This organisational arrangement may influence the operation and the attitudes of the DEO to teachers as a whole, and thus, teacher motivation.

In summary, teachers in deprived districts are more likely to be put into basic schools as a temporary measure, as on average 43% of primary and 62% of JSS teachers in deprived districts are trained, which is worse than those at the national level (table 4). As a result, teachers in deprived districts are more likely to work with teachers who not only have different qualifications and affiliations, but also different employment conditions.

### **3.4. Incentives for Basic School Teachers**

There are six strategies discussed here which are intended to motivate basic school teachers, particularly in rural areas.

#### **3.4.1. Incentive Packages**

Incentive package is a general term used for material rewards given to teachers in deprived areas to encourage them to stay and work. It started in October 2001 when 5000 radio cassette players (Ghetto Blasters) and 5000 sets of cooking utensils were distributed to teachers in deprived areas (a letter from the director general of the GES to the District Director on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2003). In 2002, 9,000 bicycles were distributed. In 2006, 8,280 bicycles were provided for 53 deprived districts.

Apart from the GES headquarters decisions, the District Assembly, in collaboration with the DEO, decides what could be provided as incentive packages to attract teachers to rural schools. It might include solar lamps, radios, cooking utensils, bicycles, and so on<sup>23</sup>. Accommodation could be included (MoES 2003), but in this thesis it is discussed separately.

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<sup>23</sup> From an interview with a person who used to be in charge of incentive packages at the national level.

### 3.4.2. The Best Teacher Awards scheme

The Best Teacher Awards started in 1995 to “motivate teachers for higher performance and assist to restore the respect the profession should enjoy” and also “aims at retaining qualified teachers and improving their performance and overall effectiveness in the classroom, according to the *National Best Teacher Award and World Teacher’s Day* (MoESS 2007c p8).

Eligibility for the awards is “all classroom teachers in Primary schools, Junior Secondary Schools, Senior Secondary Schools, Special Education, Technical Institutions and Teacher Training Colleges in both public and private institutions” (ibid p8). Teachers should also have taught for a minimum of five years. Selection criteria indicate some preference for teachers in rural areas, stating that teachers’ “work experience in rural setting is an added advantage (ibid p9).

There were 12 categories in 2007, two of which are primary and JSS teachers. The selection of winners of primary and JSS teachers starts at the lowest level – the circuit<sup>24</sup>. The names of outstanding teachers are short-listed by the circuit supervisor of a circuit, who has managerial supervision of a number of schools, and are recommended by the head of institution to the director of the DEO. The identification and selection of candidates continues at regional level and finally at national level.

**Picture 1 National Best Teacher Awards ceremony in 2007**



Source: field research.

<sup>24</sup> In Ghana, a district – the smallest administrative unit – is divided into circuits for education sector operational purposes.

The Best Teacher Awards at national level is a big ceremony on the Teachers' day in October. The winner is presented with material rewards in the presence of distinguished guests, such as high profile politicians and local leaders. In 2007, the overall best teacher was given a 4-bedroom house and a computer. The first and second runners-up both received a saloon car and a computer (picture 1).

### **3.4.3. Study Leave with Pay**

The study leave policy allows serving trained teachers to go back to school as full-time students for a higher degree. The study leave with pay provides beneficiaries with full financial support from the government – their salaries are also secured. The requirement to apply for the study leave with pay is a minimum of three-years teaching, after initial teacher training. However, those who serve in rural areas are given a shorter period of two years, before they become eligible. The number of beneficiaries for study leave with pay is 3,000 with a quota system for the 2006/07 academic year (MoESS2007a p9). Teachers who do not meet the condition can apply for study leave without pay.

### **3.4.4. Upgrading Programmes**

The Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) has become the national minimum teacher qualification (GES and University of Cape Coast 2007). There are two upgrading programmes to DBE that the GES has offered, in collaboration with the University of Cape Coast (UCC). One is the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) for untrained teachers and the other is DBE for trained teachers, more specifically certificate holders. Both are alternative measures “to have a highly qualified teacher in every classroom in order to achieve the goal of Education for All by 2012 in Ghana”, since the two teacher education universities by themselves cannot meet the demand (GES and UCC 2007 p2-4).

#### ***3.4.4.1. Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education***

The Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) is a 4-year distance education programme. It started in the academic year 2004/05 and targeted an estimated 24,000 untrained teachers (GES 2007 p2). The country is divided into four zones and the first phase took place in three northern regions. As of August 2007, 20,000 teachers have

enrolled in the first three phases. The criteria for enrolment in this programme are: to be an untrained teacher and to be teaching in districts specified in the programme – educational qualification is not an issue. The major components of the programme are residential face-to-face sessions<sup>25</sup> in teacher training colleges (TTCs) and district-based tutorials.

#### ***3.4.4.2. Diploma in Basic Education***

The Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) for serving certificate-holding teachers – a 2-year distance programme – started in all districts in the year 2007/08. This was to accelerate the upgrading of the qualifications of over 60,000 practising teachers in basic schools and to improve the “teachers’ image, status and retention in the service, as the acquisition of additional qualifications could lead to further promotion, increase in remuneration and job satisfaction” (GES and UCC 2007 p 5). It expects 90% of practising certificate-holding teachers to become DBE holders by 2012. The programme comprises a total 24-week residential sessions<sup>26</sup> at TTCs throughout the country for the 2-year duration.

#### **3.4.5. District Sponsorship for Trainee Teachers**

The district sponsorship is for trainee teachers, unlike the four strategies mentioned above which are for serving teachers. The district sponsorship is a strategy of the district assembly (DA) to attract newly trained teacher to its district, through its financial support for trainee teachers during their attendance at the teacher training college (TTC). Once trainee teachers receive a district sponsorship, which is a contract between the teacher and the DA, they are bonded to teach in that district for three years after the completion of their training.

Applicants for the TTC have to identify which districts are offering them Sponsorship, as a part of their enrolment requirements. 98% of the 9,000 trainee teachers enrolled in 2006 were sponsored by a DA (NDPC 2007 p100).

#### **3.4.6. The Capitation Grant Scheme for Basic Schools**

The aim of the capitation grant scheme is to motivate basic school teachers in respect of autonomy – giving them greater control over school management – and professional

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<sup>25</sup> The duration of the session is 3 weeks during Christmas Break, 3 weeks during Easter Break, and 4 weeks during Long vacation (A lead paper presented by the Director General, GES, 2007)

<sup>26</sup> Sessions are: 3 weeks during Christmas vacation, 3 weeks during Easter vacation, and 6 weeks during Long vacation.

development in managerial skills. It is designed “to empower the schools to effectively use financial resources to plan and carry out school quality improvement activities” in the *Guidelines for the Distribution and Utilisation of Capitation Grants to Basic Schools* (GES no date). The scheme was implemented as a pilot in 53 ‘deprived’ districts in 2005/06 and has been implemented in all districts since 2006/07.

In summary, the Ghanaian government has provided the following incentives for serving basic teachers: in-kind salary supplements through ‘incentive packages’; recognition through the Best Teacher Awards scheme, as Chapman (1994) suggests that “special days honouring teachers and special awards for teacher” are important to “increase the status and prestige of teaching” for the quality of teachers’ professional lives (p22); and professional development opportunities through study leave with pay and upgrade programmes, as Kemmerer (1990) and Chapman (1994) suggest. These are major incentives, as teacher allowances, such as the cost of living allowance, accommodation and transport allowance, were consolidated in a new salary scheme in 2000 (Akyeampong and Asante 2005). There is no hardship allowance in practice<sup>27</sup>, although it is said that “appropriate monthly allowances shall be paid to teachers posted to areas designated as difficult as defined by GES” (GES and GNAT 2000 p16). In general, however, the government has made efforts to attract teachers to rural areas and motivate them.

### **3.5. Conclusion**

Ghana is socio-culturally diverse with historical complexity. There are different levels of development between the *underdeveloped* north and the *resource-rich* south. On the other hand, there are pockets of underdevelopment in the south. There is an acknowledgement of urban-rural disparities, but there may be rural-rural differences.

The government of Ghana has faced the challenge of insufficient teachers, especially trained teachers, in basic schools in rural areas. The recruitment of untrained teachers, therefore continues, in order to meet demand. As a result, there are at least six categories of

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<sup>27</sup> From interviews with teachers as well as district officers.

teachers in basic schools deployed and supported by different organisations. The context of basic school teaching might be more complex than commonly understood.

The GES/MoESS have put some measures in place nationally that favour rural areas. How does the most macro-level environment and policy affect teachers in the abovementioned conditions? Do teachers live and work in similar conditions across 'deprived' districts? Do all teachers perceive their job alike? Do organisational authorities in 'deprived' districts treat teachers similarly? There seems to be a necessity to investigate two 'deprived' districts – one from the north and the other from the south – in order to explore motivation carefully.

## **4. Methodology and Methods**

### **4.1. Introduction**

There is a range of issues with respect to teacher motivation. Previous studies have used a variety of methods, from small-scale in-depth qualitative approaches, including ethnographic research, to quantitative approaches employing large samples. Some involve one-shot data collection methods and others use longitudinal data. This study has chosen a mixed-method approach, with quantitative analysis to describe teachers' characteristics, job satisfaction and perceptions, in order to get the big picture; and qualitative analysis, in order to explore teacher motivation with a focus on individuals' lives, locating them in their contexts.

This chapter presents the research questions and methodological approaches to the study. It also explains the reasons why I adopted the selected approaches. The chapter starts with the focus of the research and continues with the research approaches. In addition, it provides the geographical, demographic, economic and education backgrounds that comprise the settings of the two districts under study.

### **4.2. Focus of the Research**

As the title of this thesis suggests, the present study aims to develop an understanding of teacher motivation – the conditions and factors that promote commitment and dedication in basic school teachers – in rural areas of Ghana. As the six research questions presented in chapter 1 indicate, the study conducts a holistic exploration of teacher motivation in the context of two 'deprived' districts of Ghana.

It is generally understood that poor working and living conditions in developing countries are demotivating factors for teachers; yet, there are still well-motivated teachers in rural Ghana. Community support has been recognised as an important source of teachers' motivation, but little research has been conducted into how and why some communities are more supportive than others. Similarly, the government has provided incentives for

teachers; and, in addition to its managerial role, the DEO has been geared much more towards the process of continuing decentralisation.

However, there has been little analysis of how and why these arrangements affect teachers. Moreover, insufficient attention has been paid to both teachers' individual differences and also their differences as groups, in terms of motivation and job satisfaction. In the context of the present study, such disparate groups include teachers posted to Ponkujaku District and Aumiso District (both pseudonyms) in the north and south of the region respectively; trained teachers and untrained teachers; and male and female teachers.

In summary, through an investigation of the relevant actors' perceptions and lives in the selected districts, this study explores how and why identity and personality; living and working conditions; and policy and the teacher management system all affect basic school teachers.

### **4.3. Research Strategy**

This study intends to determine the complexity and intricacy of teacher motivation in rural Ghana. The world itself where teachers live and work is already complex, as are the ways in which they live and work, how they perceive their jobs and how they interact with each other. Oversimplification may lead to distortion and misconceptions (Evans 1998). Therefore, the exploration of teachers' lives is important and this requires a qualitative, data-thick description of cases.

Investigation of the extent to which basic education teachers are satisfied with the job is pertinent to this study. The discovery of the factors that contribute to teachers' satisfaction in the context of rural Ghana will help to shed light on the nature of teacher motivation, which affects the level of satisfaction. Therefore, quantitative information is necessary. The collection of quantitative data also allows the acquisition of the broader and collective views of basic education teachers, whose powerless situation has been discussed in recent studies.

Thus, a mixed-methods approach is employed in this study. This strategy primarily utilises qualitative methods, supplemented with some quantitative data.

Some researchers argue that a combination of qualitative and quantitative strategies is untenable because certain paradigms and methods do not ‘fit’ together plausibly (Smith 1983 cited in Hanson et al. 2005). Moreover, some suggest that multiple data sources do not necessarily ensure consistency (Patton 1980 cited in Cohen et al. 2000), and do not increase validity and reduce bias (Fielding and Fielding 1986 cited in Cohen et al. 2000). However, inconsistency and bias are features of all methods. Indeed, a mixed-methods approach has been used in educational research to take advantage of the generalisability of quantitative findings and the in-depth, contextual nature of qualitative of findings (Greene and Garacelli 2003 cited in Hanson et al. 2005; Bulmer and Warwick 1983).

Case study methodology is appropriate to this study for three reasons. Firstly, the purpose of this research is to investigate a case – the motivation of basic school teachers in two rural districts of Ghana – “within its real-life contextual context” (Yin 2003 p13). Its context-dependent, concrete and practical findings are strengths of the approach. Secondly, it allows theories to be tested that have been developed mainly in the Western world, in the context of developing countries (Yin 2003; Flyvbjerg 2003; Vulliamy 2004). Some argue that case study methodology is weak in its reliability and validity, as it is not easily open to cross-checking and it is prone to problems of observer bias (Nisbet and Watt 1984 cited in Cohen et al. 2000). However, all methodologies face reliability and validity issues and this study intends to contribute to theoretical propositions (Stake 1995; Yin 2003). Finally, the case study can provide insights into the influence of policy by closely describing and interpreting related events (Simons 2009). Thus, it “can directly influence policy” (Merriam 1998 p19).

However, the case study is not synonym for merely qualitative research; it is flexible, and can involve both quantitative and qualitative analysis (Stake 1995; Merriam 1998; Yin 2003; Cohen et al. 2000). Indeed, as Crossley and Vulliamy (1984) argue:

Case-study need not be purely descriptive; it need not be limited to the micro-level; and it need not ignore comparative analysis itself. By focusing upon the

complexities of educational practice, it can lead to important modifications of both educational policies and comparative theories of educational systems (p204).

Such an investigation, which aims to explore a complex ‘case’ in-depth from multiple perspectives by the most appropriate means, perfectly fits the purpose of the present study.

#### **4.4. Ontological and Epistemological Considerations**

There is a widely accepted view that there are two major paradigms – in terms of regarding the world – in social science. These dichotomous perspectives are variously referred to as postpositivism and naturalism (Lincoln and Guba 1985); positivist and interpretivist (Bernard 2000); empiricist and interpretivist (Smith 1989); or objectivism and constructionism (Bryman 2001).

The former is rooted in natural science and its function is to uncover reliable new knowledge through the generalisation of a large amount of empirical data, testing of hypotheses and the establishment of theory. The latter, on the other hand, advances the notion that knowledge is constructed through an interactive and reflexive process between the researcher and the researched. Consequently, there is a ‘paradigm debate’; some arguing that a post-positivist paradigm can only be combined with quantitative methods, and a naturalistic worldview can only be combined with qualitative methods (Reichardt and Rallis 1994 cited in Hanson et al. 2005).

There is another paradigm, that is, realism. Similar to positivists, believing that reality lies external to them, realists aim to understand ‘generative mechanisms’ (Bhasker 1975), or “objects, including structures, which have powers and liabilities capable of generating events” (Sayer 1992 p5) that are not directly observable.

Bhasker (1998) further argues:

In an experiment, scientists produce a pattern of events... What is so special about the patterns they deliberately produce under meticulously controlled conditions in the laboratory is that it enables them to identify the mode of operation of natural structures, mechanisms, or processes which they do not produce. What distinguishes the phenomena the scientist *actually* produces from the totality of the phenomena she *could* produce is that, when her experiment is successful, it is an index of what

she does *not* produce. A *real* distinction between the objects of experimental investigation, such as causal laws, and patterns of events is thus a condition of intelligibility of experimental activity... The objects of experimental activity are not events and their conjunctions, but structures, generative mechanisms and the like (forming the real basis of causal laws), which are normally out of phase with the patterns of events which actually occur (p9 emphasis in original).

Sayer (1992) suggests that structures are sets of internally related objects or practices. He explains two types of relation: *internal* or *necessary* relations, and *external* or *contingent* relations. In the former, the existence of one necessarily presupposes the other, examples being master–slave, landlord–tenant and teacher–pupil relations; while in the latter, each object has an autonomous existence, a phenomenon that may include objects such as religion and gender groups.

Sayer (ibid) goes on to argue that exploring internal relations is important, as structures, such as the landlord–tenant relation “can continue to exist while their constituents undergo changes in attributes which are not relevant to their reproduction” (p94). For this, the qualitative analysis of an object is required in order to disclose its structure, and the manner in which it acts and reacts. Therefore, the realist approach involves both quantitative and qualitative approaches, with much emphasis on qualitative analysis.

There are others who suggest that the ‘quantitative–qualitative divide’ is an illogical separation. Hammersley (1992) – who argues that much ethnography is based on realism – explains both methodological similarity and diversity. He also suggests:

[S]election among these positions ought often to depend on the purposes and circumstances of the research, rather than being derived from methodological or philosophical commitment. This is because there are trade-offs involved (Hammersley 1992 p172).

No single approach is ideal and many combinations are quite reasonable. Indeed, different methods could be used complementarily to minimise the shortcomings of a single approach (Hammersley 1992; Bryman 2001; Yin 2003; Creswell and Plano Clark 2007; Sayer 2000).

On the other hand, realism is clearly different from pragmatism, which utilises various notions of ‘what works’, applying diverse approaches and acknowledging both objective

and subjective knowledge (Cherryholmes 1992 cited in Hanson et al. 2005); since the latter is not committed to any one system of philosophy or reality (Creswell 2003; Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009). Indeed, Scott (2000), a realist who values both agency and structure, and the relationship between them, distances his position from pragmatic versions of education and social research programmes.

Yet, as a researcher, I am at ease with realism. For my first degree, I did science with a major in biology – although we do not study the philosophy of science in Japan – and I came to believe in a single reality, for which I searched both in the laboratory and the field. Thus, after struggling to comprehend that there are different world views in the social universe, I now accept that there are multiple, constructed realities; but I would not go so far as to agree that there are as many as realities as the number of researchers. Nevertheless, I still hold that reality exists outside the researcher and that there are mechanisms waiting to be discovered.

I am familiar with experimental research – one type of quantitative research – and am thus comfortable in exploring explanations for events and crediting the stratified nature of explanation, in other words, digging deeper. On the other hand, I am aware that I cannot control the situation surrounding teachers as I did with silkworms in the laboratory. The situation I am researching is open and complex, including a lot of factors that influence outcome. Nevertheless, I strive not only to reveal the mechanism but also to understand its appearance – different mechanisms can cause an event – as Collier (1994) advocates. To this end, rational abstraction – the isolation of a significant element of the world, an undertaking that requires a generative mechanism (Sayer 1992) in order to examine an object's relative position – is employed in this study.

## **4.5. My Stance**

### **4.5.1. My Identity**

It was a surprise to learn how much skin colour mattered in this study. As a Japanese person, I am non-white but for Ghanaians, I am non-black; therefore, I am white, being

called *Silminsili* in Dagbanli<sup>28</sup>, or *Oburoni* in Twi<sup>29</sup>. Having ‘white’ skin, I was apparently a stranger or guest to Ghanaians. Since they believe that strangers bring good things (Tamale Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies), I had comparatively easy access to wherever/whoever I wanted to get access to.

When I visited organisations, including the District Assemblies and NGOs, to introduce myself and to make an appointment with the people in charge, I was without fail allowed to sit down and most of time to continue my business. Whenever I went back to people for further information, I felt I was welcomed.

Access to written information was the same. In the case study districts, I was provided with all the files of documents I had requested at the District Education Office (DEO). When I was looking for a master’s degree thesis in the University of Cape Coast library, I waited for less than 20 minutes, swiftness that one of my friends, who was a lecturer there, attributed to my skin colour, adding that if she had made such a request, it would have taken more than two days. In communities, I was always introduced to chiefs, and treated and fed well. I also had better opportunities to move around freely and gain access to people and information as a stranger.

Having worked in the Teacher Education Division (TED), Ghana Education Service, for an INSET project supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) from 2003 to 2005, in other ways my identity did not have so much influence on my research. People, including district education officers and basic school teachers in the two districts selected for this study, knew me as no more than a student. On the other hand, I was often asked if I could do something for them, especially financially. However, once I had told them that I was a self-financing student, they did not insist. Indeed, I felt that I was appreciated for having chosen their (deprived) districts rather than urban districts for this study.

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<sup>28</sup> Dagbanli is the language of the Dagomba, who dominate in Ponkujaku, Northern Region.

<sup>29</sup> Twi is the language of the Akan, who dominate in Aumiso, Ashanti Region.

My identity as a woman helped in approaching females, particularly in Ponkujaku where Muslims are in the majority. However, being female did not prevent me from talking to males either, since my ‘white (non-black)’ identity superseded my being a woman when I was with men. In both districts, being ‘white’ and female gave me maximum access to everybody, including chiefs.

#### **4.5.2. Outsider and Insider**

I was an outsider because of my skin colour and lack of proficiency in local languages. Although I tried to learn the dominant languages in the two districts – Dagbanli and Twi – limited communication was inevitable. On the other hand, I found that teachers (and members of the community in general) seemed willing to talk freely with me. Although I was based at the DEO for some time, teachers seemed to think it was entirely acceptable to interact with me, partly because they knew that I had no power to demote or punish them no matter what they told me. I was thanked for conducting my research on this topic not a few times. Moreover, some of my Ghanaian friends hinted to me that since people tended to expect outsiders to solve their problems, they shared and even exaggerated their troubles (I did not find much exaggeration). In short, my status as an outsider provided both limitations and opportunities.

While I was an outsider, I was also an insider to some extent. I was able to empathise with teachers and community members, particularly in rural areas, through my background as a teacher and being from a rural area of Japan. My two-year teaching experience in a village in Nepal also helped me get close to local people with respect, adopting their way of life. Once I had established myself in the community and people realised that I enjoyed their traditional food and interacting with them, the barriers associated with being an outsider seemed to shrink. In summary, this research required me to establish a relationship with the researched.

#### **4.6. Case Study Research Design**

Case study research is an investigation of a ‘bounded system’ – the unit of analysis. Although the individual is the primary unit of analysis (Yin 2003), a case may include, for example, an individual, a class, a school, a community, a country, an institution, a project

or a programme. In some cases, sub-elements in Simons' (2009) definition – or sub-cases – may constitute a case. Simons gives an example case: the medium-term impact of centrally developed curriculum projects as the overall case, and case studies of four schools as sub-elements. Thus, each school is written up as a case.

This investigation is a case study of basic school teacher motivation in two 'deprived' districts of Ghana. It consists of two levels of sub-cases: school and district, which comprise five case studies of schools and two case studies of districts. Sub-cases are referred to simply as 'cases' in this study.

#### **4.6.1. Case Study Strategy**

This research comprises a multiple case study, schools and districts having been strategically selected from different geographical and socio-cultural contexts in order to maximise findings (Stake 1995; Flyvbjerg 2003), taking into consideration the ability to "obtain information about the significance of various circumstances" (Flyvbjerg 2003 p426), and to "get balance and variety" (Stake 1995 p6). Although such a small number of cases cannot represent the general situation, if similarities are found in certain aspects in cases with *maximum variation*, it may be safely assumed that similar results would occur in other cases as well, which could lead to some external generalisability (Yin 2003).

#### **4.6.2. Selection of Cases**

The selection of cases started at regional level, then to district and finally schools, and how five schools in two districts were selected is elaborated on below (a diagram of this selection is included almost at the end of this section).

##### **4.6.2.1. Selection of Regions**

Two regions – the Northern Region and Ashanti Region – came to mind before I started my fieldwork because of my familiarity with them through my prior work experience at district level in these regions. As explored in the previous chapter, they differ geographically, historically and economically. The Northern Region – one of the "depressed regions" – and the Ashanti Region, as a "resource frontier" (Songsore 2003 p77), have disparities, as shown in brief in table 9.

**Table 9 Characteristics of Northern and Ashanti Regions**

|                           | Northern Region                     | Ashanti Region                                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Climate                   | Dry Savannah                        | Wet Tropical forest                              |
| Rainy/Agricultural Season | Once a year (April–September)       | Twice a year (April-July and September- October) |
| Cash Crop                 | Shea nuts and butter                | Cocoa  |
| Food Crop                 | Yam and grains (millet, rice, etc.) | Cassava, yam, plantain, etc.                     |
| Ethnicity                 | Dagomba and Gonja                   | Akan   |
| Language                  | Dagbani, Hausa and Moshie           | Akan-Twi   |
| Natural resources         | n/a                                 | Gold, timber                                     |

n/a= not available.

Source: *Atlas for Ghana* (1999).

#### **4.6.2.2. Selection of Districts**

At the beginning of my fieldwork, I planned to select Aumisoë – one of four deprived districts in the Ashanti Region (table 10) – as one of two districts because of my familiarity with the area.

**Table 10 Overall number of districts compared with number of deprived districts in the Northern and Ashanti Regions**

|                           | Northern Region | Ashanti Region |
|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| No. of Districts          | 18              | 21             |
| No. of Deprived Districts | 17              | 4              |

Source: a list provided by the PBME, MoESS.

The selection of Ponkujaku District – one of 17 deprived districts out of a total of 18 districts in the Northern Region – involved much more deliberation. I narrowed it down from 17 to 8 Dagbanli dominated districts, one of two major languages spoken in the Northern Region, as I had learnt Dagbanli on a five-week cross-cultural studies course at the Tamale Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies at the beginning of my fieldwork.

Two districts close to Tamale Metropolis, namely Savelugu-Nanton and Tolong-Kunbungu, were excluded, despite the recommendation of many people who assumed that I would prefer commuting from Tamale – the regional capital – as many teachers do in order to enjoy access to certain amenities. Yendi was also omitted, due to previous tribal conflict in 2004 and the assumption that this might still affect teachers' perceptions and motivation.

To facilitate further selection, in addition to recommendations by the regional education director and his staff, two other factors were considered. One was educational statistics, which included the percentage of trained teachers, the pupil to teacher ratio, the gender parity index, and the results of the basic education certificate examination (BECE) – the basic education leaving examination. The other was the administrative history of the district, the capital of Aumisoë being the capital of the former district. I also had some apprehension that the newly created districts might not have the full co-operation of government agencies, including the District Assembly and the District Education Office of the GES.

A brief description of the two case study districts – Ponkujaku in the Northern Region and Aumisoë in the Ashanti Region – is provided in 4.10.1.

#### ***4.6.2.3. Selection of Schools for Ethnographic Research***

Five rural schools, 2 in Ponkujaku and 3 in Aumisoë, were selected out of 214 basic schools – 65 primary and 9 junior secondary school (JSS) in Ponkujaku and 94 primary and 46 JSS in Aumisoë – with the assumption that committed teachers in more challenging situations would demonstrate their relations and interaction with professional motivating factors more clearly and distinctively.

##### **4.6.2.3.1. Preconditions for Selection**

Three criteria were employed as preconditions. Firstly, schools were to be rurally located rather than in towns. Although both districts are classified as rural according to the Ghana Education Service (GES), the entire district should not be considered as ‘rural’. The district capitals, for example, are more like towns, as their District Assemblies (DAs) and teachers themselves perceive them to be. This is due to their better amenities, such as health and financial services; good communications networks; the availability of potable water and electricity; and a good (at least, better) network of roads. In Aumisoë, schools on trunk or major roads were also excluded for the same reason.

The second criterion was accessibility. Although ideally, all candidate schools would have been visited, this was not feasible due to logistical constraints. In Ponkujaku at the beginning of my data collection, I was accompanied by circuit supervisors (CSs) – the

District Education Office (DEO) officers in charge of the basic schools in their circuits<sup>30</sup> – on motorbikes, following one of Twumasi’s (2001) suggestions in his *Social Research in Rural Communities* that “it is always good to go to the village with a reliable contact person from the village or at least the district” (p76). However, I soon found that when meeting with teachers, it was rather awkward to have to ask a CS to excuse us so that we could talk in private. Being escorted by CSs also gave me less flexibility to prompt development.

Later, I rode on a motorbike by myself but because of the vastness of the district and its frequently poor road conditions, my movement was not as free as I had imagined it would be. Eventually, I had to choose some schools that met at least one of the following two conditions: a school could be located a long way from the capital, but had to be accessible by public transport; or it needed to be located within 40 km of the capital, so that I could ride to it confidently by motorbike. In Aumisoe, I found public transport readily available. I could not choose any of the ‘overseas’ schools, which could be cut off for prolonged periods due to flooding during the rainy season; or those in ‘bush’ or ‘interior’ communities, as this would have necessitated taking paths away from main roads (including feeder roads) for my own safety. That I was expected to allow children to carry my equipment, including sachet water<sup>31</sup> to drink that I bought in town, also reinforced my preference for schools located on roads that were passable by vehicle.

The last criterion was the availability of toilets in the community. I had to consider the possibility that I might have diarrhoea in the night, despite the fact that I am normally not very selective about what I eat. A story a female teacher told about how she fell into a pit latrine in the night acted as a cautionary tale to me. Thus, logistics determined the criteria for selection.

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<sup>30</sup> Each circuit is assigned a circuit supervisor, who is in charge of on average 15 to 20 basic schools.

<sup>31</sup> I did not drink untreated water during my field research, although I knew that a glass of water offered, especially when first meeting someone was a sign of hospitality.

#### 4.6.2.3.2. Selection Strategies

The selection of the five schools involved a combination of four different information sources: District Education Office (DEO), teachers, pupils (academic performance) and myself (my impressions).

Firstly, the views of DEO officers were requested, as they were in charge of the basic school teachers. I sought a list of the winners of the Best Teacher Award (BTA) scheme and of beneficiaries of incentives provided by national and district authorities, as a formal impression of the DEO; and 18 officers' recommendations – the names of three 'committed' and 'hard-working' teachers, with the reasons for their choices.

Contrary to my expectation that each DEO organised the BTA scheme at district level, as national selection was made from regional winners and, similarly, regional selection was made from district winners, Ponkujaku DEO had not organised the BTA for three years due to lack of funds. Aumisoe DEO had run it, but winners were selected only from among trained teachers, and were concentrated in town schools or only those rural schools that were close to the district capital. Beneficiaries of incentives provided by the GES were also only chosen from among trained teachers in both districts. Moreover, the selection criteria were not available in written form and information tended to be kept only by the person in charge. Therefore, actual information was obtained through interaction with DEO officers in both districts.

Secondly, information from teachers was gathered from questionnaires sent to them and from direct interaction. Some comments teachers made in the open question section of the questionnaire prompted me to go further. Even the response to closed questions hinted at something different. Why had a young female trained teacher accepted such a rural posting? What made a head teacher organise school-based INSET?

On the other hand, interaction with teachers mainly took place in their schools. However, I also visited teachers who were pursuing the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) or the Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) at teacher training college, during the school holidays. Moreover, I attended workshops and meetings for teachers

organised by their respective DEOs. Needless to say, I chatted with teachers who came to the DEOs for whatever kind of reason. Whenever I had an inkling that a teacher had something to share with me – either in happiness or frustration – I tried to follow it up with him or her in the school for further exploration.

Thirdly, with regard to pupils' academic performance – which would be reflected by teachers' commitment – the results of two assessments were initially sought: the BECE and the School Education Assessment (SEA). One of five case study schools in Aumisoe was selected because of its impressive pass rate (100% in 2007) in the BECE. However, Ponkujaku had only nine JSSs (as opposed to 46 primary schools). Three had only been established in 2005 or 2006 and thus did not have pupils who took the BECE in 2007. Another four were located in towns. Moreover, parents and guardians tended to send their wards to JSSs in towns, thus the BECE results in Ponkujaku did not provide much insight.

On the other hand, the results of the SEA – the bi-annual national assessment of primary grade two and four pupils in English and mathematics since 2006 – were found to be either unavailable or invalid. There was no raw or collated data available in Ponkujaku. There was in Aumisoe but after entering the raw data, I began to doubt its validity. In some classes, almost all the pupils performed extremely well in English, given that few children at that level could read English words and sentences new to them (normally they recited those taught in class) and I could barely communicate with them in English. Additionally, much later, when I happened to be at a school for the SEA in 2008, I found the administration to be questionable. Therefore, I took only the Aumisoe BECE into account, although I was aware that the results might not correctly reflect the efforts of those teaching there at the time.

Fourthly, I used my own judgment, based on my impressions and findings. How Ghanaian people perceived committed and motivated teachers might have been different from the way I did. There would also be factors that influenced pupils' performance other than their teachers. I therefore saw a need to use my judgement, visiting schools and interacting with whoever was concerned in order to learn what was really going on in basic schools. I stayed

all day, observing teachers from morning assembly to their free time after closing assembly. I checked pupils' exercise books, as well as the general school environment. I also paid attention to teachers' attitudes towards and interaction with pupils, colleagues and members of the community. When I was favourably impressed, I wanted to know why a teacher had behaved that way.

Data and information collected from the four above sources were not always sequential and my visits were more likely to verify information obtained from other sources. Occasionally, more than one strategy was used simultaneously and sometimes I used multiple sources to verify my impressions and findings.

#### ***4.6.2.4. Rationale for Selection of Five Schools***

In my initial plan, I intended to conduct an in-depth study of two schools in each district, including one male and one female teacher in each. However, after identifying two schools each in each district, I added a third in Aumisoe, Asonbwa. I simply felt that giving up Asonbwa would be a big loss. The following sections provide the rationale for selecting two schools in Ponkujaku and three in Aumisoe. They, whose names are pseudonyms, are presented chronologically according to the conduct of the research.

##### **4.6.2.4.1. Jamune Primary Local Authority (LA) School, Ponkujaku**

The two trained teachers at Jamune Primary Local Authority (LA) School – the head teacher (HT) and the assistant HT – had been mentioned not only by their circuit supervisor, but also by other officers such as the DEO girl child officer and a desk officer of an NGO. The HT won the district Best Teacher Award (BTA) in 2004 (there was no BTA in 2005, 2006 or 2007). Both the HT and assistant HT were said to be regular and punctual. My first – impromptu – visit to the school was on a Monday morning at about eight a.m. The assistant HT was there, supervising the pupils as they swept the premises. Shortly, the HT joined him and a morning assembly took place. On that day, the two teachers were going back and forth, trying to cover all the classes for kindergarten years one and two as well as primary years one to six (one pupil teacher came back from a funeral in a nearby community when the school was about to close). The assistant HT, who was from the regional capital, Tamale, said, “I am here because of love for children and others.”

#### 4.6.2.4.2. Lesanyili Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School, Ponkujaku

The untrained assistant HT (former acting HT) of Lesanyili Roman Catholic (RC) Primary was also mentioned by more than one officer. He happened to be one of the teachers whom I had met earlier in a group taking a UTDBE course, and who had expressed his frustration convincingly. Another untrained teacher from the same school also sounded interesting at a focus group discussion. However, what impressed me the most on my first visit were their P6 pupils, who could express themselves well in English in their Citizenship Education class. In Ponkujaku (actually, in both districts), I seldom found pupils, even in JSS in towns, who could communicate well in English.

#### 4.6.2.4.3. Nakaose Basic School, Aumisoe

Nakaose basic School (primary and JSS headed by the same HT) was one of the most remote schools and had a small enrolment. No teacher at this school was brought to my attention. However, its 100% BECE pass rate in 2007 intrigued me, since there were 8 JSSs with a pass rate of less than 10%, including 2 with 0%. Markedly better performance was not only demonstrated by Nakaose, but also other schools in the same rural circuit that had an average pass rates of 98.1%, the district average being 55.4%.

#### 4.6.2.4.4. Manekanto Primary School and JSS, Aumisoe

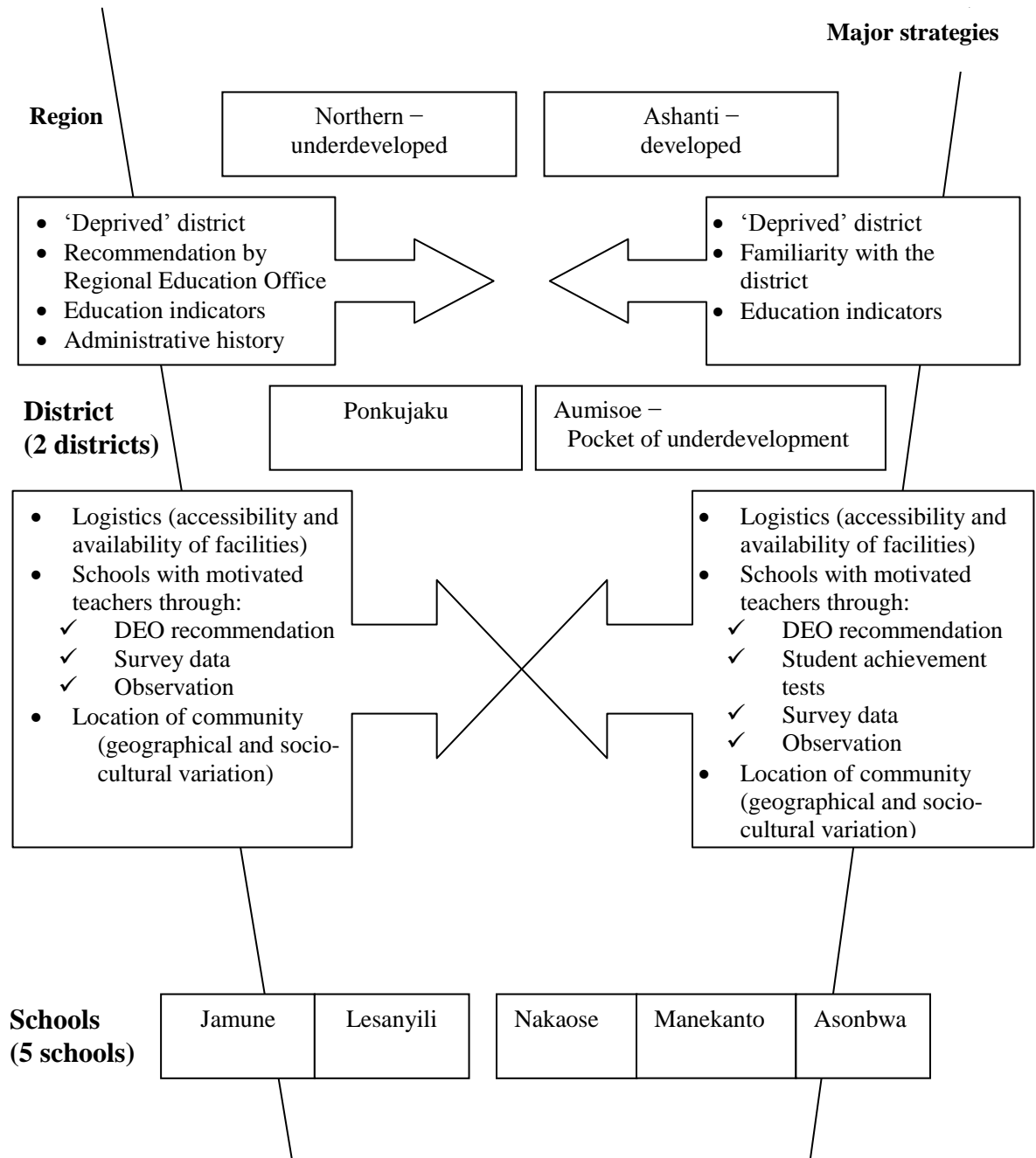
The female HT of Manekanto Primary was mentioned by more than one officer. She was one of three trained female teachers who had been posted to rural schools, that is, not in towns or on trunk roads. My first visit happened to be on the day of a PTA meeting, in which she and the JSS HT were trying to solve the issue of a volunteer primary teacher who had not been paid by the community as had been agreed. I noted that her lesson plan was open while she was teaching. Moreover, when she was seeing me off, she greeted almost every member of the community she met by name.

On the other hand, Manekanto JSS had performed comparatively poorly in the 2007 BECE, with a 31.2% pass rate. The circuit was not impressive in general, with a 59.1% pass rate, even though half the basic schools in the circuit were on a trunk road, unlike the adjacent rural circuit mentioned above. Why couldn't it perform as well as the rural circuit?

#### 4.6.2.4.5. Asonbwa JSS (and Primary School), Aumiso

As I proceeded with my ethnographic research into the two above cases in Aumiso, I could not help recalling Asonbwa, where, on my first visit, I had a contrary impression of the relationship between the teachers and the community– the teachers seemed to

**Diagram 2 Cases under study**



appreciate their relationship with the community. All seven primary and JSS teachers I met initially as a group and later individually said that the community was well intentioned and supportive. Indeed, there was a library and classrooms that had been built by the community. Moreover, located in a remote community, Asonbwa JSS was headed by a trained female teacher of 29. Why had she accepted such a posting? Does the community make allowances for such teachers? And, if so, how?

In summary, two levels of sub-cases comprising two districts and five schools respectively – cases of maximum variation at both levels – were strategically selected for this study. The five school case studies aim to provide context-dependent thick descriptions of teachers' lives through ethnographic research; and the two district case studies intend to gather teachers' collective and broader views on their jobs through a survey and interviews. In addition, at both levels, teachers' relations with others, such as head teachers, community members, and district officers, are brought into focus and explored.

## **4.7. Data Collection**

As a case study, this investigation includes multiple sources of evidence. In addition to primary data, which is discussed in this section, secondary data, such as national and district educational reports and statistics, were sought to complement this time-bound investigation.

### **4.7.1. Quantitative Approach**

The main sources for quantitative approach are school census, survey, and teachers' attendance.

#### **4.7.1.1. School Census**

A district level census is conducted in schools during the first term of each academic year as part of an annual exercise of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports. For the year 2007/08 – the 20<sup>th</sup> census in the country's history – the form was distributed to schools in

December 2007 and collected by mid-January 2008 by the respective DEOs<sup>32</sup>. The school census is a holistic source of data on everything from enrolment to teachers and facilities.

#### ***4.7.1.2. Survey***

Although the school census is holistic, the information it gathers on teachers is limited to qualifications, gender and age. Therefore, in order to generate data on teachers' profiles and obtain a general picture of their views about the job, it was necessary to conduct a survey. A self-administered questionnaire (see appendix B) containing both closed and open questions was sent out to all 1,318 basic (primary and junior secondary) school teachers in the two districts.

The questionnaire was developed in line with instruments used in similar research, which include those adopted by Bame (1991), Akyeampong and Asante (2005), Bennell and Akyeampong (2007), and Rodgers-Jenkinson and Chapman (1990). It contained questions on teachers' personal backgrounds and goals. An attempt was made to measure teachers' perceptions and levels of satisfaction towards the job using a Likert scale with five options: strongly disagree, disagree, no preference, agree and strongly agree. There were open-ended questions on reasons for becoming a teacher, goals and any further comments on basic school teaching in Ghana. At the end of the questionnaire, teachers were asked if they were willing to participate in an in-depth study for this research and, if so, they were requested to leave a name and contact number.

The same questionnaire form was used for both primary and JSS teachers, with the exception of two elements: JSS teachers were asked if they had taught at primary level previously; and primary school teachers were expected to provide information about the classes they taught, while JSS teachers were asked to identify which subjects they taught. A covering letter was attached to each questionnaire explaining who I was and why I was conducting this research. It also explicitly guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. In addition, an envelope was provided for each teacher to submit the questionnaire to his or her head teacher in order to ensure that only I read what he or she had written.

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<sup>32</sup> EMIS 2007/08 based on these data was not available by the end of the field research – at the end of the academic year 2007/08.

Head teachers were requested to administer questionnaires in all schools and received a large envelope containing the questionnaires and envelopes for their teachers. Not only his or her title, but the name of each head teacher was written on the front of the large envelope and also on an additional covering letter to him or her.

The questionnaire was piloted with 6 teachers at a primary school in Accra and later with 11 basic school (6 primary and 5 junior secondary) teachers in a rural community in Tamale Metropolis. Minor feedback from teachers consisted of the request for greater clarification in terms of wording, while a major complaint was its voluminous aspect. I noted their reactions, but decided to maintain the length of the questionnaire since the survey Bame (1991) utilised in a study of teacher motivation and perception in the late 1960s or early 70s<sup>33</sup>, which covered 1,400 trained elementary school teachers in all nine regions of Ghana, was similarly voluminous, but achieved an 85% return rate. I thus felt that improving the clarity of some of the items the teachers had experienced difficulty in comprehending would compensate for the length of the questionnaire, as it would then be much easier for them to follow and respond to appropriately. In addition, teacher motivation is a concept that involves a lot of variables; therefore, omitting questions would seem to affect the holistic aspect of the study.

Distribution and collection of questionnaires were carried out with the support of the DEO. The distribution of questionnaires to schools was made by their respective circuit supervisors (CSs). Following Bame's (1991) success, head teachers were given this responsibility at school level. Head teachers were also expected to return all completed questionnaires to their respective circuit supervisors or take them to the District Education Office personally if they happened to be visiting the capital (for example, to collect salaries or obtain teaching and learning materials).

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<sup>33</sup> Although Bame does not specify the exact date when the survey was conducted, the time span can be estimated since he mentions it was a part of his doctoral research.

The survey was conducted in Ponkujaku late in the first term, in early December 2007, and in Aumisoë, late in the second term, in late March 2008. Altogether, 1,318 questionnaires were sent out in the 2 districts and 847 (64.3%) were returned.

#### ***4.7.1.3. Teachers' Attendance***

The data were collected from teachers' attendance registries in the third (last) term of 2007/08– up to the end of July (almost the end of the third term) for Jamune and Lesanyili in Ponkujaku and up to the end of June (the middle of the third term) for Nakaose, Manekanto, and Asonbwa in Aumisoë. The numbers of school days of first and second terms in case study schools were 64-74 days and 59-61 days respectively. Those of third term in Ponkujaku were 43-53 days, while those in Aumisoë were 31-34 days.

#### **4.7.2. Qualitative Approach**

In this study, the main qualitative analysis methods for exploring teachers' voices and experiences are ethnography (ethnographic research in this thesis) and the interview.

##### ***4.7.2.1. Ethnography (Ethnographic research)***

For the five in-depth case studies of teachers' lives, ethnography was used as a method of data collection. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) suggest:

It involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people's lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are focus of the research (p1).

I wanted my research to reflect, as far as possible, an insider's view of teachers' lives. With this aim in mind, I started my field research with a five-week cross-cultural course to better understand the nuances of participating in the host society. For the main part of my field research, I lived for one to three weeks in five communities to observe teachers and the events related to their lives which occurred at different times of the day, week, and in Ponkujaku's case, season. The characteristics of my research approach for the in-depth study is therefore consistent with ethnography as defined above by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995). I use the term ethnographic research for this aspect of my study in this thesis.

Initially, I planned to stay at each school for two to three weeks solidly. However, in the event, my stay in the communities took place in two phases, except in one instance. There were two main reasons for this arrangement. Firstly, there was some intrigue amongst the teachers as to whether I would enjoy staying with them in their communities or not; for example, they were not sure if I would like their food. Therefore, they proposed a shorter period as trial. Secondly, I wanted to observe the lifestyles of teachers, particularly in rainy season, since many teachers also work as farmers in their districts. The teachers I met in Ponkujaku during the dry season assured me that they would be much busier when the rainy season arrived. Therefore, I went back to Ponkujaku later, during the rainy season.

I stayed in four schools, each for 11 to 19 days, and another for 5 days, excluding the first day I visited that school and stayed for the whole day. I stayed in a teacher quarters (TQ) provided either by the government or the community except in Lesanyili, where I stayed in a community member's house. In general, the teachers with whom I stayed provided food. A summary of the logistical details of my ethnographic research is provided in table 11.

**Table 11 Summary of ethnographic research**

| District  | School    | Season | School term | Period                                 | Days | Total |
|-----------|-----------|--------|-------------|--|------|-------|
| Ponkujaku | Jamune    | Dry    | First       | 12/12/07-14/12/07<br>17/12/07-21/12/07 | 8    | 19    |
|           |           |        | Second      | 28/01/08-30/01/08<br>11/02/08-14/02/08 | 7    |       |
|           |           | Rainy  | Third       | 24/07/08-27/07/08                      | 4    |       |
|           | Lesanyili | Dry    | Second      | 25/02/08-28/02/08                      | 4    | 11    |
|           |           | Rainy  | Third       | 17/07/08-23/07/08                      | 7    |       |
| Aumisoe   | Nakaose   | Rainy  | Third       | 19/05/08-26/05/08<br>16/06/08-19/06/08 | 12   | 12    |
|           | Manekanto |        |             | 04/06/08-08/06/08<br>19/06/08-25/06/08 | 12   | 12    |
|           | Asonbwa   |        |             | 27/06/08-01/07/08                      | 5    | 5     |
|           |           |        |             |  |      |       |

Source: field research.

In each school community, I followed one or two teachers from morning to evening and from school to farm. I conducted semi-structured interviews with the teachers and observed their activities. I also interviewed community members for which I needed an interpreter on most occasions, but got at least a couple of members to speak directly in English.

#### **4.7.2.2. Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews (see appendix C for interview schedule) were conducted individually with 38 basic school teachers at other schools, and with a total of 55 participants in six focus group discussions (three with trained and three with untrained teachers). The selection of teachers for individual interviews was made by a combination of the DEO's recommendation, the findings of the questionnaires and my impressions. The selection of participants for focus group discussions was based on teachers' voluntary participation. Most individual interviews took place at venues convenient for the teachers – either at their workplaces, or homes after school. Focus group discussions (trained and untrained teachers) were also conducted at teacher training colleges, where teachers were taking the upgrading programmes to Diploma in Basic Education during the school holidays. Interviews were recorded with the participant's agreement.

Interviewees included those in towns, both female and male, trained and untrained teachers, pupil teachers, National Service Scheme teachers and Youth Employment Programme teachers. Retired teachers were excluded since there were few of them (there were no retired teachers in Ponkujaku and they only comprised 1.6% of teachers in Aumiso). Best Teacher Award winners in both districts were also interviewed (In Ponkujaku, goes back to 2004 or earlier).

DEO officers and other stakeholders, such as the staff of the District Assembly, Ghana National Association of Teachers and NGOs active in the districts (in addition to some that operated at a national level as well) were also interviewed. However, I did not ask to record these interviews for fear that the atmosphere would change once I had made such a request.

### **4.8. Ethical Considerations**

Before approaching a teacher, permission to meet with him or her was sought from the headquarters of the Ghana Education Service (GES) and then pursued at district level. Obtaining an introductory letter from the director general of the GES to all District Education Office (DEO) did not take more than a couple of days; and with this letter, I was able to enter selected districts easily by myself (that is, without the accompaniment of an

officer from the headquarters of the GES). On the other hand, I am aware that in a country such as Ghana, people can seldom refuse the requests of higher authorities; the teachers who were asked to contribute to this study by filling in the questionnaire might have felt the same way.

In order to gain a legitimate entry into the community, I was introduced to the Chief, his elders, and other prominent leaders of the community at early stage of my stay. Knowing the cultural context of Ghana, I was trusting and respectful; frank from the outset in terms of the purpose of my research and its design; and made sure that the involvement of all participants was voluntary. Consensus was sought for ethnographic research and interviews before data collection. A few teachers did not want their interviews recorded, a position that I respected. I developed a rapport and promised confidentiality. I did not give any rewards to teachers for participating in the research. I approached community members in a similar manner, with respect and sensitivity. At the DEO, I behaved in the same way.

In general, teachers and community members were open and I felt that I was trusted. I had some concerns, especially with regard to interpretation, which are discussed in the next section. However, this thesis seeks to provide a faithful representation of the data collected in the field.

## **4.9. Major Concerns about Data Handling and Analysis**

### **4.9.1. Quantitative Data**

It is difficult to say if there is a relationship between the degree of a teacher's job satisfaction and his or her return of the questionnaire. However, the assumption that those who experienced greater job satisfaction were more likely to return the questionnaire seems less feasible in this study, since teachers' comments in the open question session often indicated frustration in their descriptions of challenging conditions and desire for improvement.

The teachers seemed to employ the questionnaire to convey their opinions to me. Thus, it may be that those who were frustrated or less satisfied tended to have responded. Whatever

the case, the survey was not designed to assess teachers' absolute job satisfaction but to provide further understanding of relative values in terms of different aspects of their lives (e.g. teachers are less satisfied with their physical environment than their relationship with the community). Therefore, problems with the results of the survey provoked by missing data, or, in this case, no response at all, may be less significant.

In spite of the high return rate of the questionnaire (64.3%), there were data missing from some of them due to the fact that it was lengthy and self-administered. For example, some questionnaires that were returned with a lot of blanks and/or simply ticked with the same response across whole sections were excluded from the analysis, not being considered valid. Organisation of the data and descriptive exploration at univariate and multivariate levels was conducted before any statistical analysis.

Missing data is handled in this study in two ways. On one hand, as one of my intentions is to get a picture of the two districts by using quantitative data, I use the data from all 847 cases for descriptive analysis, indicating missing frequencies for each variable. On the other hand, listwise deletion – that is, the exclusion from analysis of cases with missing data – is employed for factor analysis in order to explore teachers' perception and satisfaction. The sample size is thus reduced to 416, which, however, is large enough for factor analysis (Oppenheim 1992; Allison 2002).

The 416 responses indicate that on average, 38.7% of teachers are trained: 19.0% in Ponkujaku and 48.9% in Aumisoe. These findings are consistent with statistics from the 2007/08 school census of each DEO, which indicates that on average, 36.0% of a total 1,318 basic school teachers are trained: 22.2% in Ponkujaku and 41.8% in Aumisoe. This shows that the survey sample has little selection bias in terms of district and teachers' qualifications. Similarly, the sample reflects the general population in terms of male and female teachers, 84.6% and 15.4% of the sample being male and female respectively, while 84.2% and 15.8% of teachers are male and female respectively in the general population. Therefore, the survey sample used for factor analysis fairly represents the populations of the case study districts.

In the questionnaire, some items had slightly less responded to than others. Although there is no missing data in respect of district, gender or qualifications (trained and untrained), of 847 responses, 36 (4.3%) did not include their age. All questions on teachers' perceptions and levels of job satisfaction also had some missing data, which ranged from 29 (3.4%) to 65 (7.7%).

It seems that teachers were somewhat reluctant to answer questions about their colleagues; 7.7% and 6.6% of all responses lack data on satisfaction with their head teachers and colleagues respectively. They may have thought that they could be identified as the questionnaires were returned to me by the schools, although each individual response was anonymous. Other questions with high levels of missing data – indeed, the four highest – are those concerning how the media projects teachers (7.7%), safety (7.3%), retirement benefits (7.0%) and the health service teachers are entitled to (6.7%).

Teachers may have left items blank because they regarded those issues to be irrelevant or inapplicable; additionally, asking the age of a teacher might have been a sensitive area. However, the rate of missing data is no higher among those who did not include their ages than among those who did, with a differential ranging from -0.2% to 0.3% for each perception and satisfaction question. In conclusion, the rate of missing data – in other words, selection bias – does not seem to be a serious problem.

#### **4.9.2. Qualitative Data**

Interpreters were necessary in order to interview most community members, unlike basic school teachers, who spoke English. I planned to employ somebody from outside the community and recruited an English/Twi (local language), tutor at a teacher training college as an interpreter. However, I found that he could not help sharing his opinions with those I was interviewing. I also felt that he tended to summarise accounts. His use of complex phrases made me less convinced of how genuinely he was interpreting. Following this experience and with other logistical difficulties, such as transportation and accommodation for interpreters from outside, I sought senior secondary school graduates in the community. I was much more comfortable with them, as they attempted to interpret faithfully without skimming over the details. Nevertheless, I was always uncertain that

what was rendered into English was the same as the community member had said. However, finding people who spoke English also implied a selection bias.

In this study, evidence was collected with the use of various methods during field research that lasted a year. Deciding how I was to incorporate the various data – including that derived from the lower level school community cases – in order to write up my ‘case’ was a significant challenge.

As this was a multiple-case study, there were two methods of analysis, that is, the ‘within-case’ study analysis and the ‘cross-case’ analysis. Merriam (1998) suggests two stages: “once the analysis of each case is completed, *cross-case* analysis begins” (p195 emphasis in the original), citing Miles and Huberman (1994):

Cross-case analysis is tricky. Simply summarizing superficially across some themes or main variables by itself tells us little. We have to look carefully at the complex configuration of processes within each case, understand the local dynamics, before we can begin to see patterning of variables that transcends particular cases (p 205–206).

This thesis follows the above procedure in order to report the ‘cases’, in the belief that such a method is necessary to obtain a better understanding of the highly complex nature of teacher motivation in any given context.

## **4.10. General Description of Case Study Districts**

### **4.10.1. District Profile**

#### ***4.10.1.2. Ponkujaku District, Northern Region***

The district is flat at an elevation of between 140 and 180 meters above sea level. It has a rainy season that lasts from May to October – peaking in August and September – with an annual rainfall of 900 to 1,000 mm; and the rest of the year is virtually dry. The vegetation is typical Guinea savannah: elephant grass interspersed with drought-resistant trees such as the shea tree (Ponkujaku DA no date).

Agriculture is the dominant industry. The district produces cereal crops and yams, and rears livestock such as cattle, sheep and goats (District Profile no date). More than 80% of the economically active population is engaged in agriculture, including agro-processing and trading in foodstuffs (Ponkujaku DA 2006 p19).

The district has a good road network but these roads are in poor condition and their effective use is limited to the dry season of October to April (Ponkujaku DA no date). During the rainy season, many areas become inaccessible, thus leaving them cut off from the rest of the district. There are regular bus services between Ponkujaku town and most of major towns, but not all. Trucks carrying cattle, crops and other commodities on market days are an important means of transport.

**Picture 2 Main roads in Ponkujaku**



Flooded major road to Ponkujaku town



Another major road to Ponkujaku town without any regular public transportation

Source: field research.

About 80% of the population consists of the Dagomba ethnic group, and the rest consists of Konkomba and other tribes such as the Frani, who are mostly settler farmers. The dominant religion is Islam with traditional beliefs and Christianity following in descending order. About 80% of the population is illiterate (Ponkujaku DA no date p2-3).

Two communities are classified as towns (one of them being Ponkujaku town) and 30% of the population resides in these two town areas (ibid p2). Eighty percent of settlements in the district have a population of less than 800 and 51% of the population lives in settlements of less than 800 people (Ponkujaku DA p18). Its population density is 22 people per km<sup>2</sup> (ibid p14).

Only about 50% of the entire population has access to safe drinking water (ibid p30). In Ponkujaku town, there is a bank and a hospital but no landline telephone or Internet service. Newspapers did not become commercially available until 2008.

#### ***4.10.1.2. Aumisoe District***

The district is hilly, with an average elevation of about 350 meters above sea level. “The extensive nature of forest reserves in the district ensures a very good rainfall distribution patterns”: there are two rainy seasons, with peak periods from approximately May to June, and again in October. The average annual rainfall is 1,600 to 1,800 mm, with an average of 150 days of rain per year (Aumisoe DA 2006 p17). Most of the northwestern parts of the district lie within the gold belt, although current mining operations are only on a small scale (ibid p19).

In Aumisoe, 83.3% of the population engages in farming, including agro-industry (ibid p25). Cocoa is the most widespread cash crop, its cultivation employing the majority of the population, followed by the production of palm oil, coffee, maize, cassava, rice and plantain, and the rearing of livestock (ibid p38). It does not necessarily mean that people do not engage in foodstuff cultivation; they do, but mainly for their own consumption.

There is regular and frequent public transport in the form of minibuses between the district capital Aumisoe town and major cities, including the regional capital, Kumasi. Aumisoe town and nearby communities are connected by minibus and/or share taxi.

Fertile land attracts migrants, with a growth rate of 3.5%; higher than the regional and national averages of 3.4% and 2.6% respectively. Migrants constitute about 45% of the total population of the district. The Ewe ethnic group forms the majority of the population, comprising 55%, followed by the Fante (ibid p25). Two-thirds of the population claim affiliation with Christian faith, with a minority holding Islamic and traditional beliefs (ibid p23).

In 2006, it was estimated that there were 1,767,23 major communities, representing 57.4% of the population (ibid p22), while 78.1% lived in rural areas (ibid p25). Indeed, there are

many so-called ‘cottages’ – households consisting of as little as one family that are often connected to other cottages by a footpath – in the forest. The population density of the district is 110 people per km<sup>2</sup> (ibid p21).

There are three main banks and a hospital in the capital, and another other bank in another town. There is a landline telephone service and newspapers for sale, but no commercial Internet access in the capital.

In summary, the two deprived districts strategically selected for this study are similar in the sense that the main industry is agriculture – 80% of both populations are engaged in it – and most people (70–80%) live in rural areas. However, there are many more differences than there are similarities, as summarised in table 12. In particular, the type of settlement is different. As the vastness of Ponkujaku suggests – it is six times the size of Aumisoë in terms of land mass but its population density is only one fifth that of Aumisoë – communities in Ponkujaku have clear physical boundaries and are far more scattered over the savannah than those in Aumisoë.

**Table 12 Characteristics of Ponkujaku and Aumisoë Districts**

|                           | Ponkujaku  | Aumisoë   |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Vegetation                | Savanna  | Forest  |
| Rainy/Agricultural Season | Once a year (May-October)                                | Twice a year with peak periods of May to June and October |
| Main cash crop            | Food crops (Yam, cassava, etc.) and shea nuts and butter | Cocoa and palm oil  |
| Main crop                 | Food crops   | Cash crops (Cocoa and palm oil)                           |
| Ethnicity                 | Dagomba, Konkomba  | Akan, Ewe   |
| Language                  | Dagomba, Konkomba  | Akan, Ewe   |
| Dominating religion       | Muslim   | Christianity  |
| Natural resources         | n/a  | Gold  |

n/a = not available

Source: field research.

**Picture 3 Settlements of the two case study districts**

A settlement (Jamune) in Ponkujaku  
Source: ethnographic research.



A settlement (Asonbwa) in Aumisoe

#### **4.10.2. Education in the Two Districts**

##### ***4.10.2.1. Educational Institutions***

There is a gap in terms of educational service provision between Ponkujaku and Aumisoe. The former has far fewer institutions, which are also much less well established. This reflects the country's history in that formal education started in the coastal areas and expanded northwards. As of the academic year 2007/08, in Ponkujaku there were 21 public kindergartens (KGs), 65 primary schools, and nine junior secondary schools (JSSs). Apart from three KGs, there are no private educational institutions in Ponkujaku. The only (public) senior secondary school (SSS) located in Ponkujaku town is a 'community' day school, which has no dormitories or canteen and enrolls mainly local children.

On the other hand, in Aumisoe private schools are much more common. As of the same academic year, there were 63 public KGs, 94 primary schools and 46 JSSs; and 24 private KGs, 22 primary schools and seven JSSs. There are two (public) SSSs: one boarding school in Aumisoe town and a 'community' day school in the second biggest town.

Schools in Ponkujaku have been established for a much shorter period of time than those in Aumisoe. In Ponkujaku, only 1 primary school had been established before independence in 1957, while 10 (public) primary schools and 2 JSSs had been built by the same date in Aumisoe. Indeed, educational institutions are still being established in Ponkujaku, unlike in

Aumisoe, where the majority of basic schools had been built by the 1980s. In Ponkujaku, 45 (69.2%) primary schools were established after 1990, 29 (44.6%) of which were built after 2000; while only 17 (18.1%) of today's primary schools in Aumisoe had yet to be built by 1990. Similarly, six JSSs (66.7%) out of nine were built after 2000 in Ponkujaku, whose two oldest JSSs were only established in 1987; while only 11 out of 46 JSSs (23.9%) were established after 2000 in Aumisoe.

In both districts, there are off-road basic schools located in the 'bush' (in circuit supervisors' parlance). Twenty-seven primary schools (41.5%) in Ponkujaku and seven primary schools (7.4%) in Aumisoe fall into this category, although there are no JSSs similarly located in either district (table 13). However, certain areas in Ponkujaku, such as one of circuits, are not served by regular public transport. If schools that cannot be reached by public transport are considered to be bush schools, in Ponkujaku District, 45 primary schools (69.2%) and 2 JSSs (22.2%) are located in the 'bush'.

**Table 13 Location of (public) basic schools**

|           |         | Total number | Town     |      | Rural    |      | Bush     |      |
|-----------|---------|--------------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|------|
|           |         |              | <i>N</i> | %    | <i>N</i> | %    | <i>N</i> | %    |
| Ponkujaku | Primary | 65           | 7        | 10.8 | 31       | 47.8 | 27       | 41.5 |
|           | JSS     | 9            | 4        | 44.4 | 5        | 55.5 | 0        | 0.0  |
| Aumisoe   | Primary | 94           | 18       | 19.1 | 69       | 73.4 | 7        | 7.4  |
|           | JSS     | 46           | 14       | 30.4 | 32       | 69.6 | 0        | 0.0  |

Source: school census 2007/08, conducted at district level.

Moreover, since the area of Ponkujaku is six times that of Aumisoe and there are fewer schools in the former than in the latter, basic schools in Ponkujaku are far more scattered and remoteness may be a much bigger challenge. In addition, owing to a shorter history of formal education and the vast expanses of Ponkujaku, such education might still be a new concept to communities in this district.

#### ***4.10.2.2. Basic Education Statistics***

##### ***4.10.2.2.1. Enrolment***

In general, in accordance with the national trend, enrolment at basic level is on the rise in both districts: enrolment growth rates at primary level from 2005/06 to 2007/08 are 24.0%

and 1.8% in Ponkujaku and Aumisoie respectively (table 14). Similarly, those at JSS level are 7.0% in Ponkujaku and 5.0% in Aumisoie (table 15). On the other hand, both districts have lower female enrolment compared to national statistics – Education Information Management System (EMIS) based on annual school census.

**Table 14 Enrolment and pupil teacher ratio at primary level**

|         | Ponkujaku |          |      | Aumisoie |          |      | National  |          |      |
|---------|-----------|----------|------|----------|----------|------|-----------|----------|------|
|         | Total     | Female % | PTR  | Total    | Female % | PTR  | Total     | Female % | PTR  |
| 2005/06 | 8,220     | 44.3     | 45:1 | 18,789   | 46.9     | 35:1 | 2,647,617 | 48.4     | 38:1 |
| 2006/07 | 8,858     | 42.8     | 32:1 | 18,203   | 46.9     | 35:1 | 2,824,407 | 48.4     | 33:1 |
| 2007/08 | 10,817    | n/a      | 35:1 | 19,130   | n/a      | 34:1 | n/a       | n/a      | n/a  |

n/a = not available.

Source: EMIS 2005/06 and 2006/7; school censuses 2007/08 conducted at district level.

**Table 15 Enrolment and pupil teacher ratio at JSS level**

|         | Ponkujaku |          |     | Aumisoie |          |     | National |          |     |
|---------|-----------|----------|-----|----------|----------|-----|----------|----------|-----|
|         | Total     | Female % | PTR | Total    | Female % | PTR | Total    | Female % | PTR |
| 2005/06 | 1,444     | 35.5     | 32  | 5,189    | 42.3     | 21  | 883,060  | 46.1     | 19  |
| 2006/07 | 1,177     | 38.4     | 18  | 5,627    | 43.2     | 16  | 952,151  | 46.1     | 18  |
| 2007/08 | 1,545     | n/a      | 19  | 5,446    | n/a      | 15  | n/a      | n/a      | n/a |

n/a = not available.

Source: EMIS 2005/06 and 2006/7; school censuses 2007/08 conducted at district level.

#### 4.10.2.2.2. Numbers of Teachers

Based on school censuses, table 16 shows the numbers of primary school teachers in the two districts from 2005/06 to 2007/08. There was a 70% increase in primary level teachers in Ponkujaku<sup>34</sup> from 2005/06 to 2007/08, although absolute numbers of trained teachers dropped by half, from 65 in 2005/06 to 31 in 2007/8. As a result, the percentage of trained teachers at primary level in Ponkujaku declined from 37.4% in 2005/06 to 10.4% in 2007/08.

Officers explain that once trained teachers have served for a certain number of years, they apply for further study with pay, or for a transfer to another district or region. Teachers' observations are similar. A trained teacher in Ponkujaku said that, "teachers do not come. If they come, they do not stay long. Once they leave, [there is] no replacement." At the same time, greater numbers of trained teachers are posted to JSSs, as table 17 shows.

<sup>34</sup> Ponkujaku District Education Office provides somewhat different figures. According to its *performance monitoring report*, there were 340 primary school teachers in 2005/06 and 259 in 2006/07.

On the other hand, in Aumisoe its school census data indicates that the number of primary level teachers<sup>35</sup> and the percentage of trained teachers were consistent over the same years.

The proportion of female primary school teachers did not change from 2005/06 to 2007/08: approximately 5% in Ponkujaku and 24% in Aumisoe.

**Table 16 Numbers of primary school teachers**

|         | Ponkujaku |     |        |    |       |      |     | Aumisoe |     |        |    |       |      |      |
|---------|-----------|-----|--------|----|-------|------|-----|---------|-----|--------|----|-------|------|------|
|         | Male      |     | Female |    | Total | % TT | % F | Male    |     | Female |    | Total | % TT | % F  |
|         | TT        | UT  | TT     | UT |       |      |     | TT      | UT  | TT     | UT |       |      |      |
| 2005/06 | 65        | 111 | 3      | 3  | 182   | 37.4 | 3.3 | 144     | 261 | 53     | 77 | 535   | 36.8 | 24.3 |
| 2006/07 | 63        | 192 | 6      | 14 | 275   | 25.1 | 7.3 | 157     | 252 | 53     | 73 | 535   | 39.3 | 23.6 |
| 2007/08 | 31        | 266 | 1      | 11 | 309   | 10.4 | 3.9 | 143     | 285 | 58     | 72 | 558   | 36.0 | 23.3 |

TT=trained teacher, UT=untrained teacher, F=female teacher.

Source: EMIS 2005/06 and 2006/7; school censuses 2007/08 conducted at district level.

In both districts, the number of JSS teachers increased from 2005/06 to 2007/08 – an 84.4% rise in Ponkujaku and a 44.9% rise in Aumisoe (table 17). Although four JSSs in Ponkujaku and seven JSSs in Aumisoe were established after 2004, the trend for posting teachers to JSSs rather than primary schools seems to have intensified. However, the proportion of trained teachers remained constant over the same period, at the much higher rate of 50 to 67%, compared to that of primary level teachers. Male teachers dominated at JSS level as well.

**Table 17 Number of JSS teachers**

|         | Ponkujaku |    |        |    |       |      |     | Aumisoe |     |        |    |       |      |      |
|---------|-----------|----|--------|----|-------|------|-----|---------|-----|--------|----|-------|------|------|
|         | Male      |    | Female |    | Total | % TT | % F | Male    |     | Female |    | Total | % TT | % F  |
|         | TT        | UT | TT     | UT |       |      |     | TT      | UT  | TT     | UT |       |      |      |
| 2005/06 | 26        | 15 | 2      | 2  | 45    | 62.2 | 8.9 | 118     | 110 | 19     | 7  | 254   | 53.9 | 10.2 |
| 2006/07 | 32        | 28 | 5      | 0  | 65    | 56.9 | 7.7 | 150     | 101 | 28     | 9  | 288   | 61.8 | 12.8 |
| 2007/08 | 51        | 28 | 4      | 0  | 83    | 66.3 | 4.8 | 143     | 163 | 43     | 19 | 368   | 50.5 | 16.8 |

TT=trained teacher, UT=untrained teacher, F=female teacher.

Source: EMIS 2005/06 and 2006/7; school censuses 2007/08 conducted at district level.

Schools in Ponkujaku and Aumisoe do not seem to be attractive postings for trained teachers, with lower numbers of such staff than even the average for ‘deprived’ districts

<sup>35</sup> Similar to the case of Ponkujaku, Aumisoe DEO provides contrary figures in its *Performance Monitoring Report 2007*, stating that the number of primary school teachers increased from 654 in 2005/06 to 965 in 2006/07, but dropped to 558 in 2007/08. Officers attribute this trend partially to the UTDBE programme, which encouraged people to enter the teaching profession; but later, due to financial difficulties and other kinds of hardship, many of them dropped out of their courses and subsequently left teaching.

(table 18). The trend whereby the percentage of trained teachers at basic school in ‘deprived’ districts continues to decline<sup>36</sup>, as indicated in *Education Sector Performance Report 2007* (MoESS 2007a p43) , is particularly serious at primary level in Ponkujaku. This suggests that not all ‘deprived’ districts are the same: ‘deprived’ districts in a ‘deprived’ region with more pronounced rural and ‘bush’ characteristics may deteriorate even more if the issue is not addressed.

**Table 18 Percentage of public trained teachers at primary and JSS level (2006/07)**

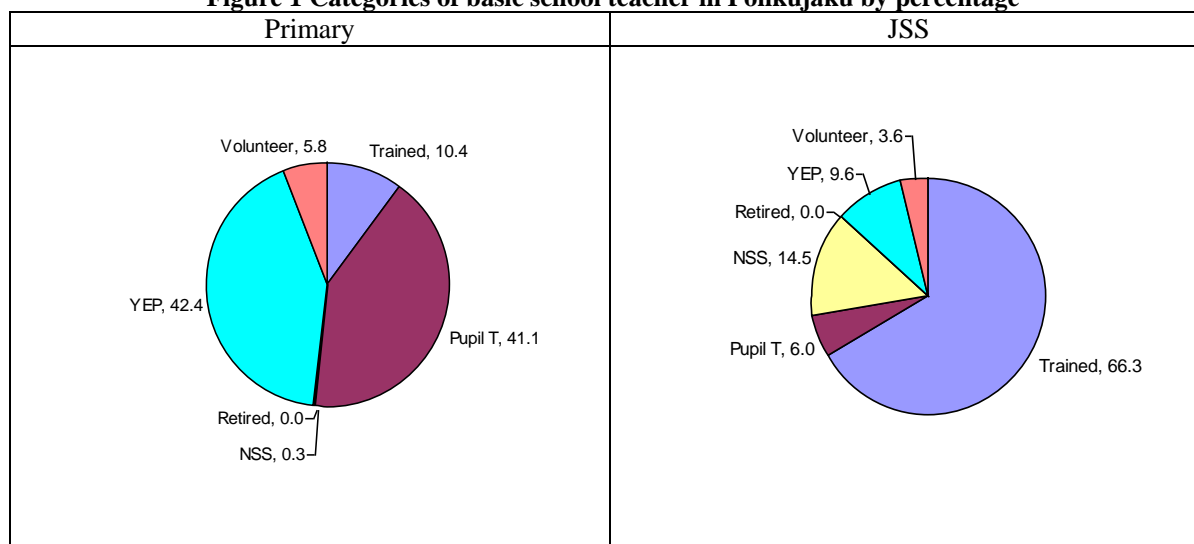
|         | National | Deprived | Ponkujaku | Aumisoe |
|---------|----------|----------|-----------|---------|
| Primary | 62.1*    | 42.8**   | 25.1*     | 39.3*   |
| JSS     | 77.2*    | 64.2**   | 56.9*     | 61.8*   |

Source: \*EMIS 2006/07; \*\* *Education Sector Performance Report 2007*.

#### 4.10.2.2.3. Teachers’ Categories

In both districts, basic school teachers come from diverse backgrounds in terms of both their qualifications and their affiliations – who pays their salaries. Of 309 primary level teachers in Ponkujaku, the majority are Youth Employment Programme (YEP) teachers (42.4%), followed by pupil teachers (41.1%) and trained teachers (10.4%). There is one National Service Scheme (NSS) teacher (0.3%) at primary level. Of 83 JSS teachers in Ponkujaku, 66.3% are trained, followed by NSS teachers (14.5%), YEP teachers (9.6%),

**Figure 1 Categories of basic school teacher in Ponkujaku by percentage**



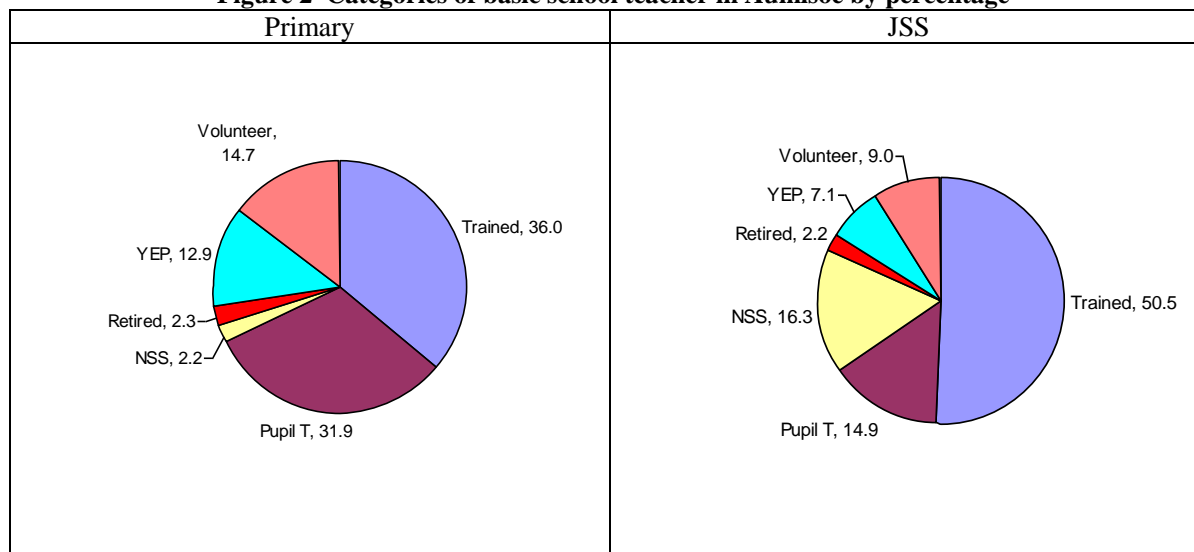
Source: school censuses 2007/08.

<sup>36</sup> The percentage of trained teachers at primary level declined from approximately 56% in 2003/04 to 42.8% in 2006/07. Similarly, that at JSS level fell from about 76% in 2003/04 to 64.2% in 2006/07.

pupil teachers (6.0%) and volunteer teachers (3.6%). While the majority of the teaching force at primary level comprises pupil and YEP teachers, that at JSS consists of trained and NSS teachers (see figure 1).

On the other hand, in Aumisoie of 558 primary level teachers, trained teachers and pupil teachers each make up one third of the total, while the 72 YEP teachers represent 12.9% – a third of this type of teacher’s representation in Ponkujaku. As in Ponkujaku, of the 368 JSS teachers in Aumisoie, trained teachers and NSS teachers are the main teaching force, at 50.5% and 16.3% respectively. However unlike Ponkujaku, Aumisoie has re-employed retired teachers on one-year contract basis at both levels (see figure 2).

**Figure 2 Categories of basic school teacher in Aumisoie by percentage**



Source: school censuses 2007/08.

With the introduction of the YEP in 2006, some volunteer teachers have been absorbed into the initiative. However, volunteer teachers remain key players in service delivery. For example, in Aumisoie almost one in 6 primary level teachers (15.7%) and one in 10 JSS teachers (9.8%) is a volunteer and they still outnumber YEP teachers. Nevertheless, the majority are untrained and do not have job security as their contracts are short-term. Indeed, volunteer teachers in particular seldom have financial security. Fewer trained teachers in a district means that it lacks continuity and consistency.

#### ***4.10.2.3. Supervision System***

District, the smallest administrative unit, is divided into smaller units, circuits, for educational management purposes. A circuit supervisor (CS) is assigned to each circuit to be in charge of its basic schools. Ponkujaku and Aumisoe District have six and eight circuits respectively. A CS in Ponkujaku is in charge of 8 to 15 primary schools, with an average 10.8; and 1 or 2 JSSs, with an average 1.5. Correspondingly, a CS in Aumisoe covers 7 to 15 primary schools, with an average 11.8; and 3 to 10 JSSs, with an average 5.8. On average, CS in Aumisoe is in charge of more schools, but in smaller physical area.

CSs have off-road motorbikes for their supervision work, which they have bought at reduced cost but in instalments. They are expected to do maintenance for their motorbikes as their possessions, while fuel is provided by the DEO.

#### **4.11. Conclusion**

A mixed-methods approach was chosen in order to take advantage of both quantitative and qualitative strategies. The qualitative aspect of research was to be emphasised for an in-depth understanding of teachers' lives in terms of the overall concern of the study – teachers' social and professional experiences, their perceptions and attitudes. Adopting a case study strategy, this research intends to provide “a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles” (Cohen et. al. 2000 p181). Quantitative data was also crucial in order to provide teachers' profiles and reveal their general views, perceptions and levels of job satisfaction. The choice of cases was made by means of a process of selection from regional to school level and was carried out rationally. The cases for ethnographic study were carefully and intentionally selected to maximise findings from them.

The two agriculture-based ‘deprived’ districts are different not only geographically and socio-culturally but also the degree of remoteness and development. As Ponkujaku has only two towns, where the higher percentage of people live than Aumisoe, 30% against 20%, and more schools in “bush”, there seems to be a bigger contrast between town and rural in

Ponkujaku. Ponkujaku may be less desirable for teachers, especially non-natives, if they have urban preference for posting. On the other hand, these differences exist within a district.

In the next four chapters, how these environments affect teachers' motivation is explored. To begin with, teachers' characteristics, job satisfactions and perceptions are analysed in chapter 5. This provides a wider picture of teachers' views. Chapter 6 describes teachers' lives through the analysis of five case studies from the two 'deprived' districts. Chapter 7 examines the factors that affect teacher motivation at the micro-level, using cross-case analysis. Then chapter 8 discusses the factors that affect teacher motivation at the macro-level, focusing on policy and teacher management.

## **5. Teachers' Profiles, Job Satisfaction, Perceptions and Goals**

### **5.1. Introduction**

Teachers' motivation is closely related to their identities and personalities, and might be shaped by personal background, society and the wider culture in which they live. Drawing on findings derived mainly from questionnaires, this chapter begins with a brief description of basic school teachers' characteristics in the two case study districts, which are geographically and socio-culturally distinct. This is followed by an analysis of the reasons for becoming a teacher and job satisfaction. Teachers' satisfaction is not the same as motivation. However, since in this study job satisfaction is conceptualised as a consequent psychological condition created by job-related factors – as discussed in chapter 2 – an analysis of the level of teachers' job satisfaction should provide some insights into what factors might motivate and/or demotivate them. The chapter continues with a discussion of teachers' perceptions and, finally, their goals. Data segregated by district, gender, qualification and age are also used to illustrate similarities and differences between groups.

### **5.2. The Profile of the Basic School Teacher**

#### **5.2.1. Teachers' Personal Characteristics**

The teaching force at basic (primary and junior secondary) level has a wide age range – from 15 to 73 years – with a mean of 32.6 and standard deviation of 10.7 (appendix A: table 1). A large number of young teachers enter the teaching profession at basic level; 82.7% and 53.0% of basic school teachers in Ponkujaku and Aumisoe respectively are younger than 32. There are fewer experienced teachers; 3.8% of teachers in Ponkujaku and 28.9% of Aumisoe are older than 40 (appendix A: table 2).

On average, 56.9% of teachers are married and 40.0% are single<sup>37</sup>. Marital status shows similar patterns in the two districts: three fifths are married and two fifths are single. On the other hand, there are differences with regard to gender. Fewer female teachers (40.4%) than their male counterparts (60.7%) are married (appendix A: table 3). Young women are also

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<sup>37</sup> The rest is separated, divorced, or widowed.

less likely to be married than young men; 29.6% of female teachers under 32 years of age are married, while the percentage of male teachers in the same age range is 39.7% (appendix A: table 4). This trend can be seen in trained as well as untrained teachers (appendix A: table 5).

The teachers in the case study districts are from various ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds, reflecting the cultural diversity within and between the two districts (table 19). The majority (76.3%) of teachers in Ponkujaku are ethnically Dagomba, followed by 14.7% Konkomba. The majority speak Dagbali. On the other hand, in Aumisoe, the majority are Akan (59.3%), followed by Fanti (15.2%) and Ewe (14.6%). Akan<sup>38</sup> is the dominant language (81.7%). Aumisoe has more ethnic and linguistic diversity amongst its teachers than does Ponkujaku. Teachers hold their own religious beliefs in both districts. The majority (82.5%) in Ponkujaku are Muslim (mainly Dagomba) and 16.0% are Christian (mostly Konkomba), while 96.0% in Aumisoe are Christian. A school may consist of teachers with different cultural backgrounds, thus values.

**Table 19 Teachers' ethnicity, language and religion**

|           |              | Ponkujaku |      | Aumisoe  |      |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|------|----------|------|
|           |              | <i>N</i>  | %    | <i>N</i> | %    |
| Ethnicity | Dagbani      | 279       | 76.3 | 560      | 0.4  |
|           | Konkomba     |           | 14.7 |          | 0.0  |
|           | Akan         |           | 0.4  |          | 59.3 |
|           | Fanti        |           | 0.0  |          | 15.2 |
|           | Ewe          |           | 1.1  |          | 14.6 |
|           | Other        |           | 7.5  |          | 10.5 |
| Language  | Dagbali      | 274       | 79.2 | 511      | 0.0  |
|           | Konkomba     |           | 12.4 |          | 0.0  |
|           | Akan         |           | 0.0  |          | 81.7 |
|           | Ewe          |           | 0.4  |          | 10.6 |
|           | Other        |           | 8.0  |          | 7.7  |
|           |              |           |      |          |      |
| Religion  | Muslim       | 257       | 82.5 | 519      | 3.1  |
|           | Christianity |           | 16.0 |          | 96.0 |
|           | Traditional  |           | 1.6  |          | 0.8  |
|           | Other        |           | 0    |          | 0.2  |
|           |              |           |      |          |      |

Source: questionnaires

<sup>38</sup> Ethnically, the Akan are distinct from the Fanti. However, linguistically, Fanti is considered a dialect of Akan, the Akan language consisting of the dialects Akan-Twi, Akan-Fanti, and Akan-Akuapem.

In Ponkujaku, 97.5% of 278 teachers who responded to the questionnaire are from the Northern Region and the rest are from four other regions that are mainly situated in the northern part of the country. In Aumisoe, on the other hand, 65.7% of 557 teachers are from Ashanti Region, followed by 11% from Central Region and 7.9% from Eastern Region. Together, the teachers in Aumisoe represent all 10 Regions. This may reflect the respective locations of the districts; Ponkujaku is situated in the middle of Northern Region, while Aumisoe is on the border between Central Region and Eastern Region. However, it also suggests that the ‘deprived’ districts in Ashanti Region are more attractive to non-natives than those in Northern Region, partly owing to the better job opportunities – including employment in education – and social services that the region can offer.

More teachers in Ponkujaku come from the locality than is the case in Aumisoe. Out of 274 teachers in Ponkujaku who responded to the questionnaire, 70.8% are from the district, followed by 9.9% from Yendi and 5.1% from the regional capital, Tamale. On the other hand, in Aumisoe, of the 529 teachers, 31.5% are from the local district, followed by 8.3% from Obuasi Municipality. Similarly, trained teachers in Ponkujaku are more likely to come from the locality than those in Aumisoe. Out of 50 trained teachers in Ponkujaku, 42.0% are from Ponkujaku, followed by 18.0% from Yendi and 14.0% from Tamale; while out of 248 trained teachers in Aumisoe, 19.4% are from the district, followed by 12.5% from Obuasi. Thus, teachers in Ponkujaku might be more familiar with the local context and feel less socially distanced from the community.

Information on the education and occupation of teachers’ parents provides insights into socio-economic backgrounds. This study found that the teachers in the case studies were most likely to be members of the first generation of their families to have received secondary or higher education. Indeed, 90.4% of fathers and 96.8% of mothers of teachers in Ponkujaku, and 70.3% of fathers and 89.7% of mothers of teachers in Aumisoe had received no formal education, or, at most, basic education. It is thus perhaps not surprising to note that more than 80% of teachers’ parents in Ponkujaku, and more than 60% of fathers and 80% of mothers of teachers in Aumisoe were farmers or traders. More trained teachers’ parents were formally educated than untrained teachers’, however, the majority –

71.2% of fathers and 91.0% of mothers – of trained teachers had as high as basic education. More than 55% of fathers and 80% of mothers of teachers of trained teachers were farmers or traders (appendix A: tables 6 to 9). This study echoes the previous findings about trained and trainee teachers that they are more likely to be first generation secondary or tertiary educated and are sons and daughters of farmers and/or traders (Bame 1991; Akyeampong and Stephens 2002). This trend has not changed since Bame did his research on trained primary school teachers throughout Ghana in the late 60s or early 70s. As Cummings (1990) suggests that primary school teachers are more likely to come “from farm[ing] and blue-collar homes” (p9).

### **5.2.2. Teachers’ Professional and Educational Characteristics**

The total of 847 responses to the questionnaire indicates that on average, 35.2% of teachers are trained: 17.9% in Ponkujaku and 43.7% in Aumisoe. These findings are consistent with statistics from the school census 2007/08 of each DEO: on average, 36.0% of a total 1,318 basic school teachers are trained: – 22.2% in Ponkujaku and 41.8% of in Aumisoe. This shows that the survey sample is an accurate reflection of the proportion of trained and untrained teachers in each of the case study districts. Similarly, the sample reflects the population of male and female teachers of the population – 81.0% and 19.0% of the sample are male and female respectively, while 84.2% and 15.8% of teachers are male and female respectively in the population. These mean that a survey sample fairly represents the population of the case study districts.

Teachers have an average of 7.5 years’ work experience. Teachers in Ponkujaku have on average less working experience than those in Aumisoe. Similarly, untrained teachers have shorter teaching experience than trained teachers (appendix A: table 10).

Trained teachers generally have higher educational qualifications – secondary education plus two to four years of teacher training – than untrained teachers, as shown in table 20. The results of the survey indicate that majority (63.9%) are pre-tertiary certificate holders, followed by 33.4% tertiary diploma holders, including the first batch of teacher training college (TTC) leavers, who represent 20.6% of trained teachers.

The recent development whereby the (latest cohort of) newly trained teachers hold higher degrees than experienced teachers might affect perceptions and relationships at school level, as Ghanaian culture values seniority<sup>39</sup>. However, in the field of basic school teaching, qualifications are more highly valued than age (experience) in terms of *rank* – one's position in the GES system, as discussed in chapter 3.3.3.1.1. Very few teachers have degrees (2.3%) or High National Diplomas (HNDs) (2.0%).

Neither district has any trained teachers who have been to university for their initial teacher training and then been posted to the districts. Of 281 trained teachers who responded to the questionnaire, 48.4% have taken upgrade programmes, mostly the Diploma in Basic Education (DBE).

The majority of untrained teachers (86.4%) graduated from secondary school, 65.1% with a Senior Secondary School Certificate of Education (SSSCE), and 21.3% with a General Certificate of Education (GCE). Few (6.8%) of them have completed a tertiary education Diploma or HND. Of 492 untrained teachers who responded, 54.9% have taken upgrade programmes, mainly the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE).

**Table 20 Teachers' professional and educational qualifications**

|                            |      | District  |        | Gender |        | Qualification |            |
|----------------------------|------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|------------|
|                            |      | Ponkujaku | Aumiso | Male   | Female | Trained       | Un-trained |
| <i>N</i>                   | 823  | 277       | 546    | 670    | 153    | 296           | 527        |
| First degree and higher    | 0.2  | 0.0       | .4     | .3     | 0.0    | 0.7           | 0.0        |
| Diploma                    | 13.5 | 7.6       | 16.5   | 11.2   | 23.5   | 33.4          | 2.3        |
| Three-year certificate 'A' | 16.3 | 9.4       | 19.8   | 16.7   | 14.4   | 45.3          | 0.0        |
| Other teaching certificate | 7.9  | 2.2       | 10.8   | 7.9    | 7.8    | 18.6          | 1.3        |
| DBS (polytechnic)          | 1.0  | 1.1       | 0.9    | 1.0    | 0.7    | 0.0           | 1.5        |
| HND                        | 2.7  | 0.7       | 3.7    | 2.8    | 2.0    | 2.0           | 3.0        |
| SSSCE                      | 41.7 | 75.8      | 24.4   | 43.0   | 35.9   | 0.0           | 65.1       |
| GCE                        | 13.6 | 1.8       | 19.6   | 14.5   | 9.8    | 0.0           | 21.3       |
| Other                      | 3.2  | 1.4       | 4.0    | 2.5    | 5.9    | 0.0           | 4.9        |

Source: questionnaires.

<sup>39</sup> One of criteria for promotion of teachers is seniority (GES and GNAT 2000). Importance of seniority in Ghanaian context was taught in a class of a four-week cross cultural study course at the Tamale Institute of Cross Cultural Studies in Tamale.

Both districts have teachers from a diverse range of educational backgrounds. Ponkujaku has a much higher concentration of secondary school graduates than Aumisoe, since the majority in Ponkujaku are pupil and Youth Employment Programme teachers. A higher percentage of women hold diplomas than do men, reflecting that situation that one third (38.2%) of female trained teachers are newly trained.

In general, basic school teachers have low levels of academic qualification, with the majority holding a secondary education certificate. However, if they take advantage of the upgrade programmes, most trained teachers can become diploma holders within a short time, and all those who take the UTDBE will become qualified teachers if they complete the programme.

Nevertheless, one third of teachers may still remain untrained, even in a best-case scenario in which all those studying for the UTDBE complete the course and become qualified teachers. Moreover, the trends whereby basic schools continue to accommodate an increasing enrolment and numbers of trained teachers are falling in ‘deprived’ districts (MoESS 2007a) could worsen the situation. The heterogeneity of basic school teachers in terms of academic background may thus persist in such districts, resulting in possible different levels of preparedness and different expectations of the job.

### **5.2.3. Reasons for Becoming a Basic School Teacher**

People had different motives for becoming a basic school teacher (see table 21), the most common being to help the children, as 37.6% of 591 teachers indicated. The majority viewed their calling in terms of assisting the children to follow their example, being educated and enlightened rather than enjoyment in working with children. The responses include:

To help younger ones to become somebody in future or to become somebody like me, being a teacher (untrained teacher, Ponkujaku).

To enlighten my country’s children to become future leaders or good citizens (trained, Ponkujaku).

To help pupils with little knowledge to increase their learning ability (untrained, Aumisoe).

To support less fortunate pupils living in the deprived areas (trained, Aumisoe).

However, it is interesting to note that few teachers in two districts mentioned enjoyment of working with children as a reason, often found in research in the West.

One in five teachers (19.6%) considered that it was their role to serve his or her nation or community; and one in eleven (8.1%) said that teaching was good, noble, respected and/or prestigious. These comments confirm the impression that the respondents have chosen to be basic school teachers for altruistic and extrinsic reasons, rather than intrinsic ones (Akyeampong and Stephens 2002).

Conversely, for some, basic school teaching is simply a means of earning a living or an opportunity to further their education, rather than a career choice per se; 19.1% cited financial motives and 21.0 % cited the enhancement of knowledge. These practical motives might indeed be the main motive, as teachers' goals in the final section of this chapter demonstrate a different trend – the most common goal is to further education.

**Table 21 Reasons for becoming a basic school teacher**

|  | Pooled | District   |         | Gender |        | Qualification |            |
|--|--------|------------|---------|--------|--------|---------------|------------|
|  |        | Ponkuja-ku | Aumisoe | Male   | Female | Trained       | Un-trained |
| <i>N</i>                                   | 591    | 187        | 404     | 502    | 89     | 222           | 369        |
| Fondness of children/support to young ones | 37.6   | 42.8       | 35.1    | 37.3   | 39.3   | 32.4          | 40.7       |
| Financial/no other job                     | 19.1   | 15.0       | 21.0    | 19.1   | 19.1   | 25.7          | 15.2       |
| Further education/ of enhancement          |        |            |         |        |        |               |            |
| knowledge/stepping stone                   | 21.0   | 26.2       | 18.6    | 21.5   | 18.0   | 15.3          | 24.4       |
| Service to nation/community                | 19.6   | 32.6       | 13.6    | 21.9   | 6.7    | 15.8          | 22.0       |
| Influenced by another                      | 11.8   | 7.0        | 14.1    | 10.8   | 18.0   | 11.3          | 12.2       |
| Being a role model                         | 4.1    | 4.3        | 4.0     | 4.2    | 3.4    | 5.0           | 3.5        |
| Noble job/prestige/respect                 | 8.1    | 7.0        | 8.7     | 8.2    | 7.9    | 10.4          | 6.8        |
| Divine reward                              | 3.6    | 2.1        | 4.2     | 3.6    | 4.5    | 4.1           | 3.3        |
| Job security/spare time                    | 1.9    | 0.5        | 2.5     | 1.4    | 4.5    | 4.5           | 0.3        |
| Other                                      | 8.5    | 8.0        | 8.7     | 8.2    | 9.0    | 8.6           | 8.4        |

Source: questionnaires.

More teachers in Ponkujaku (more than double) show altruistic instinct than their counterparts in Aumisoe, particularly in terms of the desire to contribute to the community and/or the nation. This is partly because they do not want the children suffer from the same poor access to quality education that they did. It is interesting to note that teachers in

Ponkujaku – an economically more challenging district than Aumisoë – less frequently cite ‘financial difficulties’ and ‘no other job’ as their reasons for becoming teachers. This seems to result partly from districts’ historical characteristics – whether oppressed or not (this will be discussed further in chapter 7.5.3.)

Female teachers’ most common motive is also altruistic, but they are less likely to think their role is to develop the community and/or the nation than their male counterparts. This may be explained by an aspect of Ghanaian culture whereby women are valued as carers of their families, no matter what their level of education and or status, as Dolphyne (1991) suggests in her book based on her experiences in Africa with an emphasis on Ghana. Female teachers may confine themselves to their families and, at most, schools in terms of their roles. Nevertheless, they appreciate the characteristics of the job such as security and the availability of spare time more than male teachers, as Cummings suggests (1990).

More untrained teachers show an altruistic instinct than trained teachers, similar to the case of teachers in general in Ponkujaku. On the other hand, more of them cited educational opportunities – the second most popular motive. This may reflect the introduction of the UTDBE, as some clearly indicated that this was their main reason for joining the profession.

### **5.3. Teachers’ Job Satisfaction and Perception of the Job**

In this section, teachers’ job satisfaction and perceptions of the job are discussed with reference to the Likert scale data collected. Five choices: strongly disagree, disagree, neither, agree and strongly agree may each be assigned a score ranging from one to five. Comparison is also made by district, gender, qualifications and age. Age is included as independent variable, as it is acknowledged that younger teachers have different perceptions from older teachers (Jessop and Penny 1998), and the former are more generally dissatisfied (World Bank 2004; Akyeampong and Asante 2005).

The sample size for this analysis is 416, comprising of: 142 teachers in Ponkujaku and 274 teachers in Aumisoë; 352 male and 64 female teachers; 161 trained and 255 untrained teachers; and 212 young (under 29 years old) and 204 old teachers (over 30 years old).

### 5.3.1 Teachers' Job Satisfaction

In order to examine the underlining patterns of job satisfaction, teachers' responses to 30 items concerning satisfaction are analysed using factor analysis. Of these, 24 are used for principal component analysis, which shows at least one correlation of the order of .3, although the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .868 does not change after discarding six items<sup>40</sup>. However, the factor analysis reveals six factors with eigenvalues of greater than one, as the table below indicates.

**Table 22 Rotated component matrix showing factor loadings and degree of variance explained**

| Interpretation of factor                                |                                  | Factor |       |       |       |       |       |
|---|----------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|   |                                  | 1      | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6     |
| Physical environment                                    | School facilities                | .705   | .043  | -.008 | .139  | .144  | .281  |
|   | Teaching/learning materials      | .680   | -.006 | -.048 | .159  | .088  | .380  |
|   | Salary and allowance             | .611   | .080  | .242  | .026  | .109  | -.082 |
|   | Living Conditions                | .607   | .168  | .191  | .216  | .215  | .000  |
|   | Savings                          | .527   | .314  | .365  | .078  | -.035 | -.122 |
| Relationship with the community                         | Relationship with PTA            | .096   | .879  | .074  | -.015 | .091  | .191  |
|   | Relationship with SMC            | .144   | .826  | .023  | .110  | .069  | .159  |
|   | Relationship with village        | .067   | .744  | .005  | .099  | .277  | .205  |
| Organisational support system and social representation | Transfer policy                  | .150   | .057  | .738  | .124  | .115  | .104  |
|   | Retirement security              | .102   | -.051 | .694  | .213  | .063  | .031  |
|   | Opportunity to express ideas     | -.086  | .087  | .561  | .363  | .082  | .231  |
|   | Media portrayal                  | .307   | .053  | .523  | -.002 | .267  | .035  |
|   | Promotion system                 | .351   | .037  | .428  | .162  | .384  | .033  |
| Safety and security                                     | Health service                   | .104   | -.039 | .228  | .710  | .184  | .043  |
|   | Food                             | .277   | .220  | .123  | .591  | .021  | -.112 |
|   | Financial support                | .364   | -.034 | .116  | .566  | -.005 | -.005 |
|   | Safety                           | -.042  | .104  | .156  | .530  | .315  | .160  |
| Job characteristics                                     | Spare time                       | .042   | .147  | -.077 | .243  | .733  | -.006 |
|   | Workload                         | .167   | .118  | .222  | -.034 | .682  | .069  |
|   | Prestige and respect             | .150   | .067  | .312  | .097  | .503  | .123  |
|   | INSET opportunities              | .266   | .145  | .198  | .197  | .324  | .107  |
| Relationship within the school                          | Head teacher                     | .015   | .150  | .184  | -.023 | .031  | .692  |
|   | Posting at current school        | .173   | .159  | .016  | -.092 | .122  | .659  |
|   | Pupils' participation            | .041   | .229  | .071  | .347  | .024  | .588  |
|   | Percentage of explained variance | 11.0   | 9.9   | 9.9   | 8.5   | 8.0   | 7.3   |
|   | Eigenvalue                       | 6.04   | 2.18  | 1.44  | 1.21  | 1.17  | 1.08  |

<sup>40</sup>Working with children; pupils' progress in their learning; interaction with colleagues; a healthy environment; job security; and the intervention of the Capitation Grant Scheme.

These six factors are interpretable. They are physical environment; organisational support system and social representation; safety and security; job characteristics; relationship with the community; and relationship within the school. This confirms that a teacher's external work environment consists of different layers in terms of his or her relationship with others (Ellmin 1995) – school, community, district and society as a whole – but even distal variables may have a direct effect on teachers. This also underlines the fact that a teacher's relationship with the community is an essential aspect of his or her motivation (Ankrah-Dove 1982; Kemmerer 1990; Chapman et al. 1993).

The six factors are further explained below in ascending order of average scores, in other words, the least to the most satisfying factors (table 23). A + or a – in tables 24–30 indicates statistical significance at a level of 0.05 based on a T-test of district, gender, qualification and age between the two groups. A + means the latter group's mean is statistically significantly higher than that of the former. Similarly, a – means the latter group's mean is statistically significantly lower than that of the former.

**Table 23 Six satisfaction factors**

|   | Pooled |       |              |
|---|--------|-------|--------------|
|   | Mean   | S.D.  | Avg. by item |
| Physical environment (5)                                    | 10.02  | 4.06  | 2.00         |
| Organisational support system and social representation (5) | 14.38  | 4.36  | 2.88         |
| Safety and security (4)                                     | 11.90  | 3.46  | 2.97         |
| Job characteristics (4)                                     | 13.26  | 3.29  | 3.32         |
| Relationship with community (3)                             | 10.06  | 3.11  | 3.35         |
| Relationship within school (3)                              | 10.96  | 2.58  | 3.66         |
| Job satisfaction (24)                                       | 70.57  | 14.56 |              |

Teachers are generally dissatisfied with their physical environment (living and working conditions), as table 24 indicates. The five items in this category are ranked the lowest of all 30 items. This is evinced with regard to salary and allowances in particular, an item with which 88.7% of teachers are not satisfied. This may be the result of a tendency for salary to be the focus of discussion, as it is a topic that all teachers have in common. Perhaps surprisingly, trained teachers – who receive a higher salary than untrained teachers – are less likely to be satisfied with their salary and allowance. This may suggest that 'salary' was not considered simply in terms of remuneration, but included other factors such as

level of salary in comparison with other professions and other related issues such as delay of and inconsistency in payment.

Neither are teachers satisfied with their physical working conditions (school facilities, teaching and learning materials), as 80% of them indicate. Again, trained teachers are less likely to be satisfied with their physical conditions. They may have a higher level of expectation than untrained teachers, being exposed to wider society and knowing what might be available elsewhere.

**Table 24 Satisfaction factor 1: physical environment**

|                                 | Pooled |      |                      |              | Dist-<br>rict         | Gend<br>-er     | Qualifi<br>-cation    | Age                  |
|---------------------------------|--------|------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|                                 | Mean   | S.D. | Dis-<br>agree<br>(%) | Agree<br>(%) | Ponkujaku/<br>Aumisoe | Male/<br>female | Trained/<br>untrained | Under 29/<br>over 30 |
| Salary and allowance            | 1.54   | 1.01 | 88.7                 | 8.4          | -                     |                 | +                     |                      |
| Savings                         | 2.21   | 1.22 | 70.0                 | 22.6         |                       |                 | +                     |                      |
| Living conditions               | 2.27   | 1.27 | 67.5                 | 26.2         |                       |                 | +                     |                      |
| Teaching and learning materials | 1.91   | 1.07 | 82.0                 | 13.7         |                       |                 |                       |                      |
| School facilities               | 2.08   | 1.24 | 75.7                 | 20.7         |                       |                 | +                     |                      |
|                                 | 10.02  | 4.06 | -                    | -            | -                     |                 | +                     |                      |

The second lowest factor is concerned with how teachers present themselves and how they are perceived by others (table 25). There are two possible aspects of presentation, organisational and non-organisational. The former includes the transfer system, promotion and retirement security – and teachers show low satisfaction with all of these aspects. The latter includes exterior phenomena, for example, the media. On average, teachers are satisfied with the opportunities they have to express their opinions.

Teachers in Aumisoe are less likely to be satisfied than those in Ponkujaku in this respect. The fact that Aumisoe has been subject to the influences of modernisation and economic power values to a greater extent may be one of the reasons for this. Similarly, trained teachers in general are less likely to be satisfied. Ironically, trained teachers are more dissatisfied with the system in which they work.

**Table 25 Satisfaction factor 2: organisational support system and social representation**

|                                | Pooled |      |                      |              | Dist-<br>rict         | Gend<br>-er     | Qualifi<br>-cation    | Age                  |
|--------------------------------|--------|------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|                                | Mean   | S.D. | Dis-<br>agree<br>(%) | Agree<br>(%) | Ponkujaku/<br>Aumiso. | Male/<br>female | Trained/<br>untrained | Under 29/<br>over 30 |
| Retirement security            | 2.61   | 1.37 | 52.4                 | 35.6         | –                     |                 | +                     |                      |
| Promotion system               | 2.61   | 1.31 | 51.0                 | 32.9         |                       |                 | +                     |                      |
| Transfer policy                | 2.84   | 1.27 | 46.4                 | 42.3         | –                     |                 | +                     |                      |
| Media portrayal of teachers    | 2.69   | 1.24 | 49.5                 | 34.1         | –                     |                 | +                     |                      |
| Opportunities to express ideas | 3.63   | 1.13 | 19.5                 | 74.3         |                       |                 | +                     |                      |
|                                | 14.38  | 4.36 | -                    | -            | –                     |                 | +                     |                      |

The third factor is safety and security (table 26). Teachers are generally (66.3%) satisfied with their safety. However, a sizable minority (20.9%) are dissatisfied. This may be the result of a recent spate of insults and attacks on teachers by parents and/or community members, as the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) circulated a letter to the DEO to collect data on “the increasing incidence of attacks on teachers” (a letter by GNAT national secretariat in April 2008). Additionally, teachers generally tend to be dissatisfied with the level of support that they feel they are entitled to when necessary. Financial support, in particular, is an issue that they raise. In short, they tend to be dissatisfied with the level of support that is available to help maintain relatively short-term or everyday well-being. This view is shared across districts, genders, qualifications and age groups.

**Table 26 Satisfaction factor 3: safety and security**

|                                | Pooled |      |                      |              | Dist-<br>rict         | Gend<br>-er     | Qualifi<br>-cation    | Age                  |
|--------------------------------|--------|------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|                                | Mean   | S.D. | Dis-<br>agree<br>(%) | Agree<br>(%) | Ponkujaku/<br>Aumiso. | Male/<br>female | Trained/<br>untrained | Under 29/<br>over 30 |
| Financial support (e.g. loans) | 2.52   | 1.30 | 57.5                 | 32.0         | +                     |                 |                       | +                    |
| Health service                 | 2.83   | 1.31 | 45.2                 | 43.0         |                       |                 | +                     |                      |
| Food                           | 3.00   | 1.31 | 43.5                 | 50.0         | –                     |                 |                       |                      |
| Safety (non-emergency)         | 3.55   | 1.10 | 20.9                 | 66.3         |                       |                 | +                     | +                    |
|                                | 11.90  | 3.46 | -                    | -            |                       |                 |                       |                      |

The fourth factor is the characteristics of the job (table 27). Teaching, especially at basic level, is considered to be of low prestige and status, or less well respected (Lockheed and Verspoor 1991; Hedges 2002; Akyeampong and Asante 2005).

However, in general, those in the case studies feel that prestige and respect are accorded to them as teachers. On the other hand, trained teachers are less likely to feel that they are valued and respected, partly because they may consider themselves to be on the bottom rung of the GES system, as its Conditions and Scheme of Service and the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers indicates teachers with Certificate ‘A’ is the “entry appointment” of the GES (GES and GNAT 2000 p7).

Young teachers are also less likely to feel valued and respected. This may reflect teachers’ ‘downwardly mobile’ status due to the deprofessionalisation of the job, with a greater number of teachers in general and a high percentage of untrained teachers, while society offers more modern career choices, as Cummings suggests (1990).

Teachers tend to appreciate having spare time and INSET opportunities. They are fairly evenly divided over satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the workload, although trained teachers are less likely to be satisfied with it. A possible reason for this is that they are more aware of uneven workloads among teachers.

**Table 27 Satisfaction factor 4: job characteristics**

|                      | Pooled |      |              |           | District             | Gender          | Qualification         | Age                  |
|----------------------|--------|------|--------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|                      | Mean   | S.D. | Disagree (%) | Agree (%) | Ponkujaku/<br>Aumiso | Male/<br>female | Trained/<br>untrained | Under 29/<br>over 30 |
| Workload             | 2.86   | 1.31 | 49.3         | 45.9      |                      |                 | +                     |                      |
| Spare time           | 3.43   | 1.12 | 24.0         | 65.4      |                      |                 |                       |                      |
| Prestige and respect | 3.72   | 1.20 | 20.4         | 75.0      |                      |                 | +                     | +                    |
| INSET                | 3.25   | 1.26 | 32.7         | 58.4      |                      |                 | +                     | +                    |
|                      | 13.26  | 3.29 | -            | -         |                      |                 | +                     | +                    |

The fifth factor is relationship with the community (table 28). On average, teachers are satisfied with their relationship with the school management committee (SMC), parent teacher association (PTA) and the communities in which their schools are located.

However, unlike the findings for other factors, there is a statistically significant gender difference: female teachers are less likely to be satisfied with community relationships. This seems to reflect a situation whereby they feel more vulnerable in rural communities and “may well find themselves subjected to intrusive scrutiny and gossip” (Hedges 2002 p358), although in this research female teachers interviewed did not point out this issue. Social distance might also be a factor, as female teachers tend to be from socio-economically better-off families. For possibly similar reasons, teachers in Aumisoe rather than those in Ponkujaku, and trained teachers rather than untrained teachers, are less likely to be satisfied with community relationships.

**Table 28 Satisfaction factor 5: relationship with the community**

|   | Pooled |      |              |           | District              | Gender          | Qualification         | Age                  |
|---|--------|------|--------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|   | Mean   | S.D. | Disagree (%) | Agree (%) | Ponkujaku/<br>Aumisoe | Male/<br>female | Trained/<br>untrained | Under 29/<br>over 30 |
| Relationship with the SMC               | 3.29   | 1.18 | 31.7         | 58.7      | –                     |                 |                       |                      |
| Relationship with the PTA               | 3.31   | 1.19 | 32.0         | 60.3      | –                     | –               |                       |                      |
| Relationship with the village community | 3.46   | 1.19 | 27.2         | 66.8      | –                     | –               | +                     |                      |
|   | 10.06  | 3.11 | -            | -         | -                     | -               | +                     | +                    |

The last factor is relationships within the school (table 29). Teachers are the most satisfied with these relationships, particularly those with their head teachers (84.6%) – the highest rate of agreement. This finding includes head teachers’ own evaluations and therefore their points of view; however, it should be appreciated that they strive to make a key positive contribution to the job satisfaction of their staff. Moreover, relationships within the school seem to have a significant effect on a teacher’s overall perception of his or her current posting.

**Table 29 Satisfaction factor 6: relationships within the school**

|                                | Pooled |      |              |           | District              | Gender          | Qualification         | Age                  |
|--------------------------------|--------|------|--------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|                                | Mean   | S.D. | Disagree (%) | Agree (%) | Ponkujaku/<br>Aumisoe | Male/<br>female | Trained/<br>untrained | Under 29/<br>over 30 |
| Posting at current school      | 3.46   | 1.30 | 27.9         | 67.3      | –                     |                 | +                     | +                    |
| Pupils' participation in class | 3.49   | 1.20 | 26.0         | 69.5      | –                     |                 | +                     |                      |
| Head teacher                   | 4.01   | 1.03 | 11.1         | 84.6      |                       |                 |                       |                      |
|                                | 10.96  | 2.58 | –            | –         | –                     |                 | +                     | +                    |

Teachers' overall job satisfaction is low, as table 30 indicates. They are seldom satisfied with the benefits and services that the job provides. They also show low satisfaction with the organisational system, such as transfer and promotion procedures. They are more satisfied with their relationships with the community and within the school. However, while the factors for which they show low(er) satisfaction are common to all teachers (although not all teachers are in the same category in terms of qualifications and affiliation), factors with higher levels of satisfaction – such as relationships with colleagues and the community – are school-specific. This may also explain the tendency for teachers to 'disguise' other causes of job dissatisfaction in the form of complaints about inadequate work environment and particularly salary (Bame 1974).

Overall, teachers in Aumisoe are less likely to be satisfied with their jobs than their counterparts in Ponkujaku. Similarly, trained teachers are less likely to be satisfied with their jobs than untrained teachers. As job satisfaction is an important consideration in deciding whether to stay in the teaching profession (Kim and Loadman 1994), trained teachers might be keener to leave basic teaching earlier in their careers than untrained teachers.

**Table 30 Overall satisfaction**

|  | Pooled |       |                    | District              | Gender          | Qualifi-<br>cation    | Age                  |
|--|--------|-------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|  | Mean   | S.D.  | Avg.<br>by<br>item | Ponkujaku/<br>Aumisoe | Male/<br>female | Trained/<br>untrained | Under 29/<br>over 30 |
| Physical environment (5)                                       | 10.02  | 4.06  | 2.00               | –                     |                 | +                     |                      |
| Organisational support system<br>and social representation (5) | 14.38  | 4.36  | 2.88               | –                     |                 | +                     |                      |
| Safety and security (4)  | 11.90  | 3.46  | 2.97               |                       |                 |                       |                      |
| Job characteristics (4)  | 13.26  | 3.29  | 3.32               |                       |                 | +                     | +                    |
| Relationship with community (3)                                | 10.06  | 3.11  | 3.35               | –                     | –               | +                     | +                    |
| Relationship within school (3)                                 | 10.96  | 2.58  | 3.66               | –                     |                 | +                     | +                    |
| Job satisfaction (24)  | 70.57  | 14.56 |                    | –                     |                 | +                     | +                    |

### 5.3.2. Teachers' Perceptions of the Job

Although teachers' job satisfaction is low, the majority (85.8%) agree that they enjoy teaching – with a mean score of 4.0 and standard deviation of 1.0 – as table 31 shows. However, one in eight (11.5%) disagrees. Trained teachers are less likely to enjoy teaching than untrained teachers. At the same time, young teachers are less likely to enjoy teaching than their older colleagues.

On the other hand, both trained and untrained teachers show the strongest interest in furthering their education, with the highest mean of 4.6 and the smallest standard deviation of 0.7. On average, 95.9% of teachers hope to go on to further education. This trend is slightly weaker among teachers in Aumisoe and among experienced teachers generally; further education is not part of the life plan of those who have already established their career paths. On average, 90.6% feel they are capable teachers.

Teaching is not merely a temporary job for the majority (65.6%) of teachers (table 31). On the other hand, similar percentages (62.7%) do not want to teach at the same level for the rest of their careers. The intention not to continue teaching at the same level is stronger among trained teachers (74.5%) than untrained teachers (55.3%). The same trend applies to young teachers (68.4%) and older teachers (56.9%) respectively. Teachers in general (77.4%) want to teach at a higher level, which means a higher salary and status.

**Table 31 Responses to general statements 1**

|   | Pooled |     |              | District     |              | Gender       |              | Qualifica-<br>tion |              | Age          |              |
|---|--------|-----|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|   | Mean   | S.D | Total        | Ponkujaku    | Aumisoë      | Male         | Female       | Trained            | Untrained    | Under 29     | Over 30      |
|   |        |     |              |              |              |              |              |                    |              |              |              |
| I hope to go for further study.   | 4.6    | 0.7 | 95.9<br>3.1  | 99.3<br>0.7  | 94.2<br>4.4  | 95.5<br>3.4  | 98.4<br>1.6  | 96.3<br>1.9        | 95.7<br>3.9  | 98.6<br>0.9  | 93.1<br>5.4  |
| I hope to upgrade my professional qualification even if it means by self-financing. | 4.6    | 0.7 | 95.4<br>3.1  | 98.6<br>1.4  | 93.8<br>4.0  | 95.2<br>3.4  | 96.9<br>1.6  | 93.8<br>3.7        | 96.5<br>2.7  | 98.1<br>0.5  | 92.6<br>5.9  |
| I am fully capable of handling my teaching work.                                    | 4.2    | 0.8 | 90.6<br>6.0  | 89.4<br>7.0  | 91.2<br>5.5  | 90.1<br>6.2  | 93.8<br>4.7  | 93.8<br>3.7        | 88.6<br>7.5  | 90.6<br>6.6  | 90.7<br>5.4  |
| I enjoy teaching.   | 4.0    | 1.0 | 85.8<br>11.5 | 88.7<br>9.9  | 84.3<br>12.4 | 85.2<br>12.8 | 89.1<br>4.7  | 79.5<br>16.1       | 89.8<br>8.6  | 83.0<br>13.2 | 88.7<br>9.8  |
| Teaching is just a temporal job.  | 2.4    | 1.4 | 28.4<br>65.6 | 33.1<br>62.0 | 25.9<br>67.5 | 29.0<br>64.5 | 25.0<br>71.9 | 28.6<br>62.1       | 28.2<br>67.8 | 35.4<br>58.0 | 21.1<br>73.5 |
| I believe that teaching at primary (or JSS) level is my life- long career.          | 2.4    | 1.5 | 29.3<br>62.7 | 26.1<br>64.1 | 31.0<br>62.0 | 28.7<br>62.5 | 32.8<br>64.1 | 20.5<br>74.5       | 34.9<br>55.3 | 21.2<br>68.4 | 37.7<br>56.9 |
| I will continue teaching but at a higher level.                                     | 4.0    | 1.2 | 77.4<br>16.1 | 76.1<br>15.5 | 78.1<br>16.4 | 77.8<br>15.6 | 75.0<br>18.8 | 73.9<br>19.9       | 79.6<br>13.7 | 72.2<br>18.9 | 82.8<br>13.2 |

\*Upper figure; \*\*lower figure.

One third (36.3%) of all teachers claim that they felt disappointed when they were first posted, while 58.4% were not, as table 32 shows. Trained teachers (45.3%) are more likely to have been disappointed than untrained teachers (30.6%). Untrained teachers' lower levels of disappointment may be partly explained by the fact that they are more likely to come from the locality in which they are teaching, or are more accustomed to rural life in general, as Hedges suggests (2002).

Teachers tend not to agree that there has been an improvement in their working conditions over the past five years (on average, 58.2% disagreed). However, the majority (61.5%) expect some improvement in their working conditions over the next five years. Untrained teachers are more positive (67.1%) in their anticipation of improvement than trained teachers (52.8%), partly because many of them expect to complete the UTDBE programme, which leads to a professional qualification and therefore better treatment within the GES. It

is not clear to what extent any improvement is perceived to relate to potential changes in the education system.

**Table 32 Responses to general statements 2**

|  | Pooled |     | District                                   |           | Gender |      | Qualifica-<br>tion |         | Age       |          |         |
|--|--------|-----|--|-----------|--------|------|--------------------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|
|  | Mean   | S.D | Total                                      | Ponkujaku | Aumiso | Male | Female             | Trained | Untrained | Under 29 | Over 30 |
|  |        |     | Percentage of agreement* or disagreement** |           |        |      |                    |         |           |          |         |
| I remember I felt disappointed when I was first posted to my school to begin my professional career. | 2.7    | 1.5 | 36.3                                       | 25.4      | 42.0   | 35.8 | 39.1               | 45.3    | 30.6      | 38.7     | 33.8    |
|  |        |     | 58.4                                       | 69.0      | 52.9   | 58.5 | 57.7               | 49.7    | 63.9      | 55.2     | 61.8    |
| The working conditions have become better for last 5 years.  | 2.4    | 1.3 | 28.6                                       | 30.3      | 27.7   | 27.3 | 35.9               | 29.2    | 28.2      | 24.5     | 32.8    |
|  |        |     | 58.2                                       | 52.8      | 60.9   | 60.5 | 45.3               | 60.9    | 56.5      | 55.2     | 61.3    |
| I believe the working conditions will be much better for next 5 years.                               | 3.6    | 1.2 | 61.5                                       | 63.4      | 60.6   | 59.9 | 70.3               | 52.8    | 67.1      | 60.8     | 62.3    |
|  |        |     | 16.8                                       | 14.1      | 18.2   | 17.6 | 12.5               | 25.5    | 11.4      | 16.0     | 17.6    |

\*Upper figure; \*\*lower figure.

Two out of three teachers (66.1%) agree that their family and friends are happy with their choice of career, while one in four (24.3%) do not agree, as table 33 indicates. Trained teachers tend to feel less appreciated, with 53.4% of trained teachers and 74.1% of untrained teachers feeling valued. Female teachers, on the other hand, seem much more positive, with 81.2% thinking that their families and friends are happy with their choice of career, while slightly more than half (63.4%) of male teachers feel the same way. Although teaching at basic level is a male-dominated occupation in Ghana, male teachers seem to feel less appreciated, partly due to their poor remuneration.

Although teachers tend to encourage their pupils to follow their example in the choice of a career (64.7%), they are less enthusiastic about their own children entering the profession. Less than half (45.0%) would be happy for their sons and daughters to become teachers, while 42.1% would not want them to enter the profession. The most reluctant group in this respect is trained teachers, only 29.8% of whom respond positively, while 57.8% give a negative reply.

Similarly, 55.3% of trained teachers would not choose a teaching job at their current level if they could start all over again. Even among female teachers, the majority of whom feel that their profession is appreciated by their families and friends, 53.1% would not choose to be a teacher now. This reflects the earlier discussion of low job satisfaction with regard to the whole group and echoes the fact that basic school teaching is not a life-long career in Ghana.

**Table 33 Responses to general statements 3**

|  | Pooled |     |  | District     |              | Gender       |              | Qualification |              | Age          |              |
|--|--------|-----|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|  | Mean   | S.D | Total                                      | Ponkujaku    | Aumiso       | Male         | Female       | Trained       | Untrained    | Under 29     | Over 30      |
|  |        |     | Percentage of agreement* or disagreement** |              |              |              |              |               |              |              |              |
| My family and friends are happy about my being a teacher.  | 3.4    | 1.3 | 66.1<br>24.3                               | 72.5<br>17.6 | 62.3<br>27.7 | 63.4<br>26.1 | 81.2<br>14.1 | 53.4<br>37.3  | 74.1<br>16.1 | 63.2<br>23.6 | 69.1<br>25.0 |
| I encourage my pupils to be a teacher.   | 3.4    | 1.3 | 64.7<br>26.4                               | 66.2<br>25.4 | 63.9<br>27.0 | 63.6<br>27.0 | 70.3<br>23.4 | 49.1<br>39.1  | 74.5<br>18.4 | 62.7<br>26.4 | 66.7<br>26.5 |
| I am/will be happy to have my children as teacher.   | 2.9    | 1.4 | 45.0<br>42.1                               | 52.1<br>35.9 | 41.2<br>45.3 | 45.2<br>42.0 | 43.8<br>42.2 | 29.8<br>57.8  | 54.5<br>32.2 | 42.0<br>42.0 | 48.0<br>42.2 |
| If I can go back to my earlier days and start over again, I will choose to be a teacher in primary (or JSS) schools. | 2.9    | 1.5 | 45.2                                       | 52.8         | 41.2         | 45.7         | 42.2         | 34.2          | 52.2         | 41.0         | 49.5         |
|  |        |     | 46.2                                       | 36.6         | 51.1         | 44.9         | 53.1         | 55.3          | 40.4         | 47.2         | 45.1         |

\*Upper figure; \*\*lower figure.

Teachers in the two deprived districts tend to claim that they enjoy teaching and that it is not a temporary occupation. However, this does not necessarily accord with the finding that “teacher morale in Ghana was reasonably high” (World Bank 2004 p99), which was the conclusion of a survey of 3,129 teachers who were asked whether they enjoyed being a teacher and if they intended to remain in the profession.

Teachers in the present study want to remain in the profession, but aspire to a higher level. Teaching at basic level is a means of climbing the ladder of the GES system and/or improving their economic status, possibly with the additional benefit of higher

qualifications in the future. Trained teachers – particularly female teachers – who are more likely to come from socio-economically better-off families, seem to have lower morale at the basic school level.

#### **5.4. Teachers' Goals**

As discussed in the previous section, in general teachers are interested in further study in order to climb the education ladder and/or move away from a teaching career. Further light may be shed on this tendency by looking at teachers' goals. Of 688 teachers who responded to open questions about their goals (life and professional<sup>41</sup>), 43% say that their goal is to hold a higher or the highest degree, as table 34 shows. This is followed by 22.1% who aspire to be professional teachers or teach more effectively; 18.5% who aim to teach at a higher level; and 17.7% who want to work in education administration.

While these individuals have goals related specifically to teaching, others have broader ambitions: 15.7% want to be a role model, have greater responsibility and/or be a leader; 13.7% wish to become rich and financially secure; and 10.6% indicate a specific interest in becoming a politician<sup>42</sup>. At least one in ten shows an interest in a completely different career such as that of doctor or lawyer. Again, this confirms the findings of earlier studies: teachers are keen to further their education in order to climb the ladder and/or change career (Bame 1991; Peil 1995; Hedges 2002; Akyeampong and Asante 2005). Although teachers indicate altruistic reasons for having entered the profession, their goals as teachers are more individualistic.

There are some differences in teachers' goals between the two districts. Teachers in Ponkujaku – unlike those in Aumisoe – tend to want to work in education administration rather than teaching at a higher level. This might be partly due to the fact that there are not many post-primary institutions in Ponkujaku – only nine JSS and one SSS. Another explanation might be that office workers are accorded more prestige, such as the possession of a motorbike. Teachers in Ponkujaku tend to aspire to be role models and/or leaders of

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<sup>41</sup> Teachers were questioned separately about their life and professional goals, but they tended to blur the distinction. Thus, the two are not differentiated in the analysis.

<sup>42</sup> Possibly by means of a political secondment; and thus not leaving the teaching profession permanently.

people and communities, while those in Aumisoe feel that they would like to produce good citizens. The role of a teacher in Ponkujaku may be closer to that in a ‘golden age’ in which, being formally educated, teachers were also leaders of the community (Jessop and Penny 1998 p395).

Gender seems to be also a contributory factor in terms of teachers’ goals. There is no statistical significance in terms of job satisfaction by gender, with the exception of one factor: a teacher’s relationship with the community. Nevertheless, female teachers – and trained female teachers, in particular – are more likely to wish to further their education, partly because they tend to be from socio-economically better-off families with concomitant higher aspirations. On the other hand, they are less likely to aspire to be role models and/or leaders compared to their male counterparts, as discussed earlier, for cultural reasons, female teachers may tend not to aspire to public positions.

|   | <b>Table 34 Teachers’ goals</b> |                |              |        |        |               |                |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------|--------------|--------|--------|---------------|----------------|
|   | District                        |                |              | Gender |        | Qualification |                |
|   | Pooled                          | Ponkuja-<br>ku | Aumi-<br>soe | Male   | Female | Trained       | Un-<br>trained |
| <i>N</i>  | 688                             | 209            | 479          | 573    | 115    | 258           | 430            |
| To hold a higher/highest degree                               | 43.0                            | 43.1           | 43.0         | 41.9   | 48.7   | 49.6          | 39.1           |
| To be a professional teacher                                  | 22.1                            | 30.6           | 18.4         | 22.3   | 20.9   | 4.3           | 32.8           |
| To teach at a higher level                                    | 18.5                            | 7.2            | 23.4         | 18.8   | 16.5   | 24.0          | 15.1           |
| To work in administration (district and regional offices)     | 17.7                            | 22.0           | 15.9         | 18.2   | 15.7   | 17.1          | 18.1           |
| To be an educationalist/ establish an educational institution | 6.0                             | 5.7            | 6.1          | 6.1    | 5.2    | 8.9           | 4.2            |
| To be a role model/leader                                     | 15.7                            | 20.1           | 13.8         | 16.9   | 9.6    | 16.3          | 15.3           |
| To be a politician/MP   | 10.6                            | 12.0           | 10.0         | 11.2   | 7.8    | 9.7           | 11.2           |
| To be rich/financially secure                                 | 13.7                            | 12.4           | 14.2         | 13.6   | 13.9   | 13.2          | 14.0           |
| To be a doctor, lawyer or work in another field.              | 12.5                            | 12.4           | 12.5         | 11.9   | 15.7   | 14.0          | 11.6           |
| To produce good citizens                                      | 17.0                            | 12.9           | 18.8         | 17.1   | 16.5   | 16.7          | 17.2           |
| To receive divine reward                                      | 0.9                             | 1.4            | 0.6          | 0.9    | 0.9    | 1.6           | 0.5            |
| Other   | 2.6                             | 0.0            | 3.8          | 2.8    | 1.7    | 3.5           | 2.1            |

Source: questionnaires.

Teachers with different qualifications seem to have different goals. Trained teachers appear to have a stronger desire to enhance their educational qualifications and are much less interested in improving their professionalism and teaching efficiency. Half (49.6%) of

trained teachers are keen on further education, but only 4.3% say their goal is to be a professional/effective teacher. Untrained teachers are also eager to further their education, but are more interested in becoming professional teachers and/or teaching as effectively as their trained counterparts. Indeed, they may not see themselves as having much choice in terms of career, as Hedges suggests (2002), or may be obsessed with the upgrade programme, the eventual benefits of which they tend to rely on both financially and academically.

One in four (24.0%) trained teachers would like to teach at a higher level, while one in six (15.1%) untrained teachers have this goal. This suggests that trained teachers see their careers as advancing beyond their current school, in the knowledge that basic teaching may be an entry point to the GES, and/or that they prefer to work in towns and urban areas. In other words, untrained teachers are more attached to their localities. However, interestingly, while trained teachers are less attracted to the prospect of working in GES administration than teaching at a higher level, untrained teachers have the opposite aspiration.

## **5.5. Conclusion**

Trainee teachers perceive a post at basic level as a stepping stone to a better job (Hedges 2002; Akyeampong and Lewin 2002). Indeed, the findings of this study indicate that almost all teachers hold this view. Although many of them mention altruistic motives – including willingness to help the children and serve the community and the nation – as reasons for becoming basic teachers, basic school teaching seems to be regarded as a means of facilitating further education. This may be result from their low job satisfaction.

In general, teachers' job satisfaction is low – echoing the findings of Akyeampong and Asante (2005) – although they show lower satisfaction with their physical and organisational environment, and higher satisfaction with their social environment. They are seldom satisfied with their physical environment (living and working conditions) or services, such as health and finance, to which they are entitled. However, these varying findings suggest that these aspects of teaching could easily be overemphasised and that

with quantitative research alone, it is difficult to provide insights into why teachers show different levels of satisfaction in relation to each of the factors discussed.

Teachers in Aumisoë are less likely to be satisfied with the job than those in Ponkujaku. Similarly, trained teachers are less likely to be satisfied with the job than untrained teachers. Trained teachers in particular – having a higher aspiration to further their education – may be keener to leave basic teaching. It is necessary to explore why these trends occur, and they are therefore discussed further in the light of qualitative analysis in the next three chapters.

The six factors analysed in this chapter may be divided into two: macro factors, that is, organisational support system and social representation; and micro factors, of which there are four: physical environment; safety and security; relationships with the community; and relationships within the school. The remaining factor – job characteristics – seems to be applicable to both levels. Chapter 6 and 7 consider these micro factors in an examination of teachers' living and working conditions; and chapter 8 continues the discussion of the impact of policy and its implementation, and the role of organisational authorities – namely the DEO and the DA – on teacher motivation. Similarities and differences between the districts and between trained teachers and untrained teachers in terms of teachers' lives and perceptions are also explored in the next three chapters.

## **6. Teachers Lives in the Five Case Study Communities**

### **6.1. Introduction**

The previous chapter suggested that there were differences between the teachers in Ponkujaku and those in Aumisoe, and between trained and untrained staff, in terms of job perception and satisfaction. The next three chapters explore the reasons why the teachers perceived the job in certain ways and how they were motivated and demotivated. This chapter illustrates the lives of teachers in the five case study communities in the two districts.

This chapter starts with an analysis of each case, focusing on four micro factors and conditions: teachers' living conditions; relationships with colleagues; relationship with the community; and teachers' identities and personalities. The first three reflect four of the six factors identified in the factor analysis in the previous chapter as possible factors of teachers' job satisfaction, while the last responds to findings of earlier studies of teacher motivation and job satisfaction – these factors are individualistic (Evans 1998). The chapter then gives a cross-case analysis and concludes briefly to lead into the next chapter in which micro factors and conditions are discussed further at the district level.

### **6.2. The Case Study School Communities**

#### **6.2.1. General Characteristics of the Case Study Schools**

##### ***6.2.1.1. The Location of the Case Study Schools***

The two primary schools selected – Jamune Local Authority (LA) Primary School and Lesanyili Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School – in Ponkujaku District were the only formal educational establishments in the community. Both had been identified by the District Education Office (DEO) as being “deprived, difficult, hard-to-post” schools<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>43</sup> From a file entitled *Compilation of Deprived, Difficult Hard-to-Post Areas* (no date) at Ponkujaku DEO. These were all primary schools and junior secondary schools outside Ponkujaku town. The main criteria for their status were that they were located at a certain distance from a health facility and police station, and had no running water, accommodation or electricity.

Jamune is located in the southwest of the district, close to the border with another district in Northern Region. It is on a main – though untarred – road between the district capital, Ponkujaku town (2–3 hours' bus ride), and the regional capital, Tamale (1–1.5 hours). Due to regular public transport between Ponkujaku town and Tamale, Jamune was relatively easy to reach, especially from Tamale, in spite of the physical distance. On the other hand, Lesanyili is located in the southeast of the district on an untarred feeder road. At the time of the study, there was no direct bus service to Ponkujaku town. People in Lesanyili – including teachers – tended to cycle to Ponkujaku town, (a distance of 23 km), taking a short cut through the 'bush' – parts of which were prone to flooding after heavy rain – instead of taking two buses.

In Aumisoe District, all three selected cases have both primary and junior secondary schools (JSSs) in their communities – unlike in Ponkujaku – although none of them are located on trunk or main roads: all are on untarred feeder roads. Nakaose and Manekanto are located in the western part of the district; while Asonbwa is located in the eastern part. Although there were regular transportation services, Nakaose and Manekanto were two of the most remote communities in the region, especially with regard to access to the district capital. The teachers needed to travel first to another district capital then to the district capital (3-4 hours' bus ride). On the other hand, Asonbwa was relatively close to the capital with a 1.5-2 hour journey; however, a regular minibuss service ran three times a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Crossing a river – approximately 50m – to a district in another region by canoe was the other means of transportation; this service ran every day except Sunday.

All five case study school communities were relatively remote, especially in terms of distance from their respective district capitals, general locations and/or the availability of public transport.

#### ***6.2.1.2. Characteristics of the Case Study Communities***

The five case study communities were similar in terms of physical environment, that is, they lacked amenities that were commonly available in towns: none of them had mains electricity or easy access to health, financial or education services. Potable water was only

available from communal sources. The mobile phone network was accessible, but it was not stable. Only Manekanto had a market (Lesanyili had one, but it was very small). The case study schools – the primary schools in Ponkujaku and the primary schools and JSSs in Aumisoie – were the only formal educational establishments in the community: there were no private schools.

On the other hand, the cases were socio-culturally diverse. In Ponkujaku, the Dagomba ethnic group – the principal tribe of the district – and the Konkomba were the predominant communities in Jamune and Lesanyili respectively. Since Aumisoie was Akan land, in Nakaose and Manekanto the Akan were the predominant communities, while in Asonbwa it was the Ewe – the most dominant ethnic group among migrants.

**Table 35 Community characteristics**

|                                       |                                 | Ponkujaku                   |                               | Aumisoie                       |                                |                          |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
|                                       |                                 | Jamune                      | Lesanyili                     | Nakaose                        | Manekanto                      | Asonbwa                  |
| Geographical/physical characteristics | Location                        | Southwest<br>On a main road | Southeast<br>On a feeder road | West<br>On a feeder road       | West<br>On a feeder road       | East<br>On a feeder road |
|                                       | Direct transport to the capital | Yes                         | No                            | No                             | No                             | No                       |
|                                       | Mains electricity               | No                          | No                            | No                             | No                             | No                       |
|                                       | Potable water                   | Yes, but shortage           | Yes                           | Yes                            | Yes                            | Yes                      |
|                                       | Mobile phone network            | Yes                         | No                            | Yes                            | Yes                            | Yes                      |
|                                       | Market                          | No                          | Yes, but small                | No                             | Yes                            | No                       |
|                                       | Kiosks                          | Yes                         | No                            | Yes                            | Yes                            | Yes                      |
|                                       | Educational establishment       | Primary school              | Primary school                | Primary and JSS                | Primary and JSS                | Primary and JSS          |
| Socio-cultural characteristics        | Ethnicity                       | Dagomba                     | Konkomba                      | Akan, Ewe                      | Akan, Fanti                    | Ewe                      |
|                                       | Language                        | Dagbanli                    | Konkomba                      | Akan, Ewe                      | Akan                           | Ewe                      |
|                                       | Religion                        | Islam                       | Traditional African           | Christianity                   | Christianity                   | Christianity             |
|                                       | Economic activity               | Food crop farming           | Food crop farming             | Cash crop farming; gold mining | Cash crop farming; gold mining | Cash crop farming        |

Source: ethnographic research.

All cases were agriculture-based communities, although the principal activity was rain-fed food crop farming in Jamune and Lesanyili in Ponkujaku, while it was cash crop farming such as cocoa and/or palm oil in Nakaose, Manekanto and Asonbwa in Aumisoie. People in

the communities of Aumisoe engaged in food crop farming mainly for their own consumption. Nakaose and Manekanto were also sites of gold mines. The characteristics of the five communities are summarised in table 35.

In the next section, the lives of teachers in each community are explored with Jamune and Lesanyili in Ponkujaku and Nakaose being studied first followed by Manekanto and Asonbwa.

### 6.2.2. Jamune, Ponkujaku District

#### 6.2.2.1. Description of the Community

Jamune, Ponkujaku, headed by its Dagomba chief, has about 50 typical compound-based households, each with a single entrance to a yard that is surrounded by individual huts for each family member.

**Picture 4 Jamune**



A typical compound house  
Source: ethnographic research.



Pupils filling a water tank of the school in the dry season

Water is a problem in Jamune. Although each household has a hand-dug well and there are two functioning boreholes, they sometimes dry up during the dry season. Once this happens, people rely on water from a nearby dam. In early 2008, people used dam water for two months, which had serious health implications as Jamune is prone to Guinea worm disease<sup>44</sup>. However, the dam sometimes also dries up. If this occurs, women and children have to walk distances of at least eight km to fetch water.

<sup>44</sup> An interview with a World Vision Ghana (WVG) staff member, who worked for a water supply and sanitation project in the district.

There is no market in the community. The nearest one is two and a half km away along the main road on which the closest junior secondary school (JSS) is located. Two pharmacies provide basic drugs such as painkillers and antimalarials; and basic goods such as soap, batteries, biscuits, and ingredients like onions, small dry fish, and spices can be obtained from kiosks.

People in Jamune engage in arable farming, growing mainly foodstuff during the rainy season, and rely on hunting during the dry season. They also rear fowls, goats and sheep.

#### **6.2.2.2. Description of the School**

Jamune Primary School, with an enrolment of 178 pupils<sup>45</sup> –104 boys and 74 girls from grade one (P1) to six (P6) – stood at the edge of the community. There were six teachers for P1 to P6 for the academic year of 2007/08; two trained teachers and four untrained teachers – two pupil teachers and two YEP teachers; there was another YEP teacher for kindergarten (KG). All were male and from the Dagomba ethnic group. None of them were from the community or from nearby. All four GES teachers – both trained and pupil teachers – were married with children, while the YEP teachers were single. The head teacher (HT) was the only teacher who lived in the community with his family (see table 36). The rest stayed in the teachers' quarters (TQ) and travelled over weekends to visit their families; they did not stay in the community during vacation periods.

**Table 36 Details of teachers of Jamune L/A Primary School**

|     | Age | Gender | Qualification | Roles       | Years in teaching | Marital Status | Native | Family | Prog. | Attendance Rate in 2007/08 |        |        |         |
|-----|-----|--------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|--------|--------|-------|----------------------------|--------|--------|---------|
|     |     |        |               |             |                   |                |        |        |       | Term 1                     | Term 2 | Term 3 | Average |
| 1   | 49  | M      | Trained       | HT and P1   | 1991-             | M              |        | √      | √     | 87.5                       | 78.0   | 94.7   | 86.7    |
| 2   | 38  | M      | Trained       | Asst. HT P6 | 2004-             | M              |        |        |       | 85.9                       | 74.6   | 87.7   | 82.8    |
| 3   | 25  | M      | YEP           | P5          | 2006-             | S              |        |        |       | 21.9                       | 6.8    | 5.3    | 11.7    |
| 4   | 24  | M      | YEP           | P4          | 2006-             | S              |        |        |       | 29.7                       | 27.1   | 42.1   | 32.8    |
| 5   | 40  | M      | Pupil         | P3          | 2006-             | M              |        |        | √     | 78.1                       | 64.4   | 77.2   | 73.3    |
| 6   | 38  | M      | Pupil         | P2          | 2006-             | M              |        |        | √     | 85.9                       | 88.1   | 89.5   | 87.8    |
| (7) | 25  | M      | YEP           | KG          | 2006-             | S              |        |        |       | 25.0                       | 0.0    | 5.3    | 10.6    |

Gender: M=male. Marital status: M=married; S=single.

Native: √=Teacher from the community. Family: √=Teacher living with his family in the community.

Prog.: √=Teacher taking an upgrade programme

Source: ethnographic research.

<sup>45</sup> School record of 2007/08 academic year.

While the GES teachers were comparatively regular, with an annual attendance rate ranging from 73% to 88%, the YEP teachers were not so conscientious: one had an attendance rate of 32.8% and the other of 11.7% (a third YEP teacher assigned to a KG class had the lowest attendance rate of all, at 10.6%).

#### ***6.2.2.3. Living Conditions of Teachers***

The HT, married to two wives with five children, lived in a typical Dagomba compound house with six bedrooms and cotes of sheep and fowl in the middle of the community. It had originally been a two-bedroom house built by the community, but gradually, as he settled down, married and had children, the compound had been expanded with the support of the community. The house had mud walls and a grass roof. However, cement had also been used on the walls, floor and the yard of the house where women and children cooked; household chores were the responsibility of the women and children. His house was the only household equipped with a solar panel provided by the World Vision Ghana for electricity. There was a TV – he had received as a prize for the Best Teacher Award – in his room where he occasionally received his visitors in his sofa, including the chief of the community and District Assembly representative. He rode a bicycle to the school – five-minute walking distance – which was given as a part of an incentive package by the GES in 2006. He seemed to be well settled – it was 16 years since he had started at the school as a newly trained teacher – and was well taken care of by his family.

The HT, unlike the other teachers, farmed in the community, having been given a piece of land for free from the chief. Although he said that the scale of farming had become much smaller, due to a DBE programme (offered not by the GES, but by a university), for which he had to attend a course in a southern region during vacation periods, farming still seemed to strengthen his financial stability. He said that he could provide his extended families with maize and cassava every year and that he could sell the excess in the market in Tamale. He also cultivated cash crops, such as groundnuts, and reared fowl, including ducks and Guinea fowl, and goats. Indeed, his riding a motorbike to his farm<sup>46</sup> was distinctive in the community. His wives also traded sugar, sandals, and soaps at their house. The HT seemed

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<sup>46</sup> According to the HT, land far from the community is more fertile.

to have established his life in Jamune, securing financial status as well as advancing his professional qualifications.

The other six teachers, including a kindergarten (KG) teacher, stayed in the four-bedroom TQ with a bathroom and a storage room on the same premises as the primary school. The building was a permanent structure – a concrete building with raised floor, tin roofs, and glass windows – and thus differed from the traditional houses. On the other hand, two teachers were compelled to share a room. This might have encouraged the YEP teachers' high absenteeism, although the YEP teacher<sup>47</sup> I interviewed did not mention the discomfort of sharing a room. The YEP teachers were younger and from towns and might have been so more individualistic.

Teachers living in the TQ, unlike the HT, had to manage their daily lives by themselves, as they had no caretakers, a role that would normally be played by female family members and children. While some pupils were asked to do chores, such as fetching water and doing dishes, teachers had to spend on average four to five hours a day<sup>48</sup> cooking and boiling water for bathing, using the only charcoal stove they had. Therefore, household chores constituted a major part of their daily lives (see box 1). However, by sharing the responsibility for household chores, and the cost of food and charcoal, this burden seemed lighter. Besides, eating together appeared to enhance their relationship, especially among teachers.

**Box 1 Life of teachers living in the TQ in Jamune**

The assistant HT was always the first person to get up in the TQ and to bathe. During Hamatern, which is the coldest season when dawn is as late as 6: 30 am, boiling water for bathing – the assistant HT's routine job – for all teachers with the only charcoal stove they had was all they could do before school. He normally arranged for a pupil to buy porridge for his breakfast, but sometimes had just tea or nothing. During the first break around 10 a.m., one, usually the youngest teacher, started cooking (and did not come back to the classroom until the cooking was done). In the early evening, one or two hours before than dark, somebody started preparing supper. Teachers ate meals together and spent their time together.

<sup>47</sup> I met two out of three teachers, during my field research. The other teacher I met was a KG teacher and I did not interview him.

<sup>48</sup> My estimation. I stayed in a room of the TQ during ethnographic research in Jamune.

The (GES) teachers living in the TQ used to have a garden, but they had been disappointed by the incident of somebody's cattle destroying their plants, and so were no longer eager to have one. The foodstuff they ate was what was provided by the HT and/or community and what they purchased. They usually ate boiled yam or rice with stew for lunch and supper rather than their traditional food such as *Tizet* (made of maize and/or cassava) and *Fufu* (pounded steamed yam and/or cassava with soup), which require more preparation and cooking time. Vegetables were difficult to obtain during the dry season in the community; they bought ingredients such as tomatoes and onions in Tamale. Apart from dried small fish for stews, which were available in the community, they did not eat meat or any other type of fish. Beans cooked with rice were the major source of protein.

The lack of potable water during dry season was a particular challenge in Jamune. Teachers living in the TQ used water from a big tank that collected rain water from the roof of a school building, as it was the most convenient distance-wise. However, once the rain water was finished, they had to rely on any source of water. Late December 2007, pupils filled the tank with water from boreholes, hand-dug wells, and a dam. Consequently, the water the teachers had was yellowish. The GES teachers had no hesitation in drinking that water untreated, but one of YEP teachers was reluctant. Once the assistant HT noticed it, he gave the YEP teacher an instrument, a straw type of filter distributed by an NGO to prevent Guinea worm disease. The YEP teacher tried to use it, but he seemed uncomfortable. The quality of water that some can accept may not be acceptable for others. For the latter, a rural posting without acceptable living standards might be life threatening. The fear of a rural posting may not be only for trainee teachers (Towse et al. 2002; Dull 2006), but also for (untrained) teachers from relatively nearer communities.

Rural postings may be challenging for teachers, not only because of the inconvenience, but also the health risks that are associated with unhygienic drinking water and so on.

Moreover, teachers seem to be required to adjust themselves to new environments in their daily lives as well as the much longer-term effects on their personal lives, such as where they settle down and whether they live with their families. Teachers' professional lives in rural Ponkujaku appeared to be much influenced by teachers' private lives.

#### ***6.2.2.4. Relationships with Colleagues***

Teachers in Jamune, GES teachers particularly, seemed to have close relationship with each other. Teachers living in the TQ appreciated their HT's accommodating attitude, which included the provision of food, as a sign of his leadership. The assistant HT said:

Sometimes [when] we [are] short food in the house, he [the HT] supports us. At times, he talks to us like our colleague. He doesn't bring himself high where you cannot approach him with your problems. If you have problems, you can meet him and talk to him like a colleague without fear ... Sometimes, when we are with him, we just play like small children. So, he is a good leader.

According to teachers, when there was only one teacher in the TQ, he was normally fed by the HT. The HT seemed to be the other teachers' security provider, particularly regarding their food and well-being.

Teachers living in the TQ tended to spend their free time together. In addition to cooking and eating together, they prayed together twice in the yard of the TQ or in a mosque in the community in the evening. They chatted while listening to the radio before going to bed around 9 pm every evening. Some afternoons, the assistant HT stayed with the pupil teachers to help them with their paper work, such as pupils' attendance records. Although their collegial relationship was observed in their private rather than their professional lives, they seemed naturally to be supportive of each other.

On the other hand, this supportive and cordial environment was not effective in reducing the three YEP teachers' absenteeism. The GES teachers were aware of delays of up to six months in the payment of the YEP teachers' salaries, and understood the difficulties the YEP teachers faced. Therefore, the GES teachers, particularly the HT and the assistant HT, supported the YEP teachers – sometimes by a monetary contribution for basic needs, including transportation fare, in addition to food provision. However, those in Jamune did not show much commitment to teaching, unlike some other YEP teachers working in similar conditions in both districts.

One of the reason why the YEP teachers in Jamune were not so keen to teach might be that they did not see their future career in relation to their current job. None of them, unlike

their pupil-teacher colleagues, had taken the UTDBE. Indeed they could not join the UTDBE course, as they had been secondary school students when it had started in the Northern Region – one of the requirements for joining the programme was to be working as a basic school teacher. The YEP teacher I interviewed talked about teaching as the job he had wanted from his childhood, following in the footsteps of his family members. However, his plan was that once he had earned money as a YEP teacher, he would go to university to become a professional teacher. He did not seem to link the experiences he could gain in Jamune to his career development as a teacher and, as a result, he did not seem to attach any value to being a committed teacher in Jamune.

Another possible reason might be that the YEP teachers had not been well prepared to take up rural postings. They had attended a three-day workshop two months after they had started the teaching. It is possible that in the initial stages, some teachers might have been discouraged by the gap between what they expected and what they found, especially in terms of the standard of living. Moreover, three days does not seem sufficient time to equip them with the skills for lesson preparation and delivery, which was the main focus of the workshop<sup>49</sup>. The lack of professional support to prepare untrained teachers<sup>50</sup> could discourage some of them and, once they become disillusioned, they may find it difficult to be motivated even with supportive colleagues.

It is not surprising that the YEP teachers' absenteeism discouraged and frustrated the other teachers. However, more importantly, it revealed that the HT did not have any authority over the YEP teachers – which the YEP teachers could take advantage of. While the HT (and the assistant HT) tended to make up for the YEP teachers' absence, he became frustrated, as he got no response from the DEO or the YEP District Office to his request to replace the YEP teachers with those from Jamune and those helped the school as volunteers. This suggests that filling vacancies with non-GES teachers might have a negative impact on the GES teachers' motivation, especially when the former do not meet the latter's

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<sup>49</sup> From interviews with the YEP teachers.

<sup>50</sup> In Aumisoe, according to YEP teachers, a three-day workshop for the YEP teachers was organised almost the end of the first year of its implementation.

expectations in that the condition that the GES teachers have no power over the non-GES teachers. This issue will be discussed further in the next chapter.

A primary school in rural Ghana seems to be somewhere teachers with not only different qualifications, but also different attitudes happen to work together. The context within the school is very complex.

#### ***6.2.2.5. Relationship with the Community***

The community members<sup>51</sup> I interviewed in Jamune said that parents and/or guardians had a strong interest in sending their children to school, although Casely-Hayford (2000) found in her research in another district in Northern Region, that the Dagomba “maintain[s] ‘tradition’ as paramount by a process of social control which restricts and regulates activities such as formal education, which are seen as potential agencies for unmediated socio-cultural change” (2000 p147). One community member described the community’s interest in education with the saying that ‘husks are everywhere’. They explained that it was education rather than farming that would provide better future prospects for their children, and that the educated – boys in particular – would be able to earn the means of supporting their families; that they would be able to find work in any part of the country; that, if they were to engage in farming, they would be able to apply new technology, such as fertilizers and pesticides; and that they would not have to ask anybody to read and write their letters for them.

The community’s willingness to support education was shown in various ways. In addition to the provision of some foodstuff, the community members, including the chief, paid visits to the school occasionally.

However, the teachers did not consider the support to education coming from the community to be sufficient. According to the teachers, a hand-dug well for the school was left incomplete; there was less provision of food for school meals than had been promised; there had been no plan drawn up to maintain the school feeding programme once the

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<sup>51</sup> Four members interviewed were the chief, the School Management Committee chair man, the PTA chair man; and the chair of a women’s organisation.

Catholic Relief Service (CRS) withdrew its support by the end of 2007/08; and there was little communal support in attempts to prevent children from going to video shows – new types of entertainment in rural communities – until late night. Even the HT said, “Parents lean on the school to change their children. Have they joined their hands?” There seemed to be a gap between teachers and community members in terms of support for education, as Mulkeen and Chen (2008) suggest.

Teachers in Jamune seemed to agree that they were respected in the community. The Assistant HT said, contrasting Jamune with society in general:

Generally, people perceive teachers to be poor in the society, among the working population. People look down upon teachers. Our financial background is very weak. Some say, “Don’t mind, just mere teacher.”... [but] once we are here, we set ourselves as role models to the community. They respect us.”

However, teachers, particularly those living in the TQ, did not seem to feel that they were sufficiently appreciated by parents and/or community, as they had not been given as much foodstuff as they wanted and they were charged the fee of 10 peswas<sup>52</sup> like others for video shows. It appears that the provision or otherwise of material support by the community influences teachers’ feelings of being appreciated.

The relationship between the HT and the community and between the community and those living in the TQ seemed different. While the former appeared to be approachable by any community members, who frequently sought help to understand letters and/or instructions for using chemicals, the latter hardly received any visitors in the TQ, apart from some JSS students whom they used to teach. Before 2006, when the TQ was built, all teachers except the HT stayed in community members’ houses and were fed by them. Some community members recalled that, at that time, they knew how and where their teachers were. However, they now perceived a distant relationship; teachers could leave the community at any time and could stay outside the community for longer periods. The HT also said, “This time it seems all teachers go for weekends. That was not so.” Teachers’ decision to give up farming in the community may have influenced their decision not to stay in the community over

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<sup>52</sup> 1=100 peswas.

weekends and thus have resulted in the teachers having less contact with community members. The TQ may also have contributed to the physical boundaries between the teachers and the community. Accommodation is said to be crucial to retain teachers in rural areas. However, it may not necessarily enhance the relationship between the teachers and the community. How teachers relate to the community seems to depend heavily on teachers' attitudes.

#### ***6.2.2.6. Teachers' Identities and Personalities***

The two teachers I followed most in Jamune were the HT and the assistant HT. They were not only regular and punctual, as some DEO officers recommended, but also were active and showed seriously they took their responsibility to the children by being accommodating and responsible.

Both teachers were only sons of farmer parents, and were the only ones among their siblings to have received a formal education. They helped their parents by working on the farm and managed to continue education. Their parents' ethos of hard-work seemed to reflect teachers' personalities as hard-workers. The assistant HT said:

I didn't find it easy educating myself, because my parents had no money most of the time. Because of that, I was in school, from school I had to go to the farm just to support my father on the farm. I was brought up by my family that way. I cannot sit idle.

Apart from their hard-working parents, their teachers seemed to have influenced them to become teachers. The HT did not mention any role models he had had; however, there were two teachers who had helped him to get jobs: one job was when he had completed a middle school and the other was a post as pupil teacher. He said:

When I completed (a middle school), I was in the farm with my father, helping. At that time I was not grown. One day, one of my teachers came for me. He sent me to Ghana Cotton Board...I was put as a messenger...I was just in the office and the manger sent me whenever he wanted me to... when I was there, another teacher came... He visited me at home and asked, "What?" I said I was appointed by the Cotton Board as a messenger... He took me into the education office... I did not know how. Later he brought an appointment letter to me to go to a primary school in [a district name].

The assistant HT of Jamune started formal education at older age and managed to continue his education within what was available – few teachers and materials and little financial support. He recalled:

He [HT who came for an enrolment drive] said, “This boy can still attend the school...I was sent to school together with area boys. All of them stopped schooling, not JSS, right from primary school ... When I went to primary school, because I was somehow big... they sent me to P2. I was 9 or 10... At that time, we did not have tables and chairs to sit on. We lay down on our stomachs, while we were writing. During my primary school time, too, we did not have enough teachers in our school.

On the other hand, he remembered some teachers who “were good to” students. He felt that he had been given “a lot of motivation and encouragement”.

Both teachers’ identities as professionals seemed to have been shaped partially by their experiences: they had struggled to continue in education and employment; thus, they tended to appreciate what they had. Some of their teachers had been supportive; without such support it is possible they may not have achieved what they had, although neither mentioned their teachers in such a context. Their feeling that they were helping their pupils seemed to also strengthen their professionalism. Indeed, they were proud of their ex-pupils who were said to outperform at JSSs. The HT particularly said, “I have been here too long. But I feel if I leave here, the school would collapse.” Both seemed to be sure about their usefulness for their pupils and the meaningfulness of the current post for their self-fulfilment.

In summary, teachers’ lives in rural Ghana cannot be described simply in terms of ‘official’ and ‘private’, as happens in a country like Japan. Teachers’ lives are much more related to those of their colleagues and community members. After discussing Jamune, which had two active Dagomba trained teachers, I will now discuss Lesanyili where I was impressed by Konkomba untrained teachers.

### 6.2.3. Lesanyili, Ponkujaku District

#### 6.2.3.1. *Description of the Community*

Lesanyili, headed by its Konkomba chief, has about 50 households whose traditional houses are similar to that of the Dagomba. The Dagomba chief was the head of the community until a conflict between the Konkomba and the Dagomba in 1994, which led to the closure of the primary school established in 1987 for four years.

Access to water is not a problem, thanks to two boreholes, which provide potable water throughout the year; and a small stream, although this dries up during the dry season.

There is a small market with several vendors that is held every six days. Additionally, basic items such as sugar and *gari* (processed cassava) can be bought from some of the community members.

There is no mobile phone network in the community – the nearest access point is a 10-minute cycle ride away. The closest town, which is 10 km away, has a clinic, a JSS and a big market every sixth day.

People in Lesanyili engage in arable farming. Additionally, the *shea* nut is an important cash crop, especially for women, who collect the nuts and extract the butter.

**Picture 5 Lesanyili community**



#### 6.2.3.2. *Description of the School*

Lesanyili Roman Catholic (R/C) Primary School, with an enrolment of 102 pupils<sup>53</sup>, 65 boys and 37 girls, had five teachers: one trained teacher – the HT – and four untrained teachers, specifically, three pupil teachers and one YEP teacher; there was another YEP teacher for KG. All were Konkombas. Five, including the KG teacher, were married and lived in the community with their families; the youngest pupil teacher was the only single

<sup>53</sup> School record of the academic year 2007/08.

teacher and commuted from a community 15 km away by bicycle (table 37). Of five married teachers, four were two married couples: the assistant HT and the P1 teacher; and the P4/P5 teacher (teaching a combined class of P4 and P5) and the KG teacher.

**Table 37 Details of teachers of Lesanyili R/C Primary School**

|     | Age | Gende | Qualifi-<br>cation | Roles            | Years in<br>teaching | Marital<br>Status | Native | Family | Prog. | Attendance Rate in 2007/08 |           |           |              |
|-----|-----|-------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|-------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
|     |     |       |                    |                  |                      |                   |        |        |       | Term<br>1                  | Term<br>2 | Term<br>3 | Ave-<br>rage |
| 1   | 32  | M     | Trained            | HT<br>P3         | 1996-8<br>2007-      | √                 | √      | √      | √     | 83.3                       | 71.7      | 62.3      | 68.1         |
| 2   | 28  | M     | Pupil              | Assist. HT<br>P6 | 2001-2<br>2004-      | √                 | √      | √      | √     | 100.0                      | 98.3      | 100.0     | 99.5         |
| 3   | 30  | M     | Pupil              | P4/P5            | 2005-                | √                 |        | √      | √     | 100.0                      | 100.0     | 100.0     | 100.0        |
| 4   | 23  | M     | Pupil              | P2               | 2007-                |                   |        |        |       | 85.7                       | 76.7      | 58.5      | 74.9         |
| 5   | 27  | F     | YEP                | P1               | 2004-                | √                 |        | √      |       | 98.6                       | 96.7      | 98.1      | 97.8         |
| (6) | 26  | F     | YEP                | KG               | 2006-                | √                 |        | √      | √     | 87.1                       | 98.3      | 92.5      | 92.3         |

Gender: M=male; F=female. Marital status: M=married; S=single.

Native: √=Teacher from the community. Family: √=Teacher living with his family in the community.

Prog.: √=Teacher taking an upgrade programme

Source: ethnographic research.

### **6.2.3.3. Living Conditions of Teachers**

The two teachers who were from the community originally, namely, the HT and the assistant HT whose wife was P1 teacher, lived in their own house with their families, while the P4/P5 teacher and his wife, a KG teacher, stayed in a room of the compound house of a district assembly man<sup>54</sup>. The P4/P5 teacher said that they were “compelled to stay” with a community member (picture 6), although it was free of charge. He also said it was not always easy, despite the fact that the couple with whom I stayed seemed to get along well with the host.

The couple, with their two-year old daughter, lived independently, not sharing household chores with the host family. As household chores are the responsibility of the women and children, the wife, the KG teacher, was occupied from morning to night, although they had a helper, a P3 girl who lived with them and mainly took care of the daughter. Household chores could take up a big portion of female teachers’ everyday lives – at least one third in

<sup>54</sup> There was a two-bed TQ built by the community, on the same premises as the school, a side of the road. However, as two deaths occurred in the school side, the TQ became abandoned with a belief that those who reside on the same side as the school would die.

my estimation – without modern facilities. Details of a typical day in the life of the KG teacher are given in box 2.

**Picture 6 Lesanyili**



Inside a Konkomba compound housing non-native teachers, with *shea* nuts in the fore ground

Source: ethnographic research.



A female teacher in her farm with ground nut, maize, hot pepper and *ayoyo*.

**Box 2 A female teacher's life in Lesanyili**

As soon as the KG teacher got up at dawn, she set fire to boil water on two charcoal stoves, unlike the wives of the house owner, who use firewood. Then she washed the dishes from the previous day and prepared breakfast, generally different types of porridge. She often cooked lunch (or a snack), which could be rice, sorghum, or beans, before she went to school so that they could eat something during break time. Bathing their daughter in the morning and evening was also her job. She cooked *Fufu* (when yam was available) or *Tizet* for dinner. She did the laundry normally during weekends at the borehole sites during the dry season and at the nearby river during the rainy season. The P3 girl helped her, but mainly by taking care of the daughter sometimes and fetching water from boreholes.

P4/P5 teacher, unlike the native teachers, did not farm in Lesanyili, as he had become disappointed with the yield. Instead, he cultivated crops, such as yam, maize, sorghum, Guinea corn, and ground nuts in his hometown – where he and his wife were building their house – and visited there at least once a week by riding a bicycle for one hour. He did not stay over in his hometown, saying that his wife would not be comfortable without him in Lesanyili. As he intended to take care of his farm well within the limited time available to him, he sometimes hired people to work for him. During my second stay, he was excited, as he was expecting a good harvest, which could be worth up to four to five months of his salary and would help both him and his wife, KG teacher to continue the UTDBE. His wife, on the other hand, had a farm in the community where she grew ground nuts, tomatoes, okra, hot peppers, and *ayoyo* (green leaves) mainly for daily consumption. Teachers' lives seem not only based on their profession as teachers, but also as farmers.

The couple seemed to have established their life in Lesanyili, not only securing an everyday living, but also preparing for their future through farming and teaching. The P4/P5 teacher said, “Life is management.” Having a family that provides mutual support appears to be a coping mechanism in an environment that is perceived as less desirable.

#### ***6.2.3.4. Relationships with Colleagues***

The HT, the only trained teacher, who was also native, lived in a house just 100 m away from the school with his family, but had the lowest attendance rate of 68.1% among his teachers in the 2007/08 academic year. He came back to Lesanyili almost at the end of the first term of that year and his attendance dropped as time went by – 83.3%, 71.7% and 62.3% over the first, second and third terms respectively. According to teachers and community members, the HT absented himself, staying at home and/or with his friends in Lesanyili. One Monday during my second stay in the third term – the day after there had been sufficient rainfall for the people of the community to begin the new farming season – he did not come to school and that afternoon he was seen working on his farm, which was next to his house. The following morning his signature was found at the end of the previous day’s attendance list. The P2 teacher, who commuted from outside the community, had become less regular, with his attendance rate decreasing from 85.7% in the first term to 76.7% and 58.5% in the second and third terms respectively, since the HT was posted to the school. The HT’s less committed attitude and lack of supervision seemed to have encouraged his subordinate’s relaxed attitude.

Unlike the P2 teacher, the assistant HT and P4/P5 teacher, both pupil teachers, maintained high attendance rates of 99.5% and 100% respectively with their wives having rates of 97.8% and 92.3%, even after the HT had been posted to the school. Although this 100% attendance rate was something of a misrepresentation, since the teachers had to go to Ponkujaku town in order to collect their salaries or for other official business – during the ethnographic research, teachers in Lesanyili, as in other schools, were observed to sign the attendance register (with the permission of the HT) before leaving the school premises for whatever reason – the assistant HT and P4/P5 teacher were hardly affected by the other teachers’ absenteeism.

The two couples, who had all been teachers of Lesanyili Primary School in the previous year<sup>55</sup>, seemed to have developed active attitudes through being close to each other in their private lives and working together professionally. The couples bore similarities: the husbands were pupil teachers and the wives were YEP teachers; they were of a similar age and both had two-year old daughters. Every morning, the assistant HT came to the P4/P5 teacher's house for them to go to school together; so did their wives. The husbands were seen to go to Ponkujaku town by bicycle together, as were their wives.

Professionally, before 2005 when the UTDBE was introduced, three teachers of the two couples (the KG teacher had not had a post at that time) had participated in a series of INSET for two years supported by the CRS. The INSET targeted all teachers in the school<sup>56</sup> and focused on child-centered classroom teaching, involving the production of teaching and learning materials and debates on selected topical issues. This INSET, unlike the UTDBE, did not provide a qualification, which, according to Lockheed and Verspoor (1991), is necessary to motivate teachers to continue. However, this type of INSET might have enhanced not only the cohesion among teachers, but also collegial support mechanisms with an emphasis on the same foundation for all. It may contribute to influence teachers' professional identities and thus their attitudes. Further exploration in this area would be interesting.

The assistant HT and P4/P5 teacher (and the KG teacher) were pursuing the UTDBE, unlike the P2 teacher mentioned earlier. It seems similar to Jamune's case where much higher attendances were observed among pupil teachers, who were taking the programme, than among the YEP teachers, who were not. The UTDBE appears to serve as a motivating factor.

Teachers in Lesanyili seemed less interdependent than those in Jamune, as they had settled in the community with their families and farms. This, then raises a question of how can

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<sup>55</sup> In the 2006/07, there was no KG. At that time, the KG teacher in 2007/08 taught P2 and P3 combined and the other three had the same class in charge in 2007/08.

<sup>56</sup> An interview with a person in UNICEF that had been supported by the CRS financially for this activity. There were two to three-day workshops in each term and six-day workshop for a long vacation period.

those who have stability, but are not active as teachers, be motivated? The HT was pursuing a DBE, but he did not seem committed. Teacher management by the DEO seems to be important for teacher motivation.

#### ***6.2.3.5. Relationship with the Community***

Community members seemed to be interested in education. As in Jamune, the people interviewed perceived that sending their children to school would lead to a financially and thus socially better future. On my first visit, as soon as community members became aware that there was a stranger (myself) in their school, five people came to the school, including the assistant PTA chair and a TTC student who had studied at Lesanyili R/C Primary School, to see what was going on.

On the other hand, there were more out-of-school children of school-going age than there were children in school, a situation community members themselves identified. The community members I interviewed attributed that to poverty. In keeping with the observations by teachers in Lesanyili, some community members mentioned that boys tended to be removed from school, as soon as they became physically strong enough to work on the farm. Indeed, the degree of poverty seemed more serious than in Jamune: most of the children in Lesanyili at lower primary age wore only underwear, short pants or skirts and no sandals outside school. The community members also showed their concerns about how to afford to send their children to the JSS. As they did not want to send their children to the closest JSS, which they perceived as being ineffective, they expected a further economic burden, having less help from their children once they had left and arranging for their children to stay with family members or friends in town.

In such economic conditions, the Lesanyili community, like Jamune, sought to motivate teachers through visiting them at school and/or at home, as well as supplying them with food in some instances and providing free accommodation for non-natives. The chief was also willing to give allotments of land to teachers for farming. The community seemed to have done what it could do in order to demonstrate its appreciation for the teachers.

On the other hand, such support, especially material support, like the provision of accommodation and food, may not be seen as encouragement by those who have established lives already, like the HT. As the HT's absenteeism and drunkenness was a concern to the community<sup>57</sup>, the assistant PTA chairman had talked with the HT occasionally; however, he had not seen much improvement. Indeed, the HT of Lesanyili was the only one among all the cases who did not introduce me to the community's senior members, including the chief, and who rarely took care of me during my stay – the assistant HT and his wife (P1 teacher) often visited me, sometimes with food for me, although I stayed with P4/P5 and KG teachers and was taken care of and fed well by them. Indeed, I felt that the HT was not a part of the community. How teachers locate in the community socially and relate to it again seems to depend on the teachers.

#### ***6.2.3.6. Teachers' Identities and Personalities***

The two teachers I was most impressed with were the assistant HT teacher, who also taught P6, and P4/P5 teacher. They were untrained, but showed professionalism. Not only were their attendance rates high, but also their pupils seemed to see learning as active interactions between the teachers and their pupils in English, particularly in the P6 class, were observed. In their upper primary classes, grown-up pupils were noticeable – more so than in Jamune – and some of them, according to the teachers, were from other communities with primary schools. This also was a sign of more effective teaching and learning in their classes.

The professionalism of the assistant HT and the P4/P5 teacher seemed to have been shaped partly by their backgrounds. Both had similar life histories in that both had encountered difficulties to continue their education, mainly due to the Dagomba-Konkomba conflict in the 1990s. The assistant HT said:

I was a cowboy [herdsman], following somebody's cows. Later, I went to school... When I was in class six, the second term of class six, there was a disaster [conflict] between Konkombas and Dagombas. The school was handled by Dagombas, so they had to leave...and the school was closed down.

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<sup>57</sup> Some officers, including the circuit supervisor in charge of Lesanyili, said that the HT was compelled to leave the previous school whose community members had made a plea to the DEO to transfer him and that he voluntarily chose his home community.

So, I moved to Bunbonayili where I join [enrolled in] form one... I stayed there for two years, but there was no effective teaching because there was only one teacher there. [The other] teachers [had] all left because they were Dagombas; they left, leaving only one.

So, I moved to Volta Region, Seconta District. When I went there, I was not allowed to go to school because the man I went to stay [with] wanted to use me for farming. So, I worked on the farm [for] one year without going to school.

So, one fortune [by chance a] man came and saw me and said...that there was need for me to go to school... When I went, I was asked to repeat form one... I completed JSS there... After my results, I had an aggregate of 16.

I had admission sent to me from A [name of a SSS] and B, Tamale. When I came home, going to Tamale was a problem because at that time, [there was] still a kind of fear between us, so I could not go to B. And A, too, the fee was [so] high...that my father could not afford [it].

The P4/P5 teacher went to a primary school in his hometown, which was “not functioning”, with only one teacher, who was neither regular nor punctual. He was sent to a family friend in Ponkujaku town. However, once an ethnic conflict between the Dagomba and the Konkomba erupted, he was compelled to leave Ponkujaku town for a Konkomba community, where he finished JSS3. He entered a technical SSS, but he found the teaching ineffective. He went to another SSS where he had to repeat Form 1, since the course he took was new to him.

The assistant HT had applied for admission to a TTC twice, in 2002 and 2004, without success. For the second application, even though he knew somebody who had promised to help him to secure a place, he still was unsuccessful. Similarly, the P4/P5 teacher had applied to a TTC with satisfactory grades at SSSCE, after taking science twice. However, while he did not get a place, he found that one of his friends had been admitted without a pass in science. According to him, he did not know the right person to help him at the right time. He was “disappointed” and said, “Only I was not fortunate.” As an alternative, he chose to go to a polytechnic in Accra, but came back due to his health problem. He again applied to and got a place at a polytechnic in Tamale in 2002. Although he started teaching as a pupil teacher in March 2002, his salary did not come as he expected to cater for admission fee. In 2004, he applied to a TTC; again he was “disappointed”. Then the UTDBE was introduced in 2005. The UTDBE is a programme both teachers had longed for. The P4/P5 teacher said:

I decided that once I struggled a lot and I did not get an admission, the only thing to do is to continue with this programme. So if I complete it, maybe somehow I would be financially independent to continue in any institution that I choose.

As he said, the UTDBE seems to provide a hope for untrained teachers to progress both academically and professionally. A combination of their past and their perceived future seems to encourage their committed attitudes to their pupils' learning.

#### **6.2.4. Key Findings from the Case in Ponkujaku**

Teachers in the same school in rural Ponkujaku are less likely to be homogeneous in their qualifications and affiliations. How teachers are brought together seems to depend partly on their personalities and whether they, especially the HT, are willing to share lives together, showing care and empathy to others. Similarly, they seem to need somebody with whom they can share their visions and values in order to maintain their active attitudes. The HT of Lesanyili did not seem to have anybody who understood and encouraged him, instead of blaming him. Indeed, in rural Ponkujaku, relationships with colleagues seemed crucial not only for teachers' physical well-being to meet basic needs, but also for their mutual encouragement and morale support.

There seems to be a gap between the teachers and the community in terms of what is required for quality education. Although the community has an interest in supporting education as well as teachers, the degree of community support may not meet teachers' expectations. It may be partly because the community might not have the capacity due to insufficient resources (poverty prevalent areas) and little experience in school management. Therefore, the community support may not be available as alternative 'incentive', as the government in collaboration with some development partners hoped to achieve through decentralisation.

Teachers' identities as committed teachers seem to be shaped by their background. Teachers who have had difficulty in continuing their education seem more committed to bringing up their younger ones, as they tend to appreciate educational opportunity they had as a whole, although it was not always "effective". Similarly, ethnicity may play a role in influencing the degree of commitment. In Ponkujaku's case, Konkomba teachers, who had

been oppressed by the Dagombas, may have faced more challenging situations. The Assistant HT of Lesanyili said that he would happily accept any post in a Konkomba community – all Konkomba communities in Ponkujaku were villages – no matter how small and/or far it was, knowing that there were not enough teachers. Forming part of a minority, in Ponkujaku's case, Konkomba, seems a motivating factor, as suggested by Hanushek et al. (2004).

The UTDBE might influence teachers' identities. On average, those taking the UTDBE had much higher attendance rates. It may help to enhance identities as teachers, provide skills and knowledge, opportunities to learn and, more importantly, qualifications. In this sense, it is a good incentive. On the other hand, those who are not a part of the UTDBE appear to have less commitment to teaching, as seen in the poor attendance of the YEP teachers in Jamune and the P2 teacher in Lesanyili. It may be partly because those without the UTDBE, especially young ones as in those cases, may not be able to see a link between what they are doing and their future. As a result, they may have difficulty in establishing identities as teachers. They may be disappointed from the beginning, knowing they were not given the same upgrade opportunities when they became teachers: the UTDBE is a 4-year programme with only a single intake in 2004/05 in Ponkujaku's case<sup>58</sup>. The UTDBE, as a temporary measure, could be a demotivating factor for those who cannot benefit from it.

There is little training for untrained teachers, either pupil teachers or YEP teachers. The UTDBE may be considered as one element of INSET for professional development; however, it is for those who are a part of the programme. Although both the GES and the YEP District Office are responsible for their teachers' training (GES and GNAT 2000; MoMYE 2006), untrained teachers lack professional orientation and what little there is, is normally in the hands of the HTs. An assumption that untrained teachers are more likely to be familiar with the context does not mean that they can manage the job automatically: they could be new to the school and the community environment, to teaching and learning, to class management, to colleague relationships and so on. Untrained teachers' needs should be explored further.

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<sup>58</sup> In Aumisoe's case, a single intake was in 2005/06.

Teachers' lives in Ponkujaku cannot be talked of from a professional aspect only. Their professional lives are intertwined with farming; upgrading programmes; and household chores for female teachers' and for male teachers without caretakers. Similarly, a teacher forms relationships not only in the school with their colleagues, and with pupils and their parents, but also with community members. Indeed, those play a key role in teachers' private lives. Although some describe the characteristics of rural life as 'apparent simplicity' (Keith 1989 p3), teachers' lives in rural areas are complex.

Teacher motivation seems context specific, due to the complexity of teachers' lives. Having discussed Ponkujaku in Savannah, I will now move to another "deprived" district in Aumisoë in the wealthier Ashanti Region in the forest zone where cash crop farming, such as cocoa and palm oil, is the main industry and food farming is for people's own consumptions. Some communities have gold mine sites.

#### **6.2.5. Nakaosè, Aumisoë District**

##### ***6.2.5.1. Description of the Community***

Nakaosè, Aumisoë, headed by an Akan chief, has approximately 40 households surrounded by cocoa farms, as well as other smaller groups of houses. Houses do not have strict boundaries – unlike in Ponkujaku – and somebody's yard could be a path leading somewhere. There are two major ethnic groups: the Akan – including the Fanti – and the Ewe; as well as a small number of northerners.

Water is accessible throughout the year from two boreholes outside the village that provide enough potable water for the community. There is no market, but two kiosks provide basic goods such as soap, batteries, biscuits and sandals. Rice is the only staple that is always available, albeit at a higher price than in towns such as Obuasi, according to the teachers. Other ingredients such as tomatoes, onions and dried fish, as well as corn and cassava dough can be obtained from women or children who sell them door-to-door.

**Picture 7 Nakaose**

Nakaose.



Nakaose community, with a table structure for cocoa processing in the middle.

Source: ethnographic research.

Community members engage in cash crop farming, mainly cocoa and/or palm oil production. They also cultivate food crops and fruits for their own consumption. Additionally, there are gold mines near the community and young men in particular engage in illegal small-scale mining.

Unlike those in Ponkujaku, Nakaose raises funds for community development. Each household contributes the equivalent of 1 kg of cocoa from every 65 kg sack it sells. Thanks to this venture, a cocoa storage barn, a community centre, public toilets, school buildings and teachers' quarters have all been constructed.

#### ***6.5.2.2. Description of the School***

Nakaose Primary School and JSS, with 169 and 59 pupils on the roll respectively<sup>59</sup>, were located outside the community and headed by an HT, and thus were called basic school<sup>60</sup>. A pupil teacher was the acting HT, being authorised for the position by his circuit supervisor since two of the school's experienced trained teachers did not attend regularly, with attendance rates of only about 35–40%, and the other one was a newly trained teacher.

In total, there were nine teachers for the basic school (excluding KG teacher): three trained teachers and six untrained teachers, with the untrained teachers being two pupil teachers,

<sup>59</sup> School record of the academic year 2007/08. It showed far fewer gender disparities than those in Ponkujaku. The primary one to six had 90 boys and 79 girls and the JSS one and two had 26 boys and 25 girls. The JSS did not have JSS three for that year.

<sup>60</sup> One of three schools in Aumisoe District.

and four volunteers (table 38). Volunteer teachers tended to come to teach and leave after a short time. There had been another female volunteer teacher in the first term, but she had stayed for only two months. Two volunteer teachers out of the four had taught no more than one term by the time of the second ethnographic research, which took place one month prior to the end of the academic year. None of those with short-term teaching periods were taking the UTDBE.

Teachers' ethnicity was quite diverse, unlike the cases in Ponkujaku: most teachers were Akan, followed by Ewe, Fanti, and Kusasi from the north. Only one of the volunteer teachers, who taught at JSS level, was female.

All the three trained teachers were non-natives of the community. Similarly, female teacher(s) happened to have come to the community due to their marriages. None of the trained teachers lived in the community with their families or stayed in the community either over weekends or during vacation periods, unlike the untrained teachers – the majority of whom were originally from the community or were from nearby and lived with their families.

Nakaose basic school was chosen for this study mainly due to a high pass rate at the BECE, which I thought would reflect some good practice of teachers and/or community support. However, the community was worried about the poorer standard of education, as the chairman of the unit committee –one of the SMC members – expressed his concern, saying, “Our school is collapsing.” Indeed, when a group of 17 community members agreed to talk to me, the issue that was discussed in the greatest depth was the lack of teachers, and particularly the absenteeism of the trained teachers’.

**Table 38 Details of teachers of Nakaose Basic School**

|   | Age | Gende | Qualifi-<br>cation | Roles                            | Years in<br>teaching        | Marital<br>Status | Native | Family | Prog. | Attendance Rate in 2007/08 |           |           |              |
|---|-----|-------|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|-------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
|   |     |       |                    |                                  |                             |                   |        |        |       | Term<br>1                  | Term<br>2 | Term<br>3 | Ave-<br>rage |
| 1 | 36  | M     | Pupil              | Acting HT<br>P5 & P6             | 1997-99<br>1999-03<br>2005- | M                 | √      | √      | √     | 83.3                       | 83.6      | 74.2      | 83.7         |
| 2 | 35  | M     | Voln.              | P4                               | 2005-                       | M                 | √      | √      | √     | 50.0                       | 36.1      | 74.2      | 49.4         |
| 3 | 32  | M     | Voln.              | P3                               | 2005-                       | M                 | √      | √      | √     | 33.8                       | 13.1      | 22.6      | 24.1         |
| 4 | 54  | M     | Pupil              | P2                               | 1996-                       | M                 |        | √      |       | 67.6                       | 68.9      | 58.1      | 66.3         |
| 5 | 56  | M     | Trained            | P1                               | 2003-                       | M                 |        |        |       | 33.8                       | 42.6      | 35.5      | 37.3         |
| 6 | 37  | M     | Trained            | JSS<br>Science,<br>Agric         | 2006-                       | S                 |        |        |       | 39.2                       | 42.6      | 45.2      | 41.6         |
| 7 | 25  | M     | Trained            | JSS Math,<br>English             | 2007-                       | S                 |        |        | √     | 83.1                       | 60.8      | 32.3      | 57.2         |
| 8 | 21  | F     | Voln.              | JSS Social<br>Study, Pre-<br>Voc | 2008-                       | M                 |        | √      |       | n/a                        | 75.9      | 58.1      | 69.4         |
| 9 | 30  | M     | Voln.              | Any class<br>(Primary-<br>JSS)   | 2008-                       | S                 |        | √      |       | n/a                        | n/a       | 100.0     | 100.0        |

Gender: M=male; F=female. Marital status: M=married; S=single. Qualification: Voln. =Volunteer.

Native: √=Teacher from the community. Family: √=Teacher living with his family in the community.

Prog.: √=Teacher taking an upgrade programme.

n/a=not applicable. They were not at post.

Source: ethnographic research.

### **6.2.5.3. Living Conditions of Teachers.**

Teachers without family houses were accommodated by the community. There were two teacher quarters (TQs) built using community funds and community labour. A four-bedroom TQ with a separated building for the toilet and bathroom with cement walls and a tin roof, accommodated the HT and his family, even though he was a native of the community, and the other six-bedroom house catered for the three trainee teachers and two volunteer teachers.

**Picture 8 A teacher working in his cocoa farm**

The HT seemed to have a well established life in Nakaose with his family, his wife and three children. After school and at weekends, he worked on his cocoa farm he had inherited from his father: unlike other community members, he used chemicals for weeding, one of the major activities in cocoa farming through which some of the volunteer



teachers in Nakaose earned an income. He and his family also cultivated foodstuffs like plantain and coco-yam, and fruit, such as bananas and pineapples. Moreover, his wife was one of the vendors in the school premises who sold porridge and bean cakes twice a week on average. Socially, he preached at a nearby church and was the secretary of a youth association and an executive committee. The HT seemed to have not only economical security, but also recognition as an important member of the community. Although he complained about his poor salary, particularly about the difficulty of continuing the UTDBE, his life seemed to be manageable, with the community's provision of free accommodation and fire wood for the cooking.

The three trained teachers' lives seemed different and much more difficult. They did not consider the TQ, where they occupied three bedrooms, to be decent accommodation, although I thought it was. One of them described his room as having no ceiling; there was obviously a tin roof, but an open space between it and the wall, hence, no ceiling. He complained bitterly about the insects, especially mosquitoes at night (indeed, I got many bites, although I used insect repellent). The TQ had no toilet; the teachers had to use the public ones at the edge of the community – and a separate bathroom built from wood and leaves, but unlike the HT's bathroom, it had no roof. The trained teachers' lives in Nakaose might have been more inconvenient than those in Obuasi where their families lived.

A more challenging issue for the trained teachers appeared to be food. Living in the community was problematic because of the lack of foodstuff for sale and, when it was available, it tended to be more expensive than elsewhere. One of the teachers commented:

The community has to encourage us. The encouragement we need from them is not that they should give us money, some foodstuff, those things. Here even though you have money, it is difficult to buy foodstuff because they use the land for only cocoa farming, cocoa farming, cocoa farming throughout. So, the standard [cost] of living here is high.

They had shared their concerns with the community, which had promised to construct a teachers' farm, but nothing had been done. They thus perceived that the community was not concerned with the well-being of its teachers. Another teacher noted:

Always, they say [what] they will do for us...but nothing... They always want teachers to be present; they always want teachers to be in school. That is only [all]

the community wants. But they don't think about our survival. They want to see teachers in school, period.

Therefore, they had concluded that the community was not willing to give them much support. The same teacher said:

Anytime we are coming from Obuasi, we have to buy own foodstuff. And they [the community of Nakaose] have a kind of mentality that the government is paying us, so why can [should] villagers give us anything.

None of the trained teachers farmed in Nakaose. All brought food for themselves from a town where their families lived. Their vulnerability in terms of food acquisition without support by the community was obvious and thus affected their well-being. However, before discussing how these trained teachers were perceived by the community, there will be a discussion of how the teachers lived among themselves.

#### ***6.2.5.4. Relationships with Colleagues***

Teachers in Nakaose seemed individualistic and behaved distantly to each other. Although the trained teachers lived in conditions similar to those at Jamune, that is, living in the same TQ without caretakers, they did not share their household chores or spend their free time together. They cooked and ate individually. One of them said that normally they stayed in their own rooms independently.

This pattern may have resulted from their low attendance rates. However, the youngest trained teacher, who was newly trained, had not shown irregular attendance initially: his attendance record deteriorated from 83.1% in the first term, to 60.8% in the second and 32.3% in the third. He had accepted the post in the belief that he could learn a great deal. He explained:

It [a posting in a rural area] makes me know more. I believe a teacher should learn more. If you are in [an] urban [area] your all [whole] life, it's somehow faulty somewhere. But if you experience this kind of life, it's fine. It makes you more complete.

In the third term, however, he started taking a distance learning course unrelated to the teaching profession, a diploma in business and administration. He said, "I will be teaching for a while. But I believe that I might divert sometime." He seemed to become quickly

disillusioned, due to such a relaxed professional culture, as observed by Casely-Hayford (2000) in northern Ghana, and due to the lack of any interrelationship among teachers.

The HT in Nakaose appeared not to be a leader like the HT of Jamune with whom the other teachers shared their concerns, including the shortage of foodstuff. On the contrary, he did not seem to empathise with his trained teachers. He rather thought that the teachers were given enough support by the provision of their accommodation, merely saying, “I don’t know their problems.” The firewood collected by pupils for teachers on Fridays was not allocated to the trained teachers, as they had left for a town by taking an early afternoon bus before the school closed – the last bus for a day. The HT rarely visited the other TQ. An HT’s supportive relationship with his teachers, showing his empathy, seems to be an important factor in shaping teachers’ positive perceptions towards their job.

#### ***6.2.5.5. Relationship with the Community***

The lack of teachers – more specifically trained teachers’ absenteeism – was the biggest concern of the community members, as mentioned earlier. One of the SMC members observed that it resulted in parents’ having less interest in sending their children to Nakaose Basic School, saying:

We all were happy to send our children to school... [But] some people don’t want to send their children to school. The reason is that we lack of teachers here. Teachers come one week only twice.

In Nakaose, there were other teachers, whose attendance rates were as poor as those of the trained teachers. However, the community seemed to have a greater degree of dissatisfaction with the trained teachers, acknowledging that untrained teachers, especially volunteer teachers, had to make ends meet, as contribution by the community to them did not cater for their living. The chairman of the unit committee expressed his frustration, saying, “They [trained teachers] are paid by the government... At the end of the day, they collect their salary. They’ve got quarters. What again [more]? ”

All of the trained teachers were aware of the community’s wish that teachers stay in the community to teach. The newly trained teacher said:

The community, they are somehow, they are nice people. They are interactive. They can interact with you and they can chat. They are not violent to teachers. They respect teachers. They wish teachers are here to help them.

However, the trained teachers did not seem to think that their survival needs, that is, food requirements, had been addressed and, with little encouragement from the community, they tended to become demotivated.

There seemed to be a gap between community and teachers in Nakaose in terms of an understanding of the notion of welfare. The trained teachers considered life to be hard in Nakaose and felt underappreciated, although they had readily agreed to the rural posting. On the other hand, the community assumed that trained teachers in particular were well paid as government employees, and thought that it had played its part fully in supporting them by providing a TQ.

Accommodation itself does not ensure teachers' well-being. Teachers need to be supported by the community for survival. However, that support does not come automatically. It seems conditional upon the community being convinced that teachers are working.

#### ***6.2.5.6. Teachers' Identities and Personalities***

One of volunteer teachers showed what seemed to me to be a high level of professionalism. In addition to attending regularly and punctually –100% attendance rate for a month of teaching at the time of the study – he tended to cover any classes that were without teachers from primary to JSS (there were always one or two classes without teachers during my stay). His attitude to maximising contact hours with pupils was distinctive in a context where teachers tended to minimise contact time, preferring to talk with other teachers and/or community members; often I had to insist that I would not interview teachers during school hours. He said, “I would like children to learn something at school before they leave every day.”

He had been a private basic school teacher in the regional capital, Kumasi for six years. He said that his attitudes had been developed through working with the proprietor of his former school whose attitudes did not sound authoritarian. He recalled:

He [the proprietor] gave me notes of training colleges, how to prepare lesson notes, how to move with some children, how to cope with a stubborn class, how to cope with polite people in the class, a lot... Sometimes, Reverend [the proprietor] comes and sits in the back of the class. He would not ask questions... If you fall short anywhere, after the class he may call you and say, “My good friend, you’ve done a good job, but this place next time take it through this”. Because of that I was able to work with him and I’ve become a professional through that experience.

He also found his personal development through being a teacher. He said:

What I got from him is how to talk to people. He taught me personal relations, too, how to talk to people, how to announce things, how to report. I’ve got professional, being a teacher.

The proprietor of his previous school appeared to have been supportive not only of his teachers’ professional development, but also of their well-being. The volunteer teacher remembered that he sometimes found yam and other things left at his house. He was not well paid, in his opinion; he received ₦35 a month in 2000 and around ₦55 in 2006. However, it was manageable with a daily one-hour extra class, which brought in extra money, and with lunch provided every day. More importantly, the proprietor was approachable, when the volunteer teacher had any difficulty. He said:

If I have a difficulty, I go him, “Reverend, I am facing this and that.” If he can do, he would do it for you. If he cannot,...

There seemed to be mutual respect and appreciation between the two. He recalled:

He told me he didn’t want me to moving around as uneducated boy since he had taken me as his child...He trained me for his school...When he planed, he helped me, I, too, helped him one way or the other. That is why I was able to work with him.

The volunteer teacher<sup>61</sup> had decided not to teach at the private school anymore because of the poor remuneration. However, his six years working in such condition suggests that poor remuneration may not be the most demotivating factor and that realisation of personal and professional development, which provides meaningfulness to the job for teachers and demonstrates the usefulness of teachers to others, can offset a poor salary for a while.

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<sup>61</sup> He was volunteering at Nakaose Basic School, while he was waiting for a job appointment as a journalist.

On the other hand, professional development seems to require the daily (or frequent) support of supervisors whose attitudes also indicate partnership and mutual appreciation. More teachers are expected to be professional in terms of qualifications, through upgrade programmes. However, they may not find actual personal and professional development such as the volunteer teacher had found. Teacher development seems to need to widen its perspective to include professional culture at the school level as well as the relationship between the teachers and the DEO, who is in a position to support teachers through monitoring.

In Nakaose, the misunderstanding between the trained teachers and the community, including the HT, seemed to hinder each party from showing empathy to the other. Indeed, I felt there was a much more distant relationship between the two in Nakaose than in the cases in Ponkujaku. It appears that the community cannot always provide a supportive environment. I will now discuss another community, bigger than Nakaose, but with similar socio-cultural and economic characteristics.

#### **6.2.6. Manekanto, Aumisoe District**

##### ***6.2.6.1. Description of the Community***

Manekanto, with its two communities – the Akan and the Fanti – governed by their respective chiefs, is located in a hilly area surrounded by cocoa and palm oil farms, as well as forest reserve. The whole village has approximately 100 households. The Akan forms the majority, but the communities have a diversity of ethnicities, partly as a result of migration for agricultural purposes from different parts of the country.

**Picture 9 A gold mine in Manekanto**



The communities have good access to water throughout the year from six boreholes. There is a large market on Tuesdays and Fridays, in addition to several kiosks that are open every

day. Fresh vegetables and basic consumables are readily available, but there is sometimes a shortage of other foodstuff.

Most community members are settler cocoa and/or palm oil farmers, working on others' plantations in return for a share of the produce. Illegal small-scale mining is also another major source of income (picture 9), and the mine where the Ashanti Gold Company (AGC) operated until 2005 is a 30-minute walk away. The men mine at this site, while the women just dig ditches in the village after it has rained.

#### ***6.2.6.2. Description of the School***

The Manekanto Primary School with an enrolment of 254 (139 boys and 115 girls) was headed by a female trained teacher, and had five teachers – one trained and four untrained teachers, specifically, three pupil teachers and one volunteer teacher. Similarly, the JSS with an enrolment of 66 (37 boys and 29 girls) was headed by a male trained teacher, and had five teachers, specifically, three trained and two untrained teachers, who were pupil teachers. The primary HT was the only female and none of the teachers were from the community. Only one teacher, the volunteer teacher, who was a pastor as well, lived in the community with his family; except for one teacher, who commuted from another community relatively nearby, the rest stayed in the TQ (table 39 and 40).

I planned to study the primary HT in-depth, after I had received a good impression about her on my first visit due to her efforts in a PTA meeting to sort out the delayed payment for the volunteer teacher and her teaching with lesson plans open, in addition to recommendations by the DEO for this study. However, the primary school was the only case without up-to-date teachers' attendance records<sup>62</sup>. During my second visit to the school, I was told by some of the HT's staff, and community members, that the HT – who was off sick at the time – did not attend regularly, perhaps twice a week. On the other hand, the volunteer teacher attended regularly and punctually; although his attendance rate for the first term was 0%, according to him and other teachers, his HT had told him not to sign the attendance registry as he was not a GES employee.

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<sup>62</sup> Records had been kept for two thirds of the first term, only the first two days of the second term and not at all in the third term.

**Table 39 Details of teachers of Manekanto Primary School**

|   | Age | Gende | Qualifi-<br>cation | Roles   | Years in<br>teaching | Marital<br>Status | Native | Family | Prog. | Attendance Rate in 2007/08 |           |           |              |
|---|-----|-------|--------------------|---|----------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|-------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
|   |     |       |                    |   |                      |                   |        |        |       | Term<br>1                  | Term<br>2 | Term<br>3 | Ave-<br>rage |
| 1 | 48  | F     | Trained            | HT, P1  | 2004-                | M                 |        |        | √     | 57.4                       | na        | na        | n/a          |
| 2 | 25  | M     | Pupil              | Assistant<br>HT<br>P4 and<br>P5 /P6 <sup>63</sup> | 2005-                | M                 |        |        | √     | 25.5                       | n/a       | n/a       | n/a          |
| 3 | 26  | M     | Pupil              | P4 and<br>P5 /P6 <sup>64</sup>                    | 2005-                | S                 |        |        | √     | 25.5                       | n/a       | n/a       | n/a          |
| 4 | 52  | M     | Volun.             | P3  | 2004-                | M                 |        | √      | √     | 0.0                        | n/a       | n/a       | n/a          |
| 5 | 51  | M     | Pupil              | P2  | 2005-                | M                 |        |        |       | 70.2                       | n/a       | n/a       | n/a          |

Gender: M=male; F=female. Marital status: M=married; S=single. Qualification: Voln. =Volunteer.

Native: √=Teacher from the community. Family: √=Teacher living with his family in the community.

Prog.: √=Teacher taking an upgrade programme

Source: ethnographic research.

**Table 40 Details of teachers of Manekanto JSS**

|   | Age | Gende | Qualifi-<br>cation | Roles   | Years in<br>teaching | Marital<br>Status | Native | Family | Prog. | Attendance Rate in 2007/08 |           |           |              |
|---|-----|-------|--------------------|---|----------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|-------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
|   |     |       |                    |   |                      |                   |        |        |       | Term<br>1                  | Term<br>2 | Term<br>3 | Ave-<br>rage |
| 1 | 36  | M     | Trained            | HT,<br>Science                                  | 2004-<br>(TT)        | S                 |        |        | √     | 83.1                       | 88.3      | 78.1      | 84.0         |
| 2 | 32  | M     | Trained            | Assistant<br>HT<br>Agric<br>science,<br>Pre-Voc | 2005-                | S                 |        |        | √     | 81.7                       | 73.3      | 78.1      | 77.9         |
| 3 | 54  | M     | Pupil              | Twi,<br>religions<br>and moral                  | 2003-                | M                 |        |        |       | 53.5                       | 60.0      | 53.1      | 55.8         |
| 4 | 25  | M     | Trained            | Maths   | 2005-                | S                 |        |        |       | 73.2                       | 53.3      | 62.5      | 63.8         |
| 5 | 26  | M     | Pupil              | Social<br>studies,<br>English                   | 2005-                | S                 |        |        | √     | 93.0                       | 95.0      | 84.4      | 92.0         |

Gender: M=male; F=female. Marital status: M=married; S=single.

Native: √=Teacher from the community. Family: √=Teacher living with his family in the community.

Prog.: √=Teacher taking an upgrade programme

n/a=not available.

Source: ethnographic research.

<sup>63</sup> He taught mathematics and Twi.

<sup>64</sup> He taught Social Studies, Science, and English.

#### **6.2.6.3. *Living Conditions of Teachers***

Eight teachers lived in the TQ located at the edge of the community and built by the DA. It consisted of four two-bedroom houses with a kitchen, toilet and bathroom. As the primary HT, being a woman, occupied a house, two pupil teachers shared a room.

All eight teachers living in the TQ, except the primary HT, farmed in the community. They cultivated foodstuff, such as plantain, coco-yam, and maize, renting pieces of land and sharing half of the harvest with the owner of the land. The two young pupil teachers were also involved in illegal mining. Because of these economic activities, some of the teachers stayed in the community over some weekends and during vacation periods. The second job seemed an important factor by which teachers are physically attached to the community.

There were kiosks here and a large market took place twice a week, though this did not necessarily mean that the teachers could get what they wanted, even in terms of staple foodstuff. One trained teacher noted:

What we can eat, sometimes we cannot find. We cannot get food to buy and eat, not [only] the ingredients<sup>65</sup>, but foodstuff [staples], something: yam, cassava, coco-yam, maybe kenkey [fermented maize]. At times, you hold money, but you cannot get it.

It appears that teachers' well-being may not be secured only with accommodation, a regular salary, and even with markets. Food issues seem more serious in Aumisoe than in Ponkujaku.

#### **6.2.6.4. *Relationships with Colleagues***

The primary school and the JSS operated as two independent schools: they had morning assembly and closing assembly separately; and each HT had his or her office. The primary HT's office, unlike that of the JSS HT, was closed while she was not around. Indeed, the primary teachers' attendance book, which was not up-to-date, was kept in a cupboard in an unlocked classroom all the time. Her office was not a place for other teachers to enter freely, unlike in the JSS's; her office cupboard held some teaching and learning materials.

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<sup>65</sup> Vegetables, such as tomatoes and onions, and small dried fish, which were used in soups and stews.

The primary HT's professional life, as depicted by her staff, seemed quite different from the impression that the DEO had of her. The teachers suggested that this might be because the DEO treated the HT differently to how it treated the other teachers, often listening to the HT's point of view and not to anyone else's – who were untrained. As a result, the HT had a closer relationship with the DEO than with her own staff, which seemed to prevent some officers from seeing what was really going on and resulted in them valuing the opinions of other teachers at the school less. One of her untrained teachers said:

She is accountable to no one here. None of [the] teachers can go [to] the office. Rather, she is accountable to those people in the office, that is, the director. So, if she goes to the office and says everything [is] good, then everything is good. If a teacher goes to the office, [they will say about him or her], "Oh, this man came and what [he] told is not the truth." But this is the truth. But because the headmistress has been there to narrate a story to them, ...they do not mind [listen to] you. What they ask you is, "Are you a headmaster?" The moment you say "no," they will tell you, "If you are not a headmaster, go home."

Another teacher said, "If the headmaster has a good relationship with the director and a bad relationship with us, he has no problem." It appeared that the DEO was not only ritualised in its monitoring (Hedges 2002), but also encouraged poorly performing trained teachers, with, in the main, too much emphasis on teaching qualifications and not enough on actual work practice. Some of untrained teachers, especially younger ones, did not hesitate to share their intentions to leave teaching altogether, once they finished the UTD BE. They were frustrated in their professional lives, finding that their efforts were not only invisible to the DEO, but that also their existence was not important to the system. Their willingness to support younger ones itself does not seem to sustain teachers' long-term commitment to teaching. There needs to be more of an emphasis on occupational culture to examine how to address teacher motivation.

The JSS HT was an opposite type of teacher to the primary HT. He was regular and punctual, although his attendance rate of 84% was not very high: he was attending a degree programme in business studies that had biweekly classes in Kumasi. He had a good relationship with his colleagues in both their professional and private lives: he was approachable by any teacher of both primary and JSS and male teachers sometimes cooked and ate together. On the other hand, he did not spend as much private time with his

colleagues as did teachers in Jamune (see box 3). He was planning to leave teaching altogether, mainly due to his frustration in the relationship with the community and the DEO, as will be discussed in the next section and the next chapter respectively. This suggests that having hard-working colleagues does not always sustain teachers' commitment. Teachers are subjected to influence from factors outside the school, such as the community and the DEO.

**Box 3 The JSS HT's daily life**

The HT of JSS got up at around 6 am, bathed and listened to the radio news. He left the TQ for school around 7:15 am and was in school by 7:30 am. Most days, he was the first one to sign in the attendance registry. He often bought prepared food for his breakfast and lunch in the community. Occasionally, he cooked by himself or with his male colleagues. He often did not eat dinner and went to his bedroom by 7 pm.

**6.2.6.5. Relationship with the Community**

All community members I interviewed, including the two chiefs, SMC chairman and two women, said that they thought education was important and were willing to send their children to school. They also said that the school had become “more disciplined”, with attendance by both teachers and pupils being more regular and punctual, which was an indication of the improvement. However, Manekanto was the only case where I felt mistrust and tension between the teachers and the community, rather than the misunderstanding seen in the case of Nakaose, which was due to a difference in the notion of teachers' well-being. Indeed, both teachers and members of the community used words such as “quarrel” and “fights” when they were describing the situation.

Teachers acknowledged some support by the community, such as the occasional provision of foodstuff, but they found that the community members had much less interest in education than the teachers could wish. This situation is not peculiar to Manekanto, as it is common to teachers in all three above mentioned cases. When teachers in Manekanto made a request for pupils to be prevented from watching the video shows until late night, they were told, “You teachers are earning. Are you saying we should not earn? Do you say we should not eat?” Teachers in Jamune had similar reactions from some of the community members, according to them, but they attributed it to parents' “not understanding the

essence of education”. It did not seem to harm the relationship between the teachers and the community. However, those in Manekanto described the exchanges as “insults” with complaints and disagreement expressed in a disrespectful manner. The JSS HT said:

If there is something about your child and you cannot come to us to discuss, what else can we do to help the child? It’s a 2-way communication. What a child does in the house and what he does at school, two of us sit down and discuss... [But] parents pass unnecessary comments [behind teachers’ backs].

Teachers said that they were challenged by some of parents/guardians about more fundamental issues. When teachers advised them to buy exercise books and stationery, the parents/guardians told them that education should be free and the school had the capitation grant to cater for those. The delay of payment for two terms for the volunteer teacher, although his dedication had been recognised by his P3 pupils<sup>66</sup>, was always addressed in PTA meetings, but the wages were still due. At one point, he had to stop studying for the UTDBE due to financial difficulties. Teachers tended to observe that parents were reluctant to support education or teachers, while they could spend money on funerals.

Teachers in Manekanto seemed to attribute what was happening to the low level of respect they had in the community. Indeed, teachers complained about the lack of respect that the community seemed to have for them; in the other schools, teachers felt at least respected, although they did not receive the support they would have liked. Some teachers thought their salary was low and the fact that the villagers could make more money through farming and illegal gold mining was felt to be a reason why teachers received less respect. One untrained teacher said:

Here, when they [community members] go there [to the gold mines], they get ¢30 – some get ¢50 – when you, as a teacher, [earn] ¢1 a day. So, you are [a] little man to them, so they have no respect for you. So, when they come to school, some of [the] kids don’t respect the teachers.

A trained teacher reiterated the point:

People here go for gold mining or farming. They make money; they earn more. They don’t respect teachers who can’t earn like them.

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<sup>66</sup> The volunteer teacher had taught the class since his pupils had been P1. When he announced that he would stop teaching due to the delay of payment for two terms, P3 pupils went to him to beg him to continue teaching them. This was confirmed by other teachers as well. In addition, the number of P3 remained large compared to P2’s.

Another untrained teacher said:

Their concern is to get money quick. They don't think anything else. When they get money, they wouldn't do anything good. Even they waste it. They don't use money for something important or proper, but for buying dresses to go to a funeral.

Teachers' disappointment that they do not get enough community support might be greater if they perceive the community as being financially capable.

Teachers also pointed out there was less solidarity among community members, partly because the community consisted of two sub-communities, each with its own chief. They perceived that community members tended to be interested in their people's presence rather than the development as a whole group. One untrained teacher said:

If somebody gets up to do something for the community, then somebody else decides to pull the person down, destroy the plan, and destroy the person, so that that person will not achieve the plan for the community ... At the end of the day, the person doesn't have the mind to help the community.

A trained teacher said:

They [community members] are from different, different, different towns. Because they are not the same tribe, they do not work [as one community]. They do not have that belief. The solidarity is very weak. I am from this town, you are from that town. They do not see the reason they should support something good ... They cherish funerals rather than [communal] labour. They cherish funerals. For that one, they are one.

On the other hand, some community members indicated that their reluctance to work with teachers partly resulted from teachers' attitudes; teachers were perceived to be aggressive to enquiries made by the community. One of the community members said:

If they [community members] speak about problems and teachers hear that, there will be quarrels. So most are afraid to speak of any problems and about what is going on. So if you ask someone anything, they don't have anything to say, because they are afraid. They keep everything in their minds. So they say no problem to you, because teachers go and fight against them. That is a problem.

The same member pointed out the lack of accountability of the school for its capitation grant. He explained:

Many people ask what about the capitation grant money. We don't know what they are doing in the school. We don't see that money. So people are worried about that

money. Where is it? ...We don't know if the money is used for the school. We are annoyed.

Some other community members were also very negative about some teachers' use of corporal punishment; one of fathers said that one of his sons had stopped going to school because of a fear of being caned. Indeed, although teachers thought it necessary to discipline "stubborn" pupils, who were absent from or late for school and failed to do home work, what I saw with full force was not an instilling of "discipline"; rather, it was abuse. I felt it might be a sign of teachers' frustration. The lack of respect for teachers may have resulted partially from their attitudes, such as some teachers' absenteeism, the perceived lack of accountability regarding the use of the capitation grant, the use of corporal punishment, and the unfriendly attitudes to enquiries.

The case of Manekanto, similar to the case of trained teachers in Nakaose, suggests that respect for teachers is not automatically accorded by the community, nor is support for the teachers. The community needs to be convinced that the teachers are performing and are ready to listen to the members. Similarly, teachers need evidence of the community's interest and intention to support education as a partner. Each may encourage the other positively or negatively. In other words, both need to be encouraged to fulfil the 'social contract' (Essuman 2010).

On the other hand, the negative spiral of mistrust between the teacher and the community may have been mitigated if there had been leader(s) who could listen to each side. Without leadership of the community, teachers seem to be put in a discouraging position where they cannot talk with community members rationally about education, including any misunderstandings that may have arisen.

#### ***6.2.6.6. Teachers' Identities and Personalities***

My initial intention of staying in the community was to study the primary HT's life. However, I shifted from studying her to focusing on the JSS HT, not because she was absent during my second stay, but because the JSS HT was a committed teacher who was trying to maximise pupils' learning. On the other hand, he was a very dissatisfied teacher and intended to leave the job in the near future.

The JSS HT's virtue as a teacher seemed to be shaped partly by his Christian belief. He said:

To be a successful man or to be a scholar, best way to pass through is a teacher. When you come to Ghana here, teachers take care of children. Teachers don't easily get entangled with problems. God has made such ways so that teachers are always saved.

After teaching at a primary school as a trained teacher for six years in another region, the JSS HT pursued an HND in marketing. He was posted to Manekanto JSS in 2004 as National Service Scheme (NSS) personnel. The following year, he decided to remain in teaching, not as a part of the NSS but as a professional teacher under the GES.

In his second year headship by the time of study, he seemed very frustrated, partly finding it difficult to work with some of parents and the community. He thought that there was not much positive interaction with them, with many ill words having been spoken, although he desired two-way communication, as indicated in the quotation in the previous section. Then he tended to think that he was not performing as he wanted and began to question his usefulness. He seemed to be losing his confidence. He explained:

It has discouraged me, accepting this posting. People know me as somebody who is very disciplined and hard-working. If at the end of the day I'm not able to deliver, what do they say? That means that it damages my already-built image.

Teachers' feelings of usefulness seem important for them to continue teaching positively. Those feelings appear to be nourished in relation not only to their pupils, but also pupils' parents and the community. This case suggests that teachers' identities as professionals could be undermined if they feel unappreciated.

Manekanto was a community where the majority of teachers found it difficult to work with the community. I will now discuss another community, ethnically different from the other two cases, where teachers appreciated the community and vice versa.

#### **6.2.7. Asonbwa, Aumisoe District**

Asonbwa was added to this study, even though I had only five days to stay with them, that is, less than a half to one third of the time I had spent with the other cases. After conducting ethnographic research in the two cases above, I decided to return to Asonbwa, as I could

not forget that all seven teachers I met on my first visit had said that the community was “good” and “supportive”. Moreover, I wanted to explore why a young female trained teacher in her late 20s, the JSS HT, would work in a remote village.

#### ***6.2.7.1. Description of the Community***

Asonbwa, headed by its Ewe chief, is located in a hilly, forested area. It has about 30 households in a relatively flat clearing that is surrounded by cocoa farms and small cottages. The chief wields considerable power, being ‘enstooled’, that is, authorised and recognised by the Akan chief (Asonbwa is on Akan land). The former is thus entitled to govern his people, allocate land and mediate in disputes on behalf of the Akan chief. The predominant ethnic group is the Ewe.

Two boreholes provide potable water for the community, and water from the river is also used for all purposes. There are two kiosks, where people can obtain basic goods such as soap, batteries, sugar, biscuits and tinned fish. Imported rice is always available. Locally cultivated foodstuff may be directly purchased from farmers. However, there is no regular market, although some people sell foodstuff such as corn dough and smoked fish from door to door. After church services, people take the opportunity to trade ready cooked food; smoked fish; fresh vegetables like okra and tomatoes; and *shea* butter.

Each household engages in arable farming, mainly for its own needs, and depends economically on cocoa production. People also used to fish in the river, but they say that the catch is no longer abundant.

Asonbwa has a similar community fund to that of Nakaose – a contribution equivalent to 1 kg from every 65 kg sack of cocoa. Two school buildings, a library and teachers’ quarters have been constructed with the use of the fund and by community labour<sup>67</sup>.

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<sup>67</sup> In Asonbwa, Tuesday was a regular ‘labour day’, when people were obliged to do communal work instead of carrying on with their usual farming jobs. There was a similar arrangement in the other two case study schools in Aumisoe, but not in those in Ponkujaku.

### 6.2.7.2. Description of the School

Uniquely, Asonbwa had a small playground with a slide, swings and see-saws, in addition to the library with some books from the Ghana Book Trust and an international chocolate company. The company had been impressed by the community's effort to support education and provided playground facilities.

There were six teachers for the primary school, with an enrolment of 204 pupils (93 boys and 111 girls), and five teachers for the JSS, with an enrolment of 100 pupils (55 boys and 45 girls)<sup>68</sup> (table 41 and 42). Of the 11 teachers, all were Ewe except for one Akan, who taught Twi<sup>69</sup> at the JSS, and three were female teachers. The Ewe male teachers were descendants of migrants for cocoa farming to that area and stayed in their family houses. The female teachers, on the other hand, had come to the community through marriage. Two male teachers were single and the rest were married. What was different from the other cases was that all the teachers lived in the community or nearby with their families. Teachers without family accommodation were accommodated by the community.

**Table 41 Details of teachers of Asonbwa JSS**

|   | Age | Gender | Qualification | Roles                               | Years in teaching | Marital Status | Native | Family | Prog. | Attendance Rate in 2007/08 |        |        |         |
|---|-----|--------|---------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|--------|--------|-------|----------------------------|--------|--------|---------|
|   |     |        |               |                                     |                   |                |        |        |       | Term 1                     | Term 2 | Term 3 | Average |
| 1 | 29  | F      | Trained       | HT, science, ICT                    | 2005-             | M              |        | √      | √     | 79.4                       | 93.2   | 67.6   | 82.0    |
| 2 | 25  | M      | Volun.        | Assit. HT, maths and social studies | 2004-             | S              |        | √      | √     | 51.5                       | 71.2   | 50.0   | 58.4    |
| 3 | 48  | M      | Pupil         | Twi, Pre-T, Pre-V                   | 1981-90<br>1998-  | S              |        | √      |       | 39.7                       | 94.9   | 88.2   | 70.2    |
| 4 | 42  | M      | Volun.        | Agric                               | 2007-             | M              | √      | √      | √     | 60.3                       | 79.7   | 79.4   | 71.4    |
| 5 | 26  | M      | Volun         | English                             | 2006-             | S              | √      | √      |       | 72.1                       | 64.4   | 38.2   | 62.1    |

Gender: M=male; F=female. Marital status: M=married; S=single. Qualification: Voln. =Volunteer. Native: √=Teacher from the community. Family: √=Teacher living with his family in the community. Prog.: √=Teacher taking an upgrade programme  
Source: ethnographic research.

<sup>68</sup> School record of the 2007/08 academic year.

<sup>69</sup> The dominant ethnic group in Asonbwa was Ewe, but the school chose to teach Twi, the dominant Ghanaian language in the district. This was observed in other Ewe-dominated communities.

**Table 42 Details of teachers of Manekanto Primary School**

|   | Age | Gender | Qualification | Roles         | Years in teaching | Marital Status | Native | Family | Prog. | Attendance Rate in 2007/08 |        |        |         |
|---|-----|--------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|--------|--------|-------|----------------------------|--------|--------|---------|
|   |     |        |               |               |                   |                |        |        |       | Term 1                     | Term 2 | Term 3 | Average |
| 1 | 39  | M      | Trained       | HT, P3        | 2000-             | M              | √      | √      | √     | n/a <sup>70</sup>          | n/a    | n/a    | n/a     |
| 2 | 40  | M      | Trained       | Assit. HT, P4 | 2004-             | M              | √      | √      | √     | n/a                        | n/a    | n/a    | n/a     |
| 3 | 33  | M      | Volun.        | P6            | 2005-             | M              | √      | √      | √     | n/a                        | n/a    | n/a    | n/a     |
| 4 | 40  | M      | Pupil         | P5            | 2001-             | M              | √      | √      | √     | n/a                        | n/a    | n/a    | n/a     |
| 5 | 34  | F      | Volun.        | P2            | 2004-             | M              |        | √      | √     | n/a                        | n/a    | n/a    | n/a     |
| 6 | 34  | F      | Pupil         | P1            | 2001-             | M              |        | √      | √     | n/a                        | n/a    | n/a    | n/a     |

Gender: M=male; F=female. Marital status: M=married; S=single. Qualification: Voln. =Volunteer.

Native: √=Teacher from the community. Family: √=Teacher living with his family in the community.

Prog.: √=Teacher taking an upgrade programme

n/a=not available.

Source: ethnographic research.

**Picture 10 Asonbwa**

The library.



Pupils having carried firewood for teachers before a morning assembly.

Source: ethnographic research.

Each school was headed by its own trained teacher. In both schools, there were fewer trained teachers than untrained: the primary had two trained and four untrained teachers, and the JSS had one trained and four untrained teachers. Among the eight untrained teachers, more than half of the teachers at both levels were volunteer teachers, that is, five in total. In terms of qualifications, Asonbwa may have been the worst school among the cases studied; however, it was the most promising community.

<sup>70</sup> Not accessible, as the HT and the assistant HT were away.

### ***6.2.7.3. Living conditions of Teachers***

Asonbwa turned out to be a unique case where all teachers lived in the community or nearby with their families. Geographical distance, including infrequent transportation, may have discouraged non-natives from coming to the school – two National Service Scheme teachers were posted for the year 2007/08, but did not accept the posting, according to the teachers. However, once teachers had accepted their posting, they seemed to be willing to stay in the community.

All four teachers without family accommodation, including a KG teacher – three female teachers and one male Twi teacher – were accommodated either in the four-bedroom TQ built by the community or free of charge in a house within the premises of the chief's palace. Interestingly, all four were, for practical purposes, single parents: two female teachers, namely, the JSS HT and the P1 teacher, had husbands who lived outside the district<sup>71</sup>. Nobody complained about the quality of the accommodation they lived in, unlike the trained teachers in Nakaose who had similar accommodation. The notion of 'decent' accommodation could vary among teachers, but teachers' complaints about lack of 'decent accommodation' might be a sign of their dissatisfaction in other things, in Nakaose's case, the difficulty in the acquisition of food. This suggests that the provision of 'decent' accommodation is helpful, but it may not be an automatic incentive for teachers to stay in the community.

Food acquisition was not a problem for teachers without farms in Asonbwa, unlike teachers in a similar situation in Nakaose and Manekanto. The practice was for newly posted teachers to be fed by somebody in the community until they said they could manage by themselves. Indeed, the Twi teacher who had been in Asonbwa with his two children for more than 20 years in total, was still fed by a family in the community at the time of this study.

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<sup>71</sup> The JSS HT's husband was working in adjacent district and the P1 teacher's was pursuing a degree in a coastal district through study leave with pay.

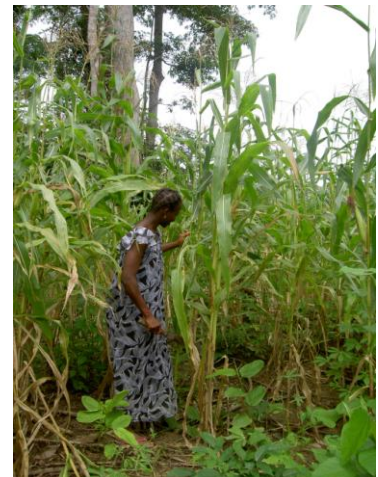
Moreover, non-native teachers who would like to farm were given pieces of land free of charge by the chief, unlike in Manekanto, although native teachers as well as community members said that all the land was already being utilised. The JSS HT and P1 teacher – the other two did not want to farm – had land a five-minute walk from the community, where they cultivated maize and cassava. What is surprising, compared to the other cases, is that the community extended its support for the teachers by taking care of their farms for them during vacation periods when they needed to be away to attend the upgrade programmes. As a result, they rarely had to buy foodstuff except for cooking ingredients. However, sometimes they ran out of foodstuff. When that happened and it became known that they had bought foodstuff from a farmer in the community, somebody would bring food to them. The firewood, which the teachers used mainly for the cooking, was also brought by pupils every week. Not only was their well-being assured by the community's provision of accommodation and food, but also they found they could save money. The JSS HT said:

The rent is free. Water is free. They (community members) bring food. Sometimes they give you cassava dough, maize, if they go to the river and they get fish, they would give it to you. So in a month, I don't use my salary, so I'm saving it.

The JSS HT, along with her husband, who was also a primary school teacher in an adjacent district, had already acquired some land in that district. She was about to start building a house through a loan scheme.

**Picture 11 A female teacher in her maize farm**

Non-native teachers in Asonbwa seemed to settle down in the community, which became their base. Their willingness to go back to the community seemed to occur naturally, as their lives were not divided into two, as were the lives of most teachers in other cases who stayed in the community only while the schools were open. Indeed, teachers could find their lives secured both in the short term as well as in the long term, because they lived in rural areas.



#### ***6.2.7.4. Relationships with Colleagues***

Teachers in Asonbwa were observed as being close to each other. Asonbwa Primary and JSS were each headed by their own HT and had independent buildings. However, both HTs used an office in the JSS building, which had been newly built by the DA. Teachers of both schools used a room next to the HTs' office as a teachers' common room. Moreover, it was usual practice for teachers to eat lunch together – the JSS HT was in charge – using foodstuff contributed by the community (a couple of female pupils had to miss their classes to cook lunch). After lunch, one of JSS teachers taught an extra class in turn.

Extra classes for JSS pupils to prepare them for their BECE, which took place during the break between the second and third term, were common in both Ponkujaku and Aumisoë. Normally, the class for JSS 3 started as late as the second term and finished once the BECE was over<sup>72</sup>. However, in Asonbwa, extra classes continued for JSS1 and JSS2 pupils after the BECE. Indeed, at the time of this study – the third term – there were no extra classes organised in Nakaosé or Manékanto. Many teachers in Asonbwa were not well paid. Why would they work under such conditions?

Many teachers in Asonbwa mentioned their “care” for their younger ones as a reason to be a teacher, one of the most common reasons given by teachers in this study, as the previous chapter indicates. However, teachers in Asonbwa seemed more confident in what they were doing, as they had tangible results to indicate pupils' progress. They were proud of the fact that the school got the first place in the BECE 2007 among the eight JSSs in the same circuit with a pass rate of 61.9%, competing with town schools on the trunk road, and 14th place out of 39 in the district. Indeed, it was a big improvement from 11.5% and the 27th place in 2006. The schools also performed well in sports competitions within the circuit in 2007/08. Teachers seem to have high morale, knowing their contributions to pupils' achievement and thus their usefulness. One volunteer teacher who was in charge of sports activities and had taught for three years said, “I have to come here to teach them [sports activities], academic too. My presence here is beneficial to students.” In previous research, there were accounts of some teachers who were disappointed with the poorer performance

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<sup>72</sup> Interviews with teachers in both Ponkujaku and Aumisoë Districts.

of pupils in rural areas (Pryor and Ampiah. 2003). However, those who are committed to being a teacher seem to assess their pupils' progress independently rather than comparing them to others, especially those in schools in towns who are more likely better off and outperforming. Teachers' realisation that they are actually helping pupils in rural areas who tend to have fewer options in learning seems to encourage teachers to keep going.

Two female teachers, the JSS HT and the P1 teacher, plus the KG teacher, were particularly close to each other, although all the teachers did their house chores independently. They were of similar ages with young children. The JSS HT with her two-year old son did not have a caretaker; instead, two school-aged children of the KG teacher, who lived in the next room in the TQ, supported her, helping with the cooking and taking care of her son. Similarly, the JSS HT and the P1 teacher took care of their toddlers in turn (for the HT's daily life, see box 4). When there was a funeral in another community, the three of them paid a visit together. Indeed, they were observed together during most of their free time. Their mutual informal support seemed not only to ease their household chores, but also to enhance their mutual appreciation, which seems similar to the case of the GES teachers living in the TQ in Jamune.

**Box 4 The JSS HT's daily life**

The JSS HT lived in one of the four-bedroom TQ houses with her two-year old son, 20 metres away from the JSS school block. Once she had got up, she boiled water for bathing by using firewood, as she listened to the radio. She took porridge for breakfast which she bought from community members. She went to school before morning assembly with her son following. During her free periods, she started preparing lunch – local dishes with yam, plantain, corn dough, or rice. A couple of hours before dark, she started preparing dinner, one of the local dishes. She again bathed with heated water. She sometimes chatted with the P1 teacher (who lived 50 metres away) and the KG teacher and by 9 pm she went to her room. Her husband came to visit his family over weekends.

The solidarity among teachers seemed quite strong in Asonbwa. It may have been fostered by their choosing to live in the community, including nearby, with their families; thus, they may have been more attached to the community and thus more willing to do act collaboratively. The situation may have been influenced by who was the leader. The JSS HT seemed to demonstrate her care for other teachers, arranging lunch and being friendly and approachable to all. Although I did not meet the HT and assistant HT of the primary

school during my stay – both were attending non-residential upgrade programmes at that time – their presence would not have much changed what I observed and how I interpreted the situation. Teachers in Asonbwa appeared to act as a team or a family.

#### ***6.2.7.5. Relationship with the Community***

The community members' interest in education was similar to that in the other cases. The community thought that education is the only way to get a financially stable future for children, and thus, secure the future for their parents/guardians. They saw that (secondary) education would lead to “white-collar jobs”, government jobs in their definition. However, what appeared to be the difference between Asonbwa and the other cases in Aumisoë was that community members in Asonbwa were more serious or more desperate. They did not see any future through farming, especially cocoa, since there was no more land to expand; all was being utilised. There were no any other industries, such as gold mines like in Nakaosé and Manekanto. Two young female farmers, JSS leavers, both of whom spoke quite good English, said that they wanted their sons to work in the agriculture sector, but as administrators who did not have to toil in the fields weeding with scythes as their parents did.

Furthermore, the community seemed to know what they should do for education and what they needed to do to retain teachers in such a “remote village”. Provision of accommodation, food, and firewood, as described earlier, was a collective effort. In addition, four of the five volunteer teachers were paid from community funds – ₦15 to ₦20 a month. Although the SMC chairman said it was “small money just for soap”, it was systematic support, unlike the situation in Nakaosé and Manekanto. Moreover, according to him, teachers could be provided with interest free loans from the community funds if they were in need: previously, some of newly posted teachers had been given ₦50 to ₦100 so that they could manage until they received a salary. I was surprised that the SMC chairman knew of teachers' possible financial difficulties. It was significant that none of four volunteer teachers taking the UTDBE had stopped the programme, unlike the volunteer teacher in Manekanto.

The SMC chairman, who had a secondary education and was a cocoa farmer as well as a cocoa purchasing clerk, appeared to play a key role not only to show the community's care for the teachers with actual measures, but also to prevent unnecessary misunderstandings arising between the teachers and the parents/guardians. He became a gate keeper for teachers through his more than 10-year experience. He said:

There was a time somebody rushed to school to ask questions and wanted to hear something from teachers. Sometimes a teacher punished a child, caning him, and a child would be weeping, parents, especially mothers, got angry by all means. Mothers may not have patience. They rush to school. Sometimes there would be no understanding ... If there is anything, they have to pass through me.

According to him, even those who would like to provide food for teachers had to get his permission to approach a teacher. Then parents/guardians were expected to come back to him to inform him regarding what he or she had talked about and/or had heard.

Why the SMC chairman and parents/guardians could behave in such way seemed to be partly influenced by how the chief governed his people. According to the teachers and SMC chairman, all school-age children were required to attend primary school or JSS and were not allowed to go to wake-keeping<sup>73</sup>; if they played truant, they would be caned by a parent teacher association (PTA) official. However, the real punishment lay in the fact that the errant child's family could be expelled from the Ewe community by the chief. This meant that the family would receive no support from the community in the case of a funeral, the biggest and most expensive event for the family.

All arrangements seem to have been well administered under the leadership of the chief, demonstrating the unity of the community in its support of education. There seemed mutual appreciation between the teachers and the community.

#### ***6.2.7.6. Teachers' Identities and Personalities***

The JSS HT – the only young female trained basic school teacher living in rural areas in Aumisoe – had been in Asonbwa JSS for two years since she had completed a private TTC. She had turned down her initial JSS post in a town on a trunk road, being convinced by her

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<sup>73</sup> Wake-keeping is a part of funeral ceremony. It takes place prior to burial.

fiancé (now husband) and his friends, all of whom were from nearby villages, that she could help Asonbwa JSS, which was without any female teacher at that time. Her husband, who was one year her senior and had attended the same TTC, had become a primary school teacher, but in an adjacent district in another region<sup>74</sup>. She explained that her belief as a Christian encouraged her to accept the post even without her husband. She said:

The Bible lets us know that we have to go to typical villages and serve people in need or something. So I chose that from the Bible. People who are here too need a help. So I must stay and help them. If I refuse this place, it means the JSS lacks some teachers. That is the reason why I decided to. I said the Bible, Bible concerned, stay.

On the other hand, she seemed to have had practice in managing her life through her experiences: since she was young, she had supported her mother with five children, by trading and farming, with little help from her father, who had many wives. She finished a private TTC with support from her mother.

She planned to stay in Asonbwa for another two years until she had finished her DBE, maintaining the same lifestyle: her husband would continue to work in the same district and she and their two children (the second child was almost due at the time of study) would live in Asonbwa. Then she would like to move to a town for her children's education. She did not seem to find working and living in Asonbwa as a disadvantage either personally or professionally.

She did not think that she would leave teaching, as she valued the free time after school and vacation periods of more than three months a year. She wanted to take a degree after her diploma, then to teach at an SSS or a TTC. She also showed her interest in establishing a KG at some time in her career, and a primary school, and hopefully, a JSS, to provide security after her retirement; she thought that after retirement, working for the GES or for another person for private education would not provide enough financial security. She seemed to perceive her situation positively, not only did her life in a rural area with the community support minimise her living cost and allow her to save money, but also she felt

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<sup>74</sup> He did not get a district sponsorship from Aumiso District Assembly, although he had tried hard. Therefore, he did not want to work for Aumiso.

there was no less opportunity for career development. It seems very important for teachers to see their current life in respect of their long-term goals, not only a career path, but also their long-term well-being.

#### **6.2.8. Key Findings from the Case in Aumisoe**

There is a diversity of teachers in rural Aumisoe, similar to Ponkujaku, in terms of qualifications and affiliation. Teachers also tend to try to secure their economic situation through having a second job, mainly farming. As part of decentralisation, communities have been encouraged to support teachers, including paying their volunteer teachers (Bray 1996). However, their unstable financial situations could hinder them from attending schools to teach, as was seen in Nakaose and Asonbwa, where those teachers' attendance rates (24%-62%) were lower than those of the GES teachers (except the trained teachers in Nakaose). Those teachers without the UTDBE could be much more temporary.

Inconsistency of teaching with volunteer teachers is inevitable. Leaving responsibility to the community to encourage teachers does not seem feasible even in Aumisoe, which could be considered better off than Ponkujaku.

Teachers in rural Aumisoe appear to be vulnerable in terms of food acquisition. Teachers tend to find it difficult to get food in rural areas where foodstuff is more likely to be expensive and often is not available to purchase. Many farm, like the teachers in Ponkujaku, but this does not necessarily provide security all the time. Without the community's support, teachers tend to face unsafe and insecure daily lives. In this sense, teachers' needs have to be addressed to include a wider range of materials than those included in some 'incentive packages', such as accommodation and bicycles.

Teachers seem to perceive if they are appreciated by the community or not by the level of materials, mainly foodstuff, provided. When teachers' expectations were not accommodated, as was seen in the case of trained teachers' in Nakaose, the teachers seemed disappointed and discouraged. The Asonbwa's case is the opposite. Indeed, there seems to be a gap between the teachers and the community members, in terms of understanding what is necessary for teachers' welfare. On the other hand, the extent to which the community can support teachers seems to depend partly on how teachers work

and vice versa. It also appears that a strong leadership of the community can make a difference. Each party can encourage or discourage the other. In short, teacher motivation is closely related to the relationship between the teacher and the community.

Teachers' identities and personalities are a key factor of motivation. Religion seems to provide the meaningfulness of the job, and thus, encouragement. On the other hand, their identities as professionals may be threatened when they find that they are not appreciated. As a job, teaching is unusual; as teachers are working with children, but not much with their colleagues (Evans 1998), teachers seem to assess their usefulness through the community's response and treatment. Teachers' identities seem to be also influenced by the DEO (which will be discussed in chapter 8), but, surprisingly, teachers appear to be much more affected by the relationship with the community.

### **6.3. Conclusion**

Teachers in rural areas, especially those from outside the community, could be vulnerable to the environment. Their health might be at risk due to poorer infrastructure and the lack of food security. Teachers' lives in rural areas are indeed challenging. However, as seen in Asonbwa's case, teachers could choose to live in rural areas as committed basic school teachers. This suggests that 'rural challenge model' could be possible.

Those who are committed to teaching seem to be able to manage their lives, ensuring their security through having a second job, mainly farming, and though being supported by their colleagues and the community. The support from the community is crucial, as teachers tend to take it as a sign of its appreciation to their efforts. Teachers seem to be seeking the meaningfulness of the current job and of themselves, perhaps through their usefulness for others.

From the findings of ethnographic research, there seem three issues which are important to make 'rural challenge model' possible: teachers' survival, in other words, physical well-being; their feelings of usefulness; and the meaningfulness of the current job. In the next chapter, these are further explored at a district level, followed by a chapter focusing on policy implications and teacher management.

## 7. Micro-level Motivating and Demotivating Factors and Conditions

### 7.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, teachers' lives in the five case study communities were described in order to explore teacher motivation in terms of four themes: living and working conditions; relationships with colleagues; relationships with the community; and identities and personalities. This chapter continues the examination according to the same themes, but now treats the district as the case, analysing additional data, mainly through interviews with staff in other schools and the exploration of teachers' coping mechanisms. Thus, this chapter intends to provide a wider picture of teachers' lives and motivation in the two case study districts.

### 7.2. Teachers' Living and Working Conditions

#### 7.2.1. Accommodation

Accommodation in the community is important in rural areas, since without it, teachers may have to commute long distances. Neither cycling in Ponkujaku – the vastness of which means that walking is not an option – where the hot sun continuously beats down (even the rainy season does not mean that it is cloudy all the time), nor walking in the hilly forests of Aumisoe, is an easy task. It took some teachers in the case study communities up to two hours to travel to school.

**Table 43 Types of teachers' accommodation**

|                       |           |          | Ponkujaku |           | Aumisoe |               |         |
|-----------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|---------|
|                       |           |          | Jamune    | Lesanyili | Nakaose | Manekant<br>o | Asonbwa |
| In the community      | TQ        | Provider | DA        | Com       | Com     | DA            | Com     |
|                       |           | Rooms    | 4         | 2         | 10      | 8             | 4       |
|                       |           | <i>N</i> | 5 (1)     | 0         | 5 (1)   | 8             | 2 (1)   |
|                       | Own House | <i>N</i> | 1         | 3         | 2       | 1             | 0       |
|                       | Lodger    | <i>N</i> | 0         | 1(1)      | 0       | 0             | 1       |
| Outside the community | Commuter  | <i>N</i> | 0         | 1         | 2       | 1             | 8       |

*N* = primary and JSS teachers, with KG teachers in brackets.

Com= community.

Source: field data.

All case study schools had accommodation provided either by the District Assembly (DA) or the community. All non-native teachers who wished to live in the community were accommodated in teachers' quarters (TQ), except two untrained teachers in Lesanyili, a married couple who lived in a house in a district assembly man's compound (table 43). All accommodation was free, but not everyone appreciated what they had been given.

There were two accommodation issues among teachers in rural areas: quality and quantity. Firstly, in spite of the initiative the communities had shown in encouraging teachers to stay, the TQ they provided did not always meet teachers' expectations; as seen in the case of a trained teacher in Nakaose who expressed his dissatisfaction, saying that his accommodation had no ceiling. Similarly, a trained teacher who was posted to a primary school in a rural area of Ponkujaku did not find his accommodation to be comfortable, explaining:

It was only a four-bedroom house built by the community. It was plastered in the local way. Unfortunately, the house was located on the outskirts of the community. I encountered a number of problems: you could be sleeping, a snake is entering; you could be in the room, a scorpion could be entering... Sometimes, communities put up those things [TQ]. When it is done, the DA has to come to aid to put it in shape. If this is not done, we are risking our lives too much.

Some untrained teachers gave similar accounts, one in Aumisoe complaining:

If we go to rural areas, the communities can give you a room. But if you look at the kind of house you are going to use, and if you sleep in the room, you can see the accommodation is not good. It is a dilapidated house. If it rained and there was a very small storm, everything would collapse. The roofing would go because they do not have iron sheets. They have thatched roofs. And we use mud to build all those things. When we are sleeping in the room, you may see millipedes, mosquitoes and other kinds of insect. We are fighting with them in the room we are sleeping in. We can have sleepless nights because of that.

Some teachers considered that teaching in a rural area without decent accommodation was tantamount to risking their lives. As a result, "even though accommodation is provided in some of the communities for teachers, most teachers commute to and from the school" (*Ponkujaku Situational First Quarterly Report 2008* no page).

The second issue relates to the shortage of TQ, especially that provided by the DA, which, on the whole, was considered to be satisfactory. However, there was not always sufficient DA provided accommodation, as seen in the cases of Jamune and Manekanto. Some teachers agreed to have a roommate, but others were reluctant or not able to share a room. As one trained teacher in Aumisoe argued in a focus group discussion, “We are mature; we cannot share a room.” This may have also been a disincentive for married teachers to move with their families into rural TQ. The provision of accommodation may not in itself work as an incentive to attract and retain teachers in rural areas (MoE 2003 *Education Strategic Plan 2003–2015*; MoESS 2007 *Performance Monitoring Report*), if it does not address their needs. In her study of the South American context, Vegas (2007) argues that housing incentives in rural areas may not be effective if the socio-cultural context is not considered.

Moreover, trained teachers in particular (who undertake a three-year pre-service training course) are not always well prepared for rural situations, especially if the degree of their disillusionment – the gap between what is expected and what is available – is too wide to manage. They may not have been exposed to similar conditions and or learnt how to cope with them before their first posting. The living conditions that one trained teacher in Ponkujaku experienced during his teaching practice did not sound very convenient. Nevertheless, he and his colleagues managed:

We men slept in the community. They gave us rooms. In each room, we were paired two to a room, two to a room... We were sleeping in the community, cooking in the community, and doing everything in the community... We had a water crisis. The water we were drinking was very bad. It was dam water. The borehole was very salty. We fetched dam water, boiled and filtered it for drinking. The salty water, we used for washing and bathing.

He had been posted along with 11 other trainee teachers from the same TTC to a rural primary school employing 6 teachers, 4 being trained. Although he did not explicitly mention that he felt supported by the others, he and his colleagues seemed to help each other, like the teachers living in the TQ in Jamune. Not only did they share the housework, which, as seen in the previous chapter, is extremely time-consuming in rural areas, but also experienced a sense of belongingness.

Through such prior exposure combined with the support of colleagues, teachers' disillusionment might be reduced, as they are thus able to build up their confidence. Having gained such self-assurance, they may subsequently take up challenging but more rewarding posts in rural areas. The abovementioned teacher turned down a post in town and chose to work at a rural primary school where he thought his service was needed more. Indeed, as noted by Vavrus (2009) in a study of Tanzania, teaching practice seems to have the potential to shape the positive perceptions of trainee teachers.

Teachers in town have different challenges. Here, the TQ shortage<sup>75</sup> – due in part to the priority given to rural areas – forces many teachers at town schools to rent a room themselves. They found accommodation difficult to find and, in the meantime, they had to manage somehow, perhaps staying with friends. One trained teacher in Aumisoë said:

You go and you have not gotten accommodation. You would be moving and floating unless your colleagues...have mercy upon you, searching [for] accommodation for you. But other works [jobs] are not like that.

Another trained teacher in Aumisoë complained:

When you go into nursing, they have access to accommodation. They have ready accommodation for every nurse who is posted to a district. But in education, we do not have [it]. We have to struggle for [our] own accommodation.

Newly posted teachers in particular seemed to perceive that their conditions of service were worse than in other occupations. Moreover, some claimed to get little support from the DEO or the HT. A newly trained female teacher, who was not a native of Ponkujaku or Northern Region, was frustrated. She said:

It was the sixth time I came [here] before I got this room for myself. I had to go, come, go and come six times. I have an auntie in Tamale, so usually [when] I come [from Kumasi], I do stay there... You see I was prepared to come...[but was] told [there was] no room. Where are you going to stay to teach? You have to go back.

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<sup>75</sup> In Ponkujaku town, there were three primary schools (one of 18 classes, excluding KG) and three JSSs (all with more than 10 teachers), but only 3 available TQ with a total of 24 bedrooms. In Aumisoë, there was no TQ at all in the district capital.

Again, newly trained teachers and those new to the district in particular seemed to become discouraged if they could not initially find any (decent) accommodation, which was a threat to their basic security. They then felt unwelcome or underappreciated.

Once teachers rent a room, they must meet additional related costs such as water and electricity. Moreover, the fact that they have to pay the rent in advance (often up to two years) is a big concern for many teachers. One trained teacher in Aumisoë said:

You are supposed to pay, say, ₺300 in advance. As a teacher who is earning some token [sum], how can you pay this amount? If we ask the government to come to our aid, they say, “we will do it, we will do it,” but this is not coming.

Such teachers consider themselves to be unfortunate compared to some of their colleagues with free accommodation; they feel unfairly treated. The provision of accommodation is intended to serve as an incentive, but its evident shortage may well serve as a disincentive for those who do not benefit.

The two case study districts have been found to be disfavoured to both the DEO and its teachers in terms of accommodation. *Ponkujaku Performance Monitoring Report 2007* indicates that, “Absenteeism on the part of teachers is due to lack of residential accommodation in the rural areas” (no page). The former Aumisoë DEO also acknowledges the difficulty in deploying teachers to rural schools in the *former Aumisoë Situational Report Jan–March* (2005), attributing it to accommodation problems:

Though the district is doing *all it could* to sustain available manpower, the effort is not achieving the desired result due to lack of adequate and relatively good accommodation for teachers. This has, in fact, resulted in teachers refusing posting to such communities after visiting to observe situation on the ground. Ironically, teachers who are supposed to stay in such communities to bring about the needed socio-cultural changes rather stay in towns with the desired accommodations and travel daily to school (no page with emphasis in italics).

There is no doubt that the lack of ‘decent’ accommodation makes it difficult for teachers to live and work effectively, and thus creates a problem for the DEO. On the other hand, the DEO tends to treat accommodation as the responsibility of the teacher and, in rural areas, that of the community. Consequently, Teachers tend to believe that the DEO does not

make sufficient effort to accommodate them in its district, which they perceive as little encouragement or appreciation of those who have chosen to work there.

Teachers in both districts complained about accommodation. This echoes the findings of a study of a coastal region by Akyeampong and Asante (2005): teachers in rural school complained about finding decent accommodation and those in urban areas talked about affordable accommodation.

The provision of accommodation seems to be an incentive for teachers. However, it is still far from the case that the majority of teachers are granted accommodation<sup>76</sup> – the stage when it loses its impact as a reward (Chapman 1994). Nevertheless, the present study suggests that the accommodation issue not only has implications in terms of physical security but is significant in other ways as well. As there is limited ‘decent’ free accommodation, those who are not provided with it and who must secure it without the support of the DEO tend to feel that they are treated unfairly. Teachers seem to take accommodation as a sign of appreciation by the community and the DEO. If accommodation is to be an incentive, it must entail more than simply the provision of a house.

### **7.2.2. Food**

The quality of teachers’ diets, especially non-farming ones, seems to have been determined by the relationship between teacher and community. Even those with farms did not always feel secure in terms of food acquisition. One untrained male teacher in a remote community of Aumisoe said:

If I don’t get anything – foodstuff – from my farm, even [if] you have money, getting foodstuff is a problem. You have to travel all the way to Obuasi to go and buy [it]... [Or] we depend on commercial sellers; those who go to big towns and buy the foodstuff, and come and sell it.

The teachers seemed to find it no less problematic to acquire food in communities with comparatively large markets like Manekanto. It may thus be concluded that in rural and

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<sup>76</sup> The results of the survey included in the present study suggest that 11% and 12% of teachers lived in the TQ provided by the DA and the community respectively, while 34% rented a room and 40% lived in a family house.

semi-rural areas, teachers' well-being might not be secure without the willingness of local communities to support them. Moreover, teachers can be powerless actors in their relationships with those who have food if it is not available to purchase. An untrained teacher in Aumisoe said:

If you go to some areas, you would not get food to buy in the market unless you go and beg; you are stranger there. You are being sent to teach. How can you eat?

This could lead to the lower social status of teachers in the community. Roberts (1975) suggests:

The teacher may earn more each month than the farmer, but spend much of it on food: the farmer may have no cash in his pocket but can provide his visitors generously with food and drink at the end of as well as the beginning of the month. The social status of the teacher in the community is likely to be based on such values (p246).

In the rural communities of this study, basic school teachers could find themselves in an awkward position: financially, they were relatively stable but still might not have been able to manage their lives independently, as sometimes they had difficulty in acquiring food; particularly in Aumisoe, where arable farming was mainly for cash crops and foodstuff production was for family consumptions. Indeed, the results of the survey indicate that teachers in Aumisoe are less likely to be satisfied with food than those in Ponkujaku (table26). If the teachers were not able to appreciate the interdependent nature of such a culture, they were likely to perceive their lives as being very hard; while others, like the teachers in Asonbwa, had good reason to be grateful for the situation they found themselves in.

### **7.2.3. Salary**

Salary was a big concern for all categories of teachers. The monthly salary varied from no payment in the case of some volunteer teachers – nobody supported them financially at all – to ₦423 for trained and experienced staff.

Trained teachers were the most highly and regularly paid although, interestingly enough, they were the least likely to be satisfied with their salary and allowance, as the quantitative

analysis in chapter 5 suggests. Many trained teachers cited poor remuneration as a reason for their intention to leave basic school teaching. One such person in Ponkujaku said:

Nobody would like to remain as a teacher permanently, unless the situation changes. It is not only that we want increased salary, but what we are doing should be appreciated.

Teachers tended to engage in farming and trading to provide food and supplement their income, as was observed with most of the teachers in the case study schools. Some of them intentionally moved to or stayed in rural areas so that they could engage in farming and maximise their economic opportunities. One trained teacher at a rural primary school in Aumisoe said, “I have chosen to be in a rural area in order to farm to supplement what I am doing.” Another trained teacher in Ponkujaku, who had decided to move from a town school to a rural school, elaborated:

After purchasing the ingredients and other things, what... [is] left would not be enough. Getting close to the end of the month, I am compelled to borrow [for] myself, my wife and child every month. I had no accommodation problem, but if you go [to your hometown], you have your father and mother. They expect that now you are working and at the end of the month, you do something. Only you realise that at the end you cannot do anything. Then there is no...[use in] working... I needed to buy three bags of maize for [the] upkeep of [my] family. Maybe I needed a bag of maize to send home. But because my salary was not enough in Akosumo, I couldn't do it. So, it prompted me that if I came here, combining my profession and a little bit of farming, it would cushion the life.

In addition to the need to take a second job, a low salary also had other implications, including perceived lower status and fewer financial opportunities. Moreover, the teachers were also dissatisfied with the manner in which their salary was paid.

Firstly, due to their low salary, they did not think that they were respected, as teachers in Manekanto mentioned. In a group discussion in Aumisoe, one trained teacher commented:

Even [the] community, a lot of them, do not respect teachers actually... They see us as the lowest income workers in Ghana. Even traders selling cassava, plantain, and other things at market earn more than we teachers. The condition of service is not good. We teach; at the end of the month, we receive little, scant money, scant amount. That would not take you to next month. If you compare to others in the community – farmers, traders, and nurses – you could see that we teachers are not given what we expect.

Similarly, an untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said in a group discussion, “if you are a watchman of a company, it is better than a teacher.”

Due to their low salary, teachers thought that they could not be good role models and that their attempts to promote education might not be convincing. An untrained teacher in Ponkujaku, who was taking an upgrade course, elaborated:

If we tell them [community members] education is good, they say, “What have you done so far? You have been to school up to this stage; what have you done so far for your people or your house?” That is the question they ask you. They may have a tractor; they may have a motorbike. You as a teacher, you do not have a proper bicycle. Then they tell you farming is better than teaching because he has a tractor or motorbike.

The teaching profession confers a deceptively high social status – a notion that several teachers mentioned during the field study and one that is corroborated by the survey, as mentioned earlier – but an economically low status. Rodgers-Jenkinson and Chapman (1990) observe:

In many countries, teaching has been regarded traditionally as employment of higher status than the salary level would indicate. Typically, teachers’ status in their community operates as a non-monetary incentive helping to offset the otherwise low wages. In many countries, that equation is being threatened by a drop in the perceived status of teaching, thereby changing the incentive value of the job, and by salaries falling too low to be meaningfully offset by such intangibles as status (p306).

Secondly, since the teachers’ salaries were comparatively low, they were not able to secure big enough bank loans for the establishment of other businesses that were intended to supplement their income and to sustain them in their retirement. One trained teacher in Aumisoë said:

When we teachers want to go for loans, the bank determines the amount they have [are willing] to give us. They do not give you what you demand for [need]. The money you take, you cannot use...to invest to doing any other business.

Moreover, rural banks were financially limited. Following a Ponkujaku DEO directive, all teachers had to use the one bank in Ponkujaku town, but they claimed that rural banks were only able to lend a third to a sixth of the amount those in urban areas were able to offer.

Ghana National Teachers Association also had a loan scheme. However, the teachers said that it was a slow process, which could take up to six months; although a district level authority claimed that a loan could be secured within a third of this time. Nevertheless, in Aumisoe at least, there were other private financial institutions, such as a teacher credit union, available. Partly reflecting their situation, teachers in Ponkujaku were less likely to be satisfied with available financial services. While, on average, 57.5% of all teachers were not satisfied in this respect, a greater proportion in Ponkujaku (75.4%) showed dissatisfaction than in Aumisoe (48.2%). Interestingly, there did not seem to be a big difference between trained and untrained teachers: 54.0% and 59.6% respectively were dissatisfied with financial services.

It seemed that the level of teachers' salary and the availability of loans not only affected their daily lives but also had a long-term impact. Job satisfaction could be enhanced by access to sufficient bank loans – especially in areas that lacked other professional financial support services – as this naturally led to an enhanced sense of security and general well-being.

Thirdly, the teachers were dissatisfied with the gap between their expectations and the reality: publicly announced increments were not perceived to have actually been implemented. One pupil teacher in Aumisoe said:

The government announces that this month I give you enough money or enough salary for you teachers to become free [of debt], so all of the country hears that the government increases our salaries. But when you go to the bank, you don't see any pesewas<sup>77</sup>. This makes us disturbed.

In May 2008, the government eventually announced that GES teachers' salary would be increased by 15% (official letter from the GES headquarters dated 12/05/08), and payment was made the following month<sup>78</sup>. However, the teachers said that they did not get the full 15% increment. Two trained teachers in Aumisoe said:

Government cannot do anything. Always, they are cheating. They promise and they don't fulfil.

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<sup>77</sup> One Ghanaian cedi is divided into one hundred pesewas.

<sup>78</sup> Interviews with teachers.

They promised [a] salary increment. They said 20%, then we saw 10% or 5% increase.

Another issue was the constant changes to the amount paid. One male pupil teacher in Aumisoë said:

As of now, we don't know the actual amount we are receiving... The gross...this month I got [was] about ¢150. Next month, when you go, it [may be] reduce[d] to ¢120 or ¢130. The salary is not the same standard [amount each month].

The teachers considered that salary payment procedure, including the correct amount due, was unclear. However, they tended to accept whatever they received and did not challenge the authorities, although they were dissatisfied. One pupil teacher said:

We teachers, when we put unnecessary things before them [the DEO], they say, "Let's consult the authorities." Then we won't hear anything again.

It may thus be concluded that teachers tend to "follow the orders of their superiors,"

This research confirms Jessop and Penny's observation (1998). They argue:

Salary and other material incentives were key motivating factors throughout, being both a great impetus to enter teaching, and, ironically, sources of great disgruntlement once within the profession (p398).

However, the problem does not seem to lie merely in the amount paid, which in itself is a probable threat to teachers' basic needs and security, but also in the process and procedure of its implementation, which represses them in terms of their relationship with the authorities.

#### **7.2.4. School Facilities**

Construction has taken place through government effort in collaboration with development partners – including NGOs – since poor infrastructure is considered to be a disincentive to teachers. Communities also take the initiative to support education through the provision of semi-permanent or temporary buildings. Accordingly, the case study schools had a combination of permanent and semi-permanent structures (table 44).

**Table 44 School blocks**

| Types               | Ponkujaku     |               | Aumisoë                        |               |               |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                     | Jamune        | Lesanyili     | Nakaose                        | Manekanto     | Asonbwa       |
| Permanent           | 2 3-classroom | 1 3-classroom | 1 3-classroom                  | 2 3-classroom | 1 3-classroom |
| Semi-permanent      | 1 3-classroom | 1 3-classroom | 1 3-classroom<br>1 2-classroom | 1 3-classroom | 2 3-classroom |
| Temporary           | 0             | 0             | 0                              | 0             | 0             |
| Total school blocks | 3             | 2             | 3                              | 2             | 3             |

Source: field data.

None of the case study schools taught second year kindergarten (KG) classes separately.

However, three schools had a shortage of classrooms, as indicated in table 45.

**Table 45 Classrooms**

|                               | Ponkujaku     |               | Aumisoë         |                  |                  |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
|                               | Jamune        | Lesanyili     | Nakaose         | Manekanto        | Asonbwa          |
| Total classroom               | 9             | 6             | 8               | 9                | 9                |
| Classes needed to accommodate | 7<br>(KG –P6) | 7<br>(KG- P6) | 10<br>(KG-JSS3) | 8<br>(P1 – JSS3) | 10<br>(KG- JSS3) |
| Shortage of classes           | n/a           | 1             | 2               | n/a              | 1                |

n/a = not applicable.

Source: field data.

Some schools had more acute shortages. One school in Ponkujaku had a primary 2 (P2) class in the corridor of a permanent 3-classroom block and a temporary building housing a combined class of P3 and P4 pupils. A JSS in Ponkujaku used the yard of the two teachers' quarters for three classrooms (picture 12). Moreover, a JSS in Aumisoë town had classrooms in a temporary building, the teachers based under the trees with desks and chairs brought from inside the school building. They said ironically, "This is our common tree," as they did not have a staffroom, as some JSSs in Aumisoë town did.

While the shortage of classrooms was a serious issue for some schools, they may otherwise have just as well equipped as others. Teachers tended not to be satisfied with semi-permanent and temporary buildings. One trained teacher in Aumisoë, whose school floor had been recently cemented, complained:

Poor structure; building is very poor. It was very dusty. The buildings and facilities we have in the school are not encouraging me enough to work full [whole] heartedly.

He voiced his dissatisfaction with the building even after it had been renovated. Along similar lines, an untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said, "Somebody with nice polished shoes

**Picture 12 School facilities**

A primary school with permanent (left) and temporal structure (right) in Ponkukjaku



A primary school with semi-permanent structure buildings in Aumisoe



A JSS classroom in Ponkukjaku – in the yard of the TQ built by the community  
Source: field research.



A JSS in Aumisoe town

before he comes out; whole things become brown.” Thus, the condition of some schools did not seem to be acceptable to the teachers and this demotivated them.

In addition to general satisfaction, the physical conditions that new teachers were expected to endure seemed to affect their first impressions and perceptions. Poor infrastructure in particular tended to discourage teachers who were unfamiliar with such rough and ready environments. Teachers seem to think that materially poor environment provides less opportunity for them to learn and teach. One trained teacher in Aumisoe recalled:

When I came here [to] the community, I had no problem. People are living here. So, wherever we have human beings, life must go [on]. So that one I accepted. But when I went to school and saw the structure of the school, in fact, I said to myself, “I cannot be in this school to teach,” because I had a teaching practice in a certain Catholic school in a big town. I had a very nice opportunity... I learned a lot in town. So, I thought working in town is better than in a village.

Another trained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

When we were leaving Tamale, one town large at least, another town, but when we were going deep, towns were becoming very few, and [just] clusters [of] houses. Where we were going, would we get people to teach at all?

Those who attended training college had teaching practice in a basic school in their third year. However, both teachers' accounts indicate that there was a gap between what trainees anticipated and the actual teaching conditions in rural areas.

Teachers may link their reputation with the conditions of school buildings. They might think that they should not be associated with dirt as they have an education, which, as Foster (1965) indicates, young people consider to be an escape from farming. Therefore, the condition of the school and its facilities is an important influence on a teacher's perceptions; and thus, his or her first impressions of the community and daily motivation or demotivation.

#### **7.2.5. Teaching and Learning Materials**

The case study schools seemed to have sufficient furniture at upper primary level and above.<sup>79</sup> On the other hand, there were insufficient teaching and learning materials (TLMs) in one way or another at all levels. The two case study schools in Ponkujaku had enough English and mathematics textbooks, but were short of science and social science ones; and none of the three case study schools in Aumisoe had sufficient textbooks for any of these core subjects.

Other materials available in each of the five case study schools were a couple of blackboard charts for science, health and environmental studies; blackboard-size set squares and/or compasses; and dictionaries. However, none of the three JSSs had equipment for science or vocational classes, although some had one or more footballs, as well as sports jerseys and drums<sup>80</sup>, which had been purchased with the use of the capitation grant. Uniquely,

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<sup>79</sup> There were two pupils to a double desk at upper primary level and one to a single desk at JSS level. However, from ethnographic observation, it was noted that classrooms at lower primary level and below (especially KG) were overcrowded, although no children were seen actually sitting on the floor or on stools.

<sup>80</sup> Three of five case study schools had drums. These were used for pupils to march to their respective classrooms after morning assembly.

Asonbwa had a library and a small playground with a slide, swings and see-saws. The library building had been constructed with the aid of the community fund and by community labour.

Nevertheless, there were two main implications of the general insufficiency of TLMs: the inability of teachers to carry out their duties effectively, and their dissatisfaction with the management of the DEO.

Firstly, it was difficult to teach without the appropriate materials. Some teachers tried to improvise, using, for example, leaves and flowers for environmental studies; and gravel, sticks and bottle tops for mathematics. However, there was a limit to what they could be expected to achieve by such means. One trained teacher in Ponkujaku expressed the general frustration:

Where are the things (TLMs)? We cannot clap hands day in and day out. If we need to improvise, how much can we improvise? We can only use gravel one, two, three times. That would end in two or three weeks.

The only way to teach certain subjects such as science was to explain the theory, since they could not improvise or buy the materials necessary for practical demonstrations or hand-on activities. An untrained JSS teacher in Aumisoe complained:

Teaching here is quite difficult. Most things are taught in [the] abstract. If I [am going to] teach something, for instance, photosynthesis, I need iodine, a basin, bin – apparatus that help me to test for starch. [If] I don't get them, it's a challenge.

Another untrained primary teacher in a community without electricity in Aumisoe explained:

We teach electronics in basic schools. A child here doesn't know anything about capacitors. Here, [there are] no teaching aids to show this is a capacitor and this is an inductor. I don't have money to buy all these things to show the kids. So I'm just mentioning them and they would [do] not understand whatever I am saying.

The result of such circumstances was that some teachers started to question the efficacy of their teaching. Some were very frustrated, knowing that what they were doing was not likely to meet their teaching aims, in spite of their best efforts. One trained teacher in a rural JSS in Aumisoe said:

The necessary things should be placed at my disposal for the effective or efficient training of these children. If those things are not there, it's just like giving me a basket to go to fetch water: [even if] I go several times, I wouldn't come with any water. With all these hindrances in our way, it would be very, very difficult to reach the target or objective of helping the children to become very useful. The work we are doing here would always head towards failure.

Lack of or insufficient TLMs could exasperate the teachers, as teachers wish to provide a learning opportunity for children.

Secondly, the teachers perceived that the lack of TLMs was partly a result of the way in which the DEO managed its resources. Some teachers suggested that the DEO did not appreciate the significance of TLMs in the same way that the former did, in terms of what was necessary for effective teaching. An untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said, "Whatever belongs to you, officers may sit on it." Moreover, it was generally believed that the DEO did not address the challenges faced by teachers seriously or quickly enough. One trained teacher in Ponkujaku noted:

They [the GES] bring logistics [materials], textbooks and everything to the district [DEO]. The director and storekeepers, instead of distributing it to schools, leave it in the store. We have to push, push, push.

The teachers did not think that they received sufficient support or consideration from the DEO given the conditions in which they were obliged to teach; that is, they lacked the requisite TLMs. Moreover, they believed that some officers unreasonably accused them of preparing unsatisfactory lesson plans and TLMs, which they argued was the result of circumstances beyond their control. One trained teacher in Aumisoe complained:

[With] some officers, I mean circuit supervisors, the relationship with teachers is just like a master and a servant. They are supposed to provide us with TLMs, lesson notebooks and everything at the beginning of the academic year. They would [do] not bring it. They would [do] not bring it on time. But when they come, they blame you that you are not preparing lesson notes or TLMs. But they refuse to bring materials to use [for] all these things.

Teachers tend to feel that they are unreasonably left in difficult conditions. One trained teacher at a rural JSS described the situation thus: "in the field [it's] just like we are at [on a] war front." The teachers looked to their 'master' – the DEO – to lead them but in the

deficiency of TLMs, tended to see not only inadequate support but also a poor appreciation of the conditions under which they were forced to teach.

### 7.2.6. Teacher Composition and Allocation

All case study schools were staffed by both GES and non-GES teachers, with the exception of Manekanto JSS, where only GES – trained teachers and pupil teachers – were posted. Each school had at least two out of five different categories of teacher: trained, pupil, National Service Scheme (NSS), Youth Employment Programme (YEP) and volunteer (table 46).

Of the five case study schools, three primary level – Lesanyili, Nakaose and Manekanto – had shortages of teachers, which led to the practice of multigrade teaching for two classes<sup>81</sup>. None of the case study schools – unlike town schools in both districts – had a ‘detached’ HT, that is one who worked solely in an administrative capacity; all case study HTs taught as well. As Keith (1989) suggests, teaching in rural areas is a more complex business than it is in urban areas.

**Table 46 Teacher composition at case study schools**

|                         | Jamune | Lesanyili | Nakaose* |       | Manekanto |     | Asonbwa |       |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------|----------|-------|-----------|-----|---------|-------|
|                         |        |           | Primary  | JSS   | Primary   | JSS | Primary | JSS   |
| Trained                 | 2      | 1         | 1        | 2     | 1 (1)     | 3   | 2       | 1 (1) |
| Pupil                   | 2      | 3         | 2        | 0     | 3         | 2   | 2 (1)   | 1     |
| NSS                     | 0      | 0         | 0        | 0     | 0         | 0   | 0       | 0     |
| YEP                     | 2      | 1 (1)     | 0        | 0     | 0         | 0   | 0       | 0     |
| Volunteer               | 0      | 0         | 2        | 1 (1) | 1         | 0   | 2 (1)   | 3     |
| Total                   | 6      | 5 (1)     | 5        | 3 (1) | 5(1)      | 5   | 6 (2)   | 5 (1) |
| Minimum number required | 6      | 6         | 6        | 3     | 6         | 3   | 6       | 3     |

\*Nakaose had another volunteer supply teacher who covered as required.

Figures in brackets are the number of female teachers.

Source: ethnographic research.

The mixture of trained and untrained teachers seemed to create problems for both groups. Some trained teachers – particularly HTs – talked about in-service training (INSET) at school level, but not much was heard about this from the other teachers. However, some trained teachers were reluctant to continue with INSET.

<sup>81</sup> Lesanyili combined P4 and P5, and Nakaose and Manekanto combined P5 and P6.

A newly trained teacher in Ponkujaku was appointed as HT of a rural primary school and found that his untrained teachers had not been given lesson plan notebooks, so he hurried to the DEO and managed to get them. He explained:

The YEP said that the GES [the DEO] said they should not prepare lesson notes [plans]. That is why they did not give them lesson notes [the notebooks]. So, I went to the GES and asked [about it]. Then, [it was] OK; they gave us four lesson notes [lesson plan notebooks].

He seems to have taken his responsibility as an HT seriously and had been willing to demonstrate his leadership. However, after the first school-based INSET session, he became less keen to support his teachers' professional development, feeling that perhaps he had been merely showing off his knowledge and skills. He continued:

They are not encouraging me. I told them to prepare lesson notes [plans], but they were not doing anything. They were not asking me questions. I told them if they had any problems, just you ask me. If I do not know [something], I [will] also...ask [you]. But they were not asking me. I think maybe that they do not want [things] that way – [if] you look like too know [a know-all].

Expectations of and preparedness for teaching seemed to vary between trained and untrained teachers. Although some tried to bring everyone together – like the young HT – there persisted a professional distance between trained and untrained teachers. One trained teacher in Aumisoe, a winner of a district Best Teacher Award, suggested that they were reluctant to learn from each other:

They [untrained teachers] do their best, but they lack something. You know trained teachers are capable of teaching because they have been trained. There are some things untrained teachers cannot teach. Even if they skip some of the topics, they cannot teach. They do not come to you to consult you for advice; they just skip. If you go to them to teach or tell them how to do certain things, they will not take [accept] it.

The teacher went on to suggest that some of the school's pupils were not learning properly due to the way untrained teachers taught:

At the end, they finish the syllabus, but when you examine [the] children, you may get even [some] zeros. They do not understand whatever [the] teachers have taught them because the teachers did not get [take the] time to hammer it [reinforce their lessons] well.

However, even such a serious accusation as to suggest that the pupils might not be learning did not seem to be sufficient cause to prompt all the teachers at a school to work together.

In Jamune, the trained assistant HT was observed assisting his untrained staff, but such practice may not have always been the case. Kunje and Stuart's (1999) study of the Malawian context suggests that even in a programme in which an on-the-job training arrangement – trained teachers mentoring untrained teachers – had been set up, it was left up to the untrained teachers to seek assistance from their trained counterparts. However, the authors note that having been approached, the trained teachers were quite willing to offer their support. In the case of Ghana, without such an arrangement, the manner in which they work is left up to the teachers themselves to decide.

School-based INSET is promoted to encourage learning through sharing skills and experience; learning opportunities at school level should be sufficient motivation (INSET operational programme stakeholders workshop, Accra 17/03/05). However, the example of the young HT suggests that the sharing of professional skills and knowledge might not always be possible in a context of school-based INSET. Newly trained teachers in particular might be discouraged to learn that schools are not necessarily the professionally stimulating places they had expected them to be.

The abovementioned distance between trained and untrained teachers might have been caused intentionally or unintentionally. However, untrained teachers tended to suggest that some of their trained counterparts' attitude was to look down on the former. One untrained teacher in Aumisoe said:

Trained teachers are saying that whether they do their job or not, they will be paid. So, they put a lot of pressure on pupil [untrained] teachers: "You are a pupil teacher, so you can be sacked. You should take care of your job." They always warn us and tell us, "You are a pupil teacher; if you lose your job, what will you do?" So, they, the trained teachers, are posing us [their work].

Untrained teachers tended to think that they worked harder, in return for less pay than trained teachers. This was already a demotivating factor, but the culture as a whole made it difficult for untrained teachers to work with their more highly qualified colleagues, being differentiated from them in so many ways.

The context of basic school teaching in rural Ghana is complex, partly because teachers from vastly different backgrounds teach in the same situations. They may not have similar readiness for and expectations about living and working under certain conditions. Teachers' needs also vary in different aspects, from substantive needs such as food to opportunities for professional development. How these challenges are addressed seems to depend largely on the HT; a supportive personality encourages others. On the other hand, professional development does not seem to take place readily at school level. More attention should thus be paid to the complex nature of the school environment in order to address teacher motivation as a whole.

### 7.2.7. Teacher Absenteeism

All case study schools had some degree of teacher absenteeism, although it varied considerably and in each category, some teachers had a poor attendance record while others' were exemplary. Based on the 2007/08 teachers' attendance register, the attendance rate varied from as low as 11.7% in the case of a YEP teacher in Jamune, to as high as 100% of pupil teachers in Lesanyili (table 47). As discussed in the pervious chapter, especially serious absenteeism was observed among YEP teachers in Jamune and trained teachers in Nakaose; while two pupils teachers and a YEP teacher in Lesanyili, and a volunteer teacher<sup>82</sup> in Manekanto Primary School had good attendance records. However, generally, teacher absenteeism does not seem to be correlated with qualifications or affiliation. Such varying degrees of absenteeism could be observed within a single school, as seen in Jamune and Nakaose.

**Table 47 Teachers' attendance rate**

|         | Jamune   | Lesanyili | Nakaose*<br>Basic      | Manekanto |          | Asonbwa |          |
|---------|----------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|----------|---------|----------|
|         |          |           |                        | Primary   | JSS      | Primary | JSS      |
| Average | 62.5     | 90.1      | 54.5                   | n/a       | 74.7     | n/a     | 68.8     |
| Highest | 87.8 (P) | 100.0 (P) | 83.7 (P) <sup>83</sup> | n/a       | 92.0 (T) | n/a     | 82.0 (T) |
| Lowest  | 11.7(Y)  | 68.1(T)   | 24.1(V)                | n/a       | 55.8 (P) | n/a     | 58.4 (V) |

n/a=not available.

Categories of teachers in brackets: T=trained; P=pupil; Y=YEP; V=volunteer teacher.

Source: ethnographic research.

<sup>82</sup> Manekanto Primary School did not have an up-to-date attendance record. However, this volunteer teacher was the most regular and punctual, as described in chapter 6.

<sup>83</sup> There was a volunteer teacher whose attendance rate was 100% for his one-month teaching. However, this teacher was excluded in this table, since his teaching period was one eights of others.

A JSS HT in Aumisoe was concerned about one of his pupil teacher's chronic absenteeism, whose attendance did not show much improvement even after talking to him<sup>84</sup>. The HT's next and final step was to report the teacher to the DEO in order to have his salary stopped. He had previously found this to have the desired effect with one of his young trained teachers.

However, the HT was reluctant on this occasion, as the teacher was much more senior in terms of years of service, and also considered the effect that the consequences of his action would have on the teacher's life. He recalled that when his staff found out that the young teacher's salary had been stopped, they pleaded with him to get the embargo lifted. On the other hand, he did not think that he was given the necessary authority to discipline his staff. Such authority lay with the DEO, more specifically its directors, as they made decisions with regard to punitive action. The HT suggested:

They [the DEO] should give us the power to discipline teachers who misbehave. They need instant punishment, or instant disciplinary measures. Certain things should be taken [away] from the director. We sit and write a letter without the consent of the director, write something to put [an] embargo on somebody's salary? You see, certain authority we don't have.

Another HT reported one of his trained teachers, whose absenteeism had become unbearable. However, one day the HT was told by this teacher that he had received his salary as usual.

The HT was a very committed teacher, who had developed three school buildings for KG to JSS in collaboration with the community. He had also succeeded in increasing his complement of staff, including new KG and JSS teachers, appointing five from the National Service Scheme (three of whom were women) and making sure that volunteer teachers were supported by the community. His school was the only one in either of the case study districts that was equipped with two computers.

He was therefore disappointed, not only that his request had gone unheeded, but also because he had to face the uncomfortable fact that the power he had thought he possessed

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<sup>84</sup> According to the HT, his teacher's attendance rate of around 50% was the poorest in the school.

was ‘useless’. Later, he was told by the officer in charge that he could resubmit his request, but he told me that he would never report anyone to the office again.

It is thus plain that the HT is not the real authority in his or her school. In practice, the HTs’ authority is not independently executable – they are subordinate to the DEO.

The DEO’s attitude had the effect of demotivating untrained teachers, as one in Ponkujaku explained:

They [trained teachers] do not fear the office. Since we are not trained, we do the work. We have fear that at [the] least mistake we will be sacked. We have fears and are committed to the work. But once they are trained, they do whatever they want. Whatever they do, the office cannot punish them. They cannot do anything.

While untrained teachers could do little about their trained colleagues’ absenteeism, the latter were also frustrated at the untrained teachers’ absenteeism. However, it seemed that actual the frustration of trained teachers, particularly the HT, was their limited authority given over the others’ underperformance.

Teacher absenteeism may result from a lack of job satisfaction. The fault partly lies with the GES system, which some teachers are able to take advantage of – the authority tends to take the side of trained teachers rather than their untrained counterparts. The current DEO management style, in which HT’s do not have authority to sanction their teachers, while some HTs can still manipulate the DEO, also seems to be a factor that exacerbates teacher absenteeism. Whatever the cause, absenteeism has the effect of demotivating trained and untrained teachers alike, as each is dissatisfied with the other’s underperformance.

### **7.3. Relationship with Colleagues**

The HT’s personality – his or her attitude towards school staff – seems to have been an important factor in influencing teachers’ perceptions of the relative ease or hardship of their lives. The HT of Jamune, Ponkujaku, is a positive example. The teachers at this school identified their HT’s accommodating nature – which included the provision of food – as a sign of his leadership.

Similarly, the HT of a school near Nakaose, Aumiose, helped his teachers with the provision of foodstuff from the school farm he had initiated. According to the HT, it was the school's garden but one of his teachers said that it belonged to the former. However, the pupil teacher was able to approach the HT whenever he needed some foodstuff. He commented:

We have a cordial relationship. We have human feelings for each other; we support one another. If I say I'm sick, my headmaster is worried. If I need assistance, he helps me. We live here like brothers and sisters.

Both HTs seemed to know what was necessary for their teachers' well-being – both in terms of material goods, such as foodstuff, and psychological needs like moral support – in order that they should feel appreciated to stay and work in the community.

This type of attitude seemed to be effective in accommodating even those who were not familiar with the environment. A young single female YEP teacher, the only woman at the time at a rural JSS in Aumisoe, had given up and was going to request a transfer from her post because there was no electricity in the community. However, in addition to her father's advice and the kindness of a neighbour who had befriended her and made an offer of a piece of land for free, her HT encouraged her to stay. The HT not only supported her, who had not been paid up to six months, financially but also made her feel welcome. As a result, in her second year she turned down the offer of a transfer. She said:

When I found that there was no electricity, I was shocked. In the evening when I saw the darkness, I was afraid. But the teachers encouraged me to stay here and told [me that] nothing [would] happen to me... When my headmaster is here, I credit [borrow] money from him. So, when money comes, I release [pay it] back to him. Sometime the headmaster gives me money to prepare food so that we can enjoy [it] together...I enjoy this. Right now, if they said I should be transferred, I would not go.

She talked about her physical situation positively and seemed very confident about the way she and her colleagues were able to manage, and even live comfortably and enjoyably. She continued:

We have water here; we have toilets facilities, bathhouse, or kitchen. As [for] foodstuff, when you [want, you] go and buy more in Aumisoe town, so that you put

it in the kitchen. So, when we want to enjoy, we enjoy it step by step so you may not [things] find difficult.

The HT of Nakaose, a pupil teacher, had a very different attitude. A native of the community, a preacher, and secretary of a youth association and the executive committee, he seemed to have a very good relationship with the other villagers, but not with his trained teachers, whose absenteeism was an issue in the community. As discussed in the previous chapter, the HT appeared to be of the opinion that the teachers were given sufficient support through the provision of accommodation. He did not seem to empathise with his teachers, who appeared to perceive that life in Nakaose was hard and that they were not fully appreciated by the community because they were not provided with food.

Generally, the duties of an HT did not seem to be confined to his or her responsibilities at school or as the head of other institutions. The role of an HT seemed to extend to that of guardian of his or her teachers' private lives and well-being. Thus, the personal qualities of an HT seemed to be singularly vital to teacher motivation in the context of Ghana.

#### **7.4. Relationship with the Community**

A DEO document asserts that, "parents were showing much interest in assisting their wards in their schooling" (*former Aumisoie Situational Report* Jan–March 2005). However, it seems that there was a gap between the community and teachers' expectations in terms of real support for education. The teachers in the study tended to think that parents/guardians and the community as a whole did not provided an environment conducive to effective education, or adequate support to teachers.

First, in both districts, teachers thought that parents did not promote an effective learning environment for their children, attributing this to the notion that parents did not appreciate the *importance* or *essence* of education in their definitions.

Parents withdrew their children when they became strong enough to farm, replacing them with their younger siblings until they, in turn, were old enough to help on the farm. Even the parents who sent their children to school kept them away from school, sending them to

market; obliging them to attend funerals and festivals; and engaging them in farming and so on. One trained teacher in Aumisoë said, “Parents do not understand why they should allow their children to come to school throughout the week.” The teachers were also of the opinion that parents were reluctant to spend money on their children’s education. Another trained teacher in Aumisoë said:

They can get money to buy expensive funeral clothes to attend funerals; they do not see the essence or importance of sending their children to school...The fact is not that they are too poor to buy uniform [because] the same poor parents can buy expensive clothes.

The *Aumisoë Performance Monitoring Report* (2007) states:

Parents and guardians spent much money on expensive social celebrations such as funerals and out-doorings<sup>85</sup> at the expense of the education of their wards” (p45 and p53).

Once the capitation grant – ₦3 per pupil to basic schools for school management – had been implemented, some parents did not think it was their duty to buy stationery such as exercise books, pencils and pens. School children were sometimes not even given breakfast at home. A trained teacher in Aumisoë said:

Some children come to school without eating. Sometimes, we teachers have to give these children money to eat. Sometimes, a child is sleeping. You ask...if the child has eaten and the child says “no”.

In general, the teachers were discouraged by the scant consideration parents gave to their children’s education, although it was admitted that some parents could be very supportive.

Second, the teachers did not think that they received adequate support from the community as whole. They believed that such support was manifested through its material provision to teachers or schools more than its general attitude towards its teachers, for example, how they were greeted and in what language.

All the case study communities valued education, as seen in the previous chapter, and were willing to assist teachers materially to some extent, but the degree to which they did so

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<sup>85</sup> Traditional ceremonies in which newborn babies are introduced to the community.

varied somewhat. Asonbwa, for example, was highly supportive, providing free accommodation, land, food and firewood, while Nakaose and Manekanto were less considerate; Jamune and Lesanyili lay somewhere in the middle of this spectrum (The form of community support is summarized in table 48).

Although the community support in Jamune and Lesanyili was less than that in Asonbwa, it seemed to me what was provided for teachers by the community in Jamune and Lesanyili was what the community was able to provide – land to grow crops on, occasional food provision, and visits by senior members of the community to teachers at school or their houses – in an area of poverty. Firewood was not provided – used by the community members for cooking – but until I went to Aumisoe, I had felt this was reasonable, knowing that collecting firewood in the savannah is not easy – people had to walk long distances to collect it. It seems important to see to what degree support is provided within the context – the means available to each community – rather than in comparison with others which have different conditions.

In Aumisoe, the degree of community support was distinctively different between Asonbwa and the others: Nakaose and Manekanto. All three communities in Aumisoe are located in the forest and most of their land is under cultivation for cocoa and palm oil. Teachers who wanted to farm could be given land, but not free of charge – they needed to share the profits with the owner. Asonbwa was different, because not only was land provision free but also the community took care of the farm on the teachers' behalf while they were away on their upgrade programmes. In addition, teachers in Asonbwa were provided with food and, if the teachers did not cook, cooked food for them. This must have influenced the decision of a pupil teacher who was single with two children to stay in the community for more than 20 years. In addition, teachers could be provided with interest free loans from the community funds if they were in need. It is notable that all the non-native teachers lived in the community with their families – unlike other cases, where most non-native teachers stayed in the community on school days, leaving their families in the towns – and that none of them mentioned his or her intention to leave the school as soon as possible.

**Table 48 Community support**

|                                | Ponkujaku |           | Aumisoe            |                  |         |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|------------------|---------|
|                                | Jamune    | Lesanyili | Nakaose            | Manekanto        | Asonbwa |
| Accommodation                  | n/a       | Yes       | Yes                | n/a              | Yes     |
| Farmland provision             | Yes       | Yes       | n/a                | Yes              | Yes     |
| Fee for land usage             | Free      | Free      | n/a                | Half of produce  | Free    |
| Firewood provision             | No        | No        | Yes                | No               | Yes     |
| Food provision                 | Yes, some | Yes, some | No                 | No               | Yes     |
| Support for volunteer teachers | n/a       | n/a       | Yes, but irregular | Yes, but delayed | Yes     |
| Loans                          | No        | No        | No                 | No               | Yes     |

n/a= not applicable, as Jamune and Manekanto's TQ were provided by the DA. Non-native teachers, who were trained teachers, did not want to farm in Nakaose. There were no volunteer teachers in Jamune and Lesanyili.

Source: ethnographic research.

In all case studies except Asonbwa, the teachers tended to think that they did not get the level of support from the community they considered to be their due. In Aumisoe in particular, the teachers expected the community to shelter and feed them, perhaps because they were strangers to the community, or due to the notion that they were working for the good of the community. On the other hand, the attitude of the community was that teachers had a 'white man's job', that is, they were government employees and earned a salary (as discussed in the previous chapter). Thus, the community tended to think that teachers, with the exception of volunteer teachers, were paid well enough to take care of themselves.

The teachers also noted that there was less school development than they would have liked, attributing this mainly to the insufficient contribution of the community. The teachers seemed to expect the active involvement of the community. However, such support was not always provided as expected.

The degree of community support seemed to be related to three issues: the economic situation of the community; the community's leadership; and the teachers themselves.

Firstly, communities without many economic opportunities seem more supportive of teachers. In Jamune and Lesanyili in Ponkujaku and Asonbwa in Aumisoe, farming was the only means of earning a living and people did not see farming as able to provide financial security, due to subsistence foodstuff farming in Ponkujaku and no land available for

expansion in Asonbwa. On the other hand, people in Nakaose and Manekanto were settler farmers of cocoa and palm oil, like Asonbwa, but many also engaged in illegal gold mining. Particularly in Manekanto, where there used to be a commercially operated gold mine site nearby, illegal mining activities were a part of peoples' daily lives. People in Manekanto had other means to make a living even without formal education. The role of formal education, which could lead to paid employment, seemed to be more highly appreciated in communities that had few indigenous income generating opportunities. In such communities, the people seemed to value teachers more and, as a result, to be more united in their efforts to play a supporting role in the education of their children.

Secondly, effective leadership and the degree to which it supported education also seemed to affect the attitudes of communities in the support of their teachers. Asonbwa, where teachers felt that they were well supported by the community, had two exemplary leaders: the chief and the school management committee (SMC) chairman.

Asonbwa's chief, a founder of the community, was Ewe, but authorised to be chief of the Asonbwa by the Akan chief who owns the land. As chief, he had the power to govern its people – allocate land to the people and mediate in disputes. He (said to be 90 years old) seemed to value education: he said that he usually bought kerosene for his grandchildren to study at night in an interview. Indeed, Asonbwa was the only case with the norm that all school-age children were required to attend primary school or JSS, and school-going-children were not allowed to attend wake-keeping. People complied with this, because failure to do so meant exclusion from the Ewe community by order of the chief, as described in chapter 6. The chief seemed to be respected and all powerful.

On the other hand, the SMC chairman acted as the immediate supporter for teachers. He was aware of teachers' possible financial difficulties – which was a surprise to me – unlike in the other cases. Thus, he had empathy with the teachers. Moreover, the SMC chairman was an intermediary for teachers in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding between school and community. He was also close to senior members of the community, including

the chief. He said that if he thought an issue was too big for him to handle, he consulted with his seniors to seek a collective decision.

With good leadership, the community – which knew that it needed to try and retain teachers, otherwise they would not stay in such a “remote village” – demonstrated the unity of the community in its support of education. All the arrangements – the provision of accommodation, farmland, foodstuff, cooked food if necessary, and loans from the communal funds when teachers are in need – seem to lead to teachers’ feelings of not only being highly appreciated but also well protected.

Manekanto is a contrasting example. In addition to an already challenging environment for teachers, where people seemed less interested in education as it is not necessarily the means to get a paid job, there were two chiefs, which had the effect of dividing the community. Some teachers mentioned some community members’ support such as in providing food, however, this seemed personal and on an ad hoc basis.

The solidarity of the community, which partly results from the leadership, seems to be an important factor in determining the degree of support it will give to a particular cause. Without such a precondition, it seems that support for teachers will be less effective, being more on an individual ad hoc basis.

Thirdly, how teachers are perceived by the community seems to affect how far the community supports them. The community does not appreciate some teachers’ high absenteeism, for example in Nakaose with trained teachers’ attendance rates of 35-40%, or the excessive corporal punishment seen in Manekanto. It seems natural that such behaviour can discourage the community and the resulting lack of community support discourages the teachers even more. In this situation, the relationship between the teacher and the community could become a negative spiral. There could also be a positive spiral, as in the case of Asonbwa, where the community appreciated its teachers’ efforts, which in turn resulted in the higher performance of its JSS pupils on the BECE. The degree of community support depends on how it perceives teachers. One female NSS teacher in a

rural JSS in Aumisoe, who felt her community was very encouraging, explained why they were well supported:

They [community members] have seen the kind of work we are doing. They appreciate it. (The) life style we have is another point. When you misbehave or put up any character, that is not good. They are going to respond to that. If you put up good characters, they are going to respond to it. They are going to respond, according to your behaviour.

Such understanding and attitude – ‘social contract’ or mutual appreciation – seems helpful for establishing a good relationship with the community.

In summary, teachers’ lives and well-being in rural Ghana seem to be much more closely linked to the way in which they are treated by the community than is necessarily the case in the West. The community can make a big difference to teachers’ lives in rural areas. Not only can it provide security for teachers’ well-being and but also its appreciation and recognition of their work can encourage teachers. On the other hand, this study indicates that the degree of community support offered differs across communities. Along with the decentralisation process, the community’s role has received more emphasis than earlier (Bray 1996). However, some communities may be willing to support teachers but may not be capable of doing so. Community members with lower education levels may not be always aware of their responsibilities, as Prinsen and Titeca (2008) suggest. There could be economic and time constraints on community members’ involvement. Therefore, the equity of quality education – which reflects how teachers work – becomes questionable, if teacher motivation is left solely to the school-community relationship. A higher level authorities – district and national – should be aware of the individual situations of each community so that they can address inequity issues.

This session explored teacher motivation with the focus on their living and working conditions. It echoes previous research that physical conditions such as school buildings, teaching and learning materials (TLMs), and salary are challenging for teachers. Teachers tend to find their economic status is insecure due to poor salary levels and vulnerability to difficulties in obtaining foodstuff and consequently their social status can be low (Rodgers-Jenkinson and Chapman 1990). However, teachers seem to be able to gain respect from the

community where they live and work, although they may not perceive this to be the same in the wider community (at district and national level). Whether teachers feel respected and appreciated depends on the community and teachers' relationship with it. The community can ensure teachers' well-being through the provision of materials, which is also acknowledged as a sign of appreciation by teachers. Indeed, such support is an incentive for teachers to remain in their posts (Chapman 1994; Kemmerer 1994).

An exploration of teacher motivation at school/community level also picked up some information about the DEO's management, for example, TLMs and teacher salary issues. Some teachers' absenteeism was also suggested to be a reflection of the DEO's view that teachers' qualifications are more valuable than teachers' work. Too much emphasis on teacher motivation at school level may overlook the important role of the DEO in relation to teachers. Since teachers' working environments are created partly organisationally, the role of local authorities should not be ignored when studying teacher motivation. Therefore, there is a need for an exploration of the district level, which affect the environment teachers work in – conceptualised as policy implementation and teacher management. This is discussed in chapter 8.

## **7.5. Teachers' Identities and Personalities**

Teachers can demonstrate different levels of commitment in the same school, as seen in the case studies. Therefore, personalities and identities must be taken into consideration in attempting to determine what constitutes a positive or negative attitude. Three major issues are discussed in this section: religion, the teacher as leader, and previous hardship.

### **7.5.1. Religion**

Religion played a key role in influencing the commitment of the teachers in the case study districts. Some teachers clearly indicated that they were teachers because of their religious beliefs, emphasising the teaching situation per se was not encouraging. An untrained teacher in Ponkujaku in a focus group discussion said:

What we earn at the end of the month, we cannot spend in [do not have left by] the middle of the month. You still want...money. Your fellow workers in different departments, their lifestyles are more proper and their standard of living is better than ours. If we are to be following what we are receiving at the end of the month,

we should not have been teachers. Some of us are teaching – accepting postings in rural areas – simply because we are Muslims and Christians. I personally [feel] if [it is] not [for] that, the work is not motivating.

Religion seems to provide two reasons for becoming and being a teacher. Firstly, some teachers seemed to have had a rationale for accepting a posting in a rural area, as the JSS HT of Asonbwa indicated. She said, “The Bible lets us know that we have to go to typical villages and serve people in need or something”. This belief that they need to serve others in need may partly contribute to the result that 38% of teachers in the survey – the highest percentage – said that they wanted to support the younger generation.

Religion also seems to give some strength when teachers expose themselves to a new environment. A young untrained female teacher who accepted a rural posting in Aumisoë explained:

When you are posted, as God says, when you move to another place, any place, even [at least] one soul is there. When you combine yourself to [that] one soul, you become two so that you [can] enjoy and share ideas.

With their religious beliefs, some teachers seem to be encouraged to try new and possibly challenging environments and to believe in finding enjoyment – meeting new people and learning new things – in such circumstances.

Secondly, religion seems to provide a motive to continue being a teacher. Teachers tended to find ‘rewards’ through teaching. A trained male teacher in Aumisoë said:

Jesus said that [there is] more blessing in giving than in receiving, so I consider teaching as one of these things which Jesus stated in the text. As you teach, you are imparting knowledge. You are giving out something. I know very well that once I’m giving out, I am going to be blessed more; by whom? By God, the Creator. That is why I enjoy teaching.

The volunteer teacher in Manekanto who was a dedicated teacher was a pastor as well.

Quite a few teachers in both districts mentioned “rewards in the heaven”. There seemed to be a common perception that the rewards of teaching were few on earth. Indeed, a district director said in a ceremony in which 60 bicycles provided by the GES were given to

teachers that it was an acknowledgement by the government that “teachers reward is not only in heaven but also on earth<sup>86</sup>”. It is unfortunate that teachers tend to perceive that they are not rewarded as they deserve, while they are in the teaching profession. I wonder how far they can sustain their motivation through their religious beliefs. The same teacher did not rule out the possibility of leaving the teaching profession altogether if he found a ‘greener pasture’. It is critical to note that teachers do not have high hopes or positive expectations of the teaching profession. This can make teacher recruitment and retention even more difficult if steps are not taken to improve matters.

Religion also seems to give teachers a view of how they should work. A trained teacher in Ponkujaku commented, “I am a Muslim and the code of conduct of Islam does not support lateness to school, laziness, etc.” Similarly, the HT of Manekanto JSS, a Christian, said, “Teachers take care of children. Teachers don’t easily get entangled with problems.” Teachers may not be satisfied with their conditions, but they may try to act how they believe they should. Again, religion seems to equip teachers with the strength to follow their ideal image of teachers.

On the other hand, there was absenteeism among teachers in both districts, where almost all the people (99%) were either Muslim or Christian. Therefore, religious belief does not seem to be everybody’s motivation. However, those who perceived the job and work positively seem to value their teaching roles as being consistent with their religious beliefs. Teachers appear to use religion to articulate a sense of mission and to believe they will be rewarded in some form, maybe their pupils’ success or the esteem they attract at some time (could be in the heaven), and this belief allows them to remain in the profession and cope with the hardships.

### **7.5.2. The Role as Leaders**

Some teachers seem to have developed positive images of teachers at a younger age and, as a result, project themselves in the same way through supporting the younger ones and being

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<sup>86</sup> Speech on 02/08/07.

leaders of the community. Their role models appeared to be their own teachers or other teachers in the community.

A female trained teacher in Aumisoë became a teacher, although initially she was interested in nursing. However, she was persuaded by one of her secondary school teachers who encouraged her to teach at a primary school after her O-level education. He also advised and helped her to join a TTC later. The HT and the assistant HT of Jamune had similar stories. Their teachers had supported them not only in their continuing education but also employment – as described in chapter 6. Some teachers may think their support more important for children who are less fortunate.

Teachers also perceive the role of teachers is also to be leaders, witnessing that teachers were treated – respected and appreciated – in the community. A young trained male teacher in Aumisoë explained why he became a teacher, saying:

I was influenced by my former teachers' behaviour and the kind of respect they have in the community as well as the way they dressed and communicated with others in the community.

A pupil teacher in Aumisoë, who was about to start a DBE offered by a university said:

My father happened to be a teacher. He was a pastor, too. I took an interest in teaching, because of the way he (my father) is in society. People respect him, he is knowledgeable in all aspects. If anything happens in society, people would like to learn a lot from him, so I have seen that teaching is the profession that when you are in it, you become a good planner, administrator, you know accounting, all fields. Their life style is different from those who are not teachers or in other professions... Teachers are highly respected because of our profession. We deal with people with different opinions, but we are always able to inculcate good manners. We expose them to the scientific world. As we teach, children learn how we dress, how we comport ourselves. So as teachers, in fact, we are actually leaders of the society or community.

Some teachers chose the profession to follow in the footsteps of their role models, who were confident as teachers as well as leaders of society. Their positive attitude towards the job was nourished at a young age and still seems to shape their values and contribute to their attitudes. It is interesting to note that in spite of their perceived low status, mainly due to poor remuneration, some teachers still have a positive image of teachers as leaders.

Indeed, 16% of teachers in the survey said their goal in life, including their professional

goal, is to be a role model or leader. A further exploration of how teachers can be supported so they perceive themselves as leaders and act as such seems important.

### **7.5.3. Previous Hardship**

One of the main reasons for teachers to have chosen the teaching professions is to support the younger generation, 37.6% of teachers in the survey – almost double of that of taking further education courses and enhancing their knowledge. Teachers in both districts said:

We are coming from that area and we saw that the literacy rate was very, very low. So I decided going to the field to see what I can do for my brothers and sisters (trained teacher, Ponkujaku)

In rural areas, most of our brother and sisters are lacking of education. So it is our duty to teach them to become people in the future (untrained, Ponkujaku)

I want to assist the school children to acquire knowledge and skills for their further development (trained, Aumisoe)

As discussed in chapter 5, few teachers in Ponkujaku and Aumisoe mentioned the enjoyment of working with children as a reason. Teachers in the two districts seem to be geared towards providing the environment that they wished to have when they were young.

Teachers' willingness to support children seems to be related to their previous difficulty in obtaining educational opportunities and continue their education. Some struggled much more than others. The assistant HT of Lesanyili is an example, as described in the previous chapter. He had to relocate to continue his education, mainly due to ethnic conflicts, and wait patiently for an opportunity to go back to school until somebody helped him out. P4/P5 teacher in the same school had a similar story. The assistant HT of Jamune started formal education at older age and managed to continue his education within what was available. The HT of Ahasewa JSS in Aumisoe also mentioned her difficulty in acquiring further education opportunities.

On the other hand, the degree of difficulty teachers had in continuing their education seems different. In Ponkujaku, Konkomba teachers like those in Lesanyili, as a minority, appeared to suffer more than Dagomba teachers. Similarly, teachers in Ponkujaku had more difficulties than those in Aumisoe, mainly due to fewer opportunities and a shorter

educational history in the north. One of the findings indicated in chapter 5 that teachers in Ponkujaku – an economically more challenging district than Aumisoe – less frequently cite ‘financial difficulties’ and ‘no other job’ as their reasons for becoming teachers, may be partly explained by these historically created differences, as discussed chapter 3 and 4.

Teachers who have had difficulty in continuing with their education seem more committed to bring their younger ones up. They are aware that education is the only means for younger ones to follow their paths. Therefore, they seem to have a mission to serve the not better-off children, accepting a rural posting.

Teaching requires not only knowledge and skills but also a sincere personality. Teaching at basic level in deprived districts has a lot of challenges, as described earlier. Whether a teacher can accept a rural posting and live actively seems to depend on his or her personality. This area – sincere personality – should be much more emphasised in teacher recruitment.

As previous hardship seems to equip teachers with empathy towards their pupils, especially the less fortunate ones, similar exposure to such conditions could be provided as part of teacher training. One of the trained teachers in Ponkujaku intended only to learn to pass exams when he was a trainee teacher, as he had not been interested in becoming teacher. However, through his teaching practice, he changed his mind: he wanted to provide ‘chances’ to less fortunate pupils. He said:

During the [teaching] practice when you were really posted to the field and found yourself in a village, I really felt that people who were coming had to get a miracle to get them in a classroom. And I realise that some are potentially good, very good that they can do something, if only chances are given to them... They cannot pay anything. They cannot give you anything...but people were willing to learn... Your help, a little help could turn things around.

Indeed, he finished in a TTC in the south, but he decided to serve in the north.

In summary, those who can perceive themselves positively, as fulfilling a mission and playing an important role as teachers as well as leaders, seem more committed to teaching.

Teachers' valuable contributions to children's lives need to be emphasised, not only by individual teachers but also the wider community.

## **7.6. Coping Mechanisms**

While many teachers are not willing to accept rural postings, some accept such situations with enthusiasm and are actively and contentedly living and working in remote areas. The latter seem to have a set of strategies that help them maintain a positive attitude and cope under challenging conditions.

Support and help from their families, friends, and community members no doubt constitute an important coping mechanism, as seen in the five cases. With this, teachers' household chores – a big portion of teachers' lives – could be eased. Teachers' security, especially for food acquisition, even with farm land to cultivate, could be enhanced. Moreover, it could encourage teachers, as they tend to perceive this as a sign of appreciation and care.

Teachers' willingness to contribute to mutual support – sharing responsibilities and promoting belongingness – is clearly one teacher coping mechanism.

In this section, however, the more active coping mechanisms that teachers fall back on in order to provide a sense of meaningfulness to teaching in challenging situations are explored. There seem to be two types of coping mechanism: self-fulfilment through achievement; and effective organisation and planning.

First, the teachers in the study seemed to be proud of their achievements and thus felt encouraged to continue. One such achievement is how their pupils' performance is perceived by others. Teachers in Jamune and Lesanyili were proud of their pupils, who were said to outperform some others when they progressed to JSS. Teachers in Asonbwa were encouraged by more tangible outputs – better results in the BECE. Similarly, a trained teacher in a rural area of Aumisoe was proud of his pupils' progress, saying:

A lot of students have passed through my hands, through this very school. Some have continued to SSS. Some have completed [graduated] and have gone further; some are now in polytechnics and other places. My children, I am proud.

Other achievements include increased enrolment, infrastructure development, and the actual establishment of a JSS. A trained teacher in Ponkujaku commented:

The school's population was 150. After 5 years, I was able to sensitise the community and it brought more children, now 400 plus. The school did not know what a JSS was. I was able to make [help] them get one there. And I was able to lobby...[an] NGO, and it is putting up a structure for a nursery. I think this is an achievement.

One newly trained teacher posted to a rural primary school in Aumisoe was discouraged by the English level of his P3 pupils. A colleague who had been a classmate at TTC and posted to the same school, decided to get a transfer after a year. The other asked himself, "What shall we do for these academically weak children?" However, he persisted and was now in his fourth year. He wanted his pupils to be the best in the district:

[When] I entered the class [room] and asked the children, [I found] they couldn't talk or say anything in English in class. They were looking at you. I said, "Hey, work is not easy." With all [my other] commitments, I stopped going weekends. Sometimes I stayed here for two whole months. Work needs to be done...I would like them to be the best of the district; if...not the first, first three.

This teacher became the HT of his primary school in his second year. He is the one who succeeded in developing two school buildings for KG to JSS, established a JSS in 2007, and expanded the staffing level, recruiting five NSS teachers for both primary level and JSS. The school was subsequently connected to the national grid and equipped with two computers – the only basic school with computers in the case study districts.

These innovations could not have been carried out by the teachers alone. They succeeded by involving community members and working together, developing a good and trusting relationship at the same time. Such a relationship was able to facilitate collaborative achievements.

On the other hand, teachers' sense of fulfilment might not be sustained if they find that they lose more – personally and professionally – than they gain over the long term. The HT mentioned above was planning, after four-years teaching, to get a release from the DEO to work in Kumasi where he intended to further his education. This is where the other type of coping mechanism comes in, as it will be discussed in the next paragraph.

Second, committed teachers seem to be good planners. Some intentionally settled down in rural areas, like the HT of Jamune, and yet they did progress professionally by taking the distance upgrade programme, and economically, by being successful in second jobs such as farming. In addition, the HT of Jamune felt that without him, his school would collapse. With the security he had established and the meaningfulness of his presence for the pupils and the community, he seemed to be able to continue his work there. Another HT in a rural primary school in Aumisoe had a similar life experience. He also valued his own contributions, saying:

Why don't I stay here? Why don't I help? Why don't I leave a mark here before I go away so that in my absence, people can say, "Ei, sometime ago there was a teacher here who did this, who did that". I think that is all. At times I may meet my pupils at some places, "Hei" "Master, oh, it's a long time." "It's OK, no problem." You see it. It's all about life.

The HT of Asonbwa JSS recognised the advantage of living there in order that she might be able to save money and move to town after two years when she finishes her upgrade programme. They tend to link their current situation with long-term goals.

In summary, active teachers seem to be able to identify the good things in challenging situations. These individuals tend to cope best when they realise their usefulness to others and reach an awareness of their own personal meaningfulness, fulfilling their goals. Some teachers can cope with the rural postings, but again not by themselves alone but with others' support. There seem to be three things necessary for teachers to actively and contentedly live and work in rural areas: their security and well-being must be assured; their contributions need to be appreciated and recognised; and there must be no disadvantage to their career opportunities. Teacher motivation should encompass teachers' well-being and prospects both in short- and long-term.

## **7.7. Conclusion**

The teachers' lives in the two districts were challenging. Even trained and long-serving staff were frequently unable to sustain a livelihood on their salary alone, which forced them to take a second job to supplement their income, mainly farming or trading. Even with a second job, teachers were not always able to procure basic necessities, especially foodstuff.

They might have been posted in a community that showed little empathy for or appreciation of them. They may have also needed to manage their professional lives under materially challenging though frequently unstimulating conditions. Indeed, they seemed to be expected to teach effectively under conditions that were more demanding than the authorities cared to admit.

This chapter touched on the notion that teachers' living and working conditions are not limited to the environment at community level, as some teachers suggested in relation to TLM provision and the system of salary payment. Living and working conditions are also affected by actors at higher levels, that is, the DEO and central government. Accordingly, in the next chapter, the discussion turns to aspects of the environment at macro level, and how education policies and the DEO's approach and attitude affect teacher motivation and perceptions towards the profession.

## **8. Macro-level Motivating and Demotivating Conditions and Factors**

### **8.1. Introduction**

In the previous chapter, micro-level conditions and factors that affect teacher motivation are discussed and it is suggested that teachers' perceptions could be affected by their position in relation to district education officers. In chapter 5, one of the six elements of teachers' job satisfaction is identified as 'organisational support system and social representation'. Building on these observations, this chapter discusses macro-level conditions and factors, including policy and the role of local authorities in its implementation.

Several strategies have been utilised in the attempt to enhance teacher motivation. For example, upgrade programmes for both trained and untrained teachers, the introduction of ICT as part of education reform, and study leave with pay for trained teachers, promote opportunities for professional development. Recognition schemes – the Best Teacher Award and other incentive packages – have been implemented with the aim of attracting and motivating basic teachers in rural areas, providing ministerial recognition together with some material provision for hard-working teachers.

Additionally, the deployment of secondary school leavers as teachers (officially, teaching assistants) through the Youth Employment Programme could lighten heavy workloads resulting from the shortage of teachers in rural areas. Finally, the capitation grant scheme can provide teachers with greater autonomy and a say in school management. All these initiatives are well intentioned in aiming to address the low levels of satisfaction and motivation amongst Ghanaian basic school teachers.

In this chapter, the organisational and occupational environment that teachers work within is explored. It begins by examining the implications of the above-mentioned strategies. It then moves on to discuss the procedures and attitudes of local education authorities –

mainly the District Education Office (DEO) – in their daily activities, such as teacher deployment and transfer; dissemination of information to schools; and teacher promotion. It ends by considering the informal or moral support that local education authorities provide for their teachers.

## **8.2. Implications of Policy on Teacher Motivation**

### **8.2.1. The Ghana Education Service Upgrade Programmes**

The Ghana Education Service (GES) offers two upgrade programmes: the UTDBE for untrained teachers and the DBE for certificate-holding trained teachers. Unlike university courses, these two programmes accommodate all applicants.

#### ***8.2.1.1. The Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education***

The UTDBE has encouraged people to become basic school teachers: Aumisoe DEO statisticians attribute an increase<sup>87</sup> in primary school teachers mainly to this programme. One pupil teacher in Ponkujaku described the popularity of the programme:

Sometime in December 2005, they brought in the course we are doing: the UTDBE programme by distance learning. They [the GES] brought it in. I also bought an application form. There were many of us; there were many of us in the district: up to 150 (28/02/2008).

Some people have taken advantage of the programme and have soon become teachers. Others, especially those who have some teaching experience but despite their efforts have not been admitted to a teacher training college (TTC) – like two pupil teachers in Lesanyili – have taken it as encouragement to stay in teaching.

The programme motivates teachers to continue their training as well as basic school teaching, with the promise of a better salary, job security and other benefits – such as study leave with pay – after the completion of the course. Some have even continued teaching as volunteers since the introduction of the programme in Ponkujaku in 2004/05 and in Aumisoe in 2005/06.

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<sup>87</sup> Its *Performance Monitoring Report 2008* indicates that the number of primary teachers increased from 654 in 2005/06 to 965 in 2006/07. However, these figures are inconsistent with EMIS data, 535 in both 2005/06 and 2006/07.

On the other hand, the UTDBE had only a single intake for Ponkujaku in 2004/05 and Aumisoie in 2005/06. This seems unfair for serving teachers who could not participate in the programme in the year of intake due to not having been a teacher at the time, or financial difficulties, and so on. Teachers not participating in the UTDBE tended to have higher absenteeism rates than those who were on the course. This suggests that those not participating in the UTDBE may have had less ‘hope’ of progressing professionally. Indeed, the results of the survey indicate that 41.8% of untrained teachers do not take the UTDBE. This programme design – a single intake for each district – does not make the programme a motivating factor for all serving untrained teachers.

Moreover, many teachers struggle to stay on the programme, mainly for financial reasons. The government heavily subsidises the programme so that participants only have to pay for boarding during residential courses and examination fees. However, making a payment of approximately ₡100 three times a year is not a simple matter, even for pupil teachers who are the most well off among untrained teachers. They commonly find that their initial belief that they could easily manage the financial commitment is unrealistic, with the constant increases in boarding fees and additional costs for materials such as handouts. One untrained teacher in Aumisoie said:

They [the DEO] say that no money [is involved]. You buy a form and send it in; there is no huge amount to pay. But when we enter the school, we find it very difficult because of the financial problems. We are suffering. When we go there, we pay fees for everything... Some for handouts – buy this, ₡4, ₡4, ₡4, ₡4 every subject. If I don’t have the money, how can I buy it? The course is very expensive for those who have financial problems.

A teacher in Ponkujaku said:

Most of us are facing problems to pay the fees. The fee is very high. Our colleagues – most of them – would like to join the programme. But because of the fee, they are left at home.

The difficulty of continuing the programme is reflected by the number of teachers who have dropped out. The number of 125<sup>88</sup> UTDBE students in Ponkujaku in January 2007 had

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<sup>88</sup> *An UTDBE report on 1<sup>st</sup> January in 2007.* The original enrolment was 219 in the former Ponkujaku, according to *A Report on the UTDB Programme January- April 2006*. Both were at Ponkujaku DEO.

dropped to 85<sup>89</sup> by July 2008. Similarly, in Aumisoe, more than 350<sup>90</sup> enrolled on the programme but there were only 220–240<sup>91</sup> left by July 2008. One third of the teachers in both districts dropped out of the programme.

Teachers can expect little support from the authorities. The DEO is reluctant to endorse bank loans requested by its pupil teachers, which means that the amount they need may not be approved by the bank. Unlike Aumisoe District Assembly (DA), Ponkujaku DA provided ₦35, ₦35, and ₦30 for the academic years 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07 respectively, although most teachers considered this to be insufficient. A teacher in Ponkujaku said:

Somebody had ₦40; he could not pay ₦60 for the exam. He went to the Principal's office many times, but he was not allowed to take the exam; he sat in the exam hall but he was driven away... They should see that our salary is not enough to feed our families let alone to pay the fees. So, whatever we come up against, they should help us.

There is no doubt that the UTDBE is a powerful motivator for untrained teachers. This confirms the findings of earlier studies that the prospects of an additional qualification and an increase in salary are essential for untrained teachers if they are not to drop out of an in-service programme (Greenland 1983 quoted in Rust and Dalin 1990; Rust and Dalin 1990).

However, the practicability of the UTDBE is questionable, as some committed teachers – for example, the volunteer teacher at Manekanto Primary School – has unwillingly but inevitably given up the programme. Others struggle on, spending less of their salaries on essentials, borrowing money from whomever they can, and doing other jobs to make ends meet.

As discussed in the previous chapter, teachers already live at subsistence level, but the participants of the UTDBE have an additional burden. The question of whether someone manages to complete it or not depends mainly on the teacher him or herself, but some could be severely discouraged from teaching.

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<sup>89</sup> An interview with coordinator of the UTDBE of a TTC that facilitated the UTDBE for Ponkujaku students

<sup>90</sup> A situational quarter report ending December 2006

<sup>91</sup> An interview with UTDBE coordinator at Aumisoe District Education Office.

The government's aim in implementing the UTDBE is laudable, but it does not seem to acknowledge that many untrained teachers – more than 40% of untrained teachers in the case study districts – could not benefit. Moreover, it does not seem to take into account the means by which teachers might realistically be expected to complete the programme. The *Educational Sector Performance Report 2008* (MoESS 2008) indicates the number of untrained teachers enrolled in the UTDBE two years previously, not the number of participants at the time it was written. It suggests that the government is interested in the introduction of the programme rather than its implementation or implication. There appears to be a gap between what the government understands as the context and what is going on at field level.

#### ***8.2.1.2. The Diploma in Basic Education***

It appears that the GES-facilitated two-year Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) gives trained teachers similar aspirations to those of untrained teachers taking the UTDBE. For some who have not succeeded in furthering their education by means of other distance learning or study leave initiatives in spite of their best efforts, the DBE is a much sought after opportunity. In a focus group discussion, one teacher from Aumisoë commented:

I came here purposely to further my education. Unfortunately, there has been a delay up to now.

For others, taking the DBE programme is a way to avoid falling behind diploma holding teachers in terms of *rank* or position. In a focus group discussion, an experienced teacher in Ponkujaku said:

The trend has now changed. Pupil teachers have not gone through TTCs, while you were trained for three or four years. Pupil teachers who were just employed last year will complete their courses within three or four years; then they become your seniors. So you sacrifice your time and money to get above them.

It is interesting to note that these trained teachers tend to take issue with their untrained counterparts, not the newly trained teachers who already hold diplomas. There seems to be an inclination among trained teachers to differentiate themselves from untrained teachers and maintain their position in relation to them. It is also worth mentioning that teachers in Aumisoë do not talk about the upgrade of untrained teachers' qualifications as their own

reason for taking the DBE. Rather, those in this district seem to perceive the DBE as an opportunity to further their education.

Like the UTDBE, the DBE imposes a financial burden on those taking the course. However, since the DBE – unlike the UTDBE – is not financially subsidised by the government, the cost they have to bear is even higher: tuition and material fees, in addition to boarding and examination fees. A teacher in Ponkujaku said:

For the sandwich (DBE), we have to pay everything: textbooks, tuition, lodging. The first session, they paid ø170 and the second one ø65, for three weeks. The next one has an exam, which will be more expensive[20/04/08].

All participants have to bear the same costs, but the degree of difficulty seems to be more acute for teachers in Ponkujaku (the issue was raised by them and not those in Aumisoe). This might be because teachers in Ponkujaku with much less paid job opportunities, as government employees and breadwinners, already have the substantial financial burden of supporting larger families<sup>92</sup> in more impoverished conditions than those in Aumisoe.

Inferior financial services in terms of capacity and availability might be another reason. The only bank that teachers in Ponkujaku are allowed to use is a rural bank whose service capacity, more specifically, its loan facility, is unsatisfactory due to the insufficient amount it is able to lend. There are no private teacher associations or credit unions that could support teachers financially. Moreover, teachers in Ponkujaku may have fewer options and opportunities for getting a second job. Farming is the major occupation in this respect, but it does not yield profits consistently throughout the year because it is dependent on rainfall and there is only one rainy season annually.

One of the actions that teachers in Ponkujaku have taken is to request financial support from the DA, knowing that untrained teachers have gained financial support for taking the UTDBE; and applying the district sponsorship policy for trainee teachers to themselves: teachers sponsored by the DA will serve the district after graduation. However, the

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<sup>92</sup> The results of the survey suggest that on average a teacher has 4.19 and 3.12 dependants in Ponkujaku and Aumisoe respectively.

response has been discouraging. The teachers have not obtained any support from the DA and even discovered that their formal request is not in the DA files. The perception that the authorities do not care about them and that they are not appreciated is thus being formed. One teacher commented (and others echoed his sentiments):

If the district director does not know you, but you are a native of the place and you would like to sustain the place, nobody needs to tell him [the District Chief Executive, the head of the DA] that support is looked for. We put up a formal request for that, yet it is not coming. So indirectly, it is saying that the man [the DCE] is not concerned. The DA is not concerned about its district. Imagine that I am not able to sponsor myself; I will be compelled to move out. If your situation is not good, you can move. But if you are sponsored, definitely, you will stay. So they do not like our services. They do not appreciate our services.

This view could be reinforced if it is learnt that other districts are more supportive of their teachers. Indeed, participants on residential courses have discovered that senior civil servants and politicians have different attitudes from district to district. A teacher in Ponkujaku said:

The director, DCE, MPs, presiding members all come to visit other teachers, giving some financial support, but not to us.

The participants of the two districts are doing their best to complete the programme even if it means they have to pay for it themselves. In this sense, the DBE is a motivator. On the other hand, their financial burden is real and it is a strain to find the additional income to keep up with the programme as well as doing their teaching jobs. Others may have decided not to take the DBE or have given it up because the burden is too great.

Upgrade programmes are intended to support teachers' professional development. However, insufficient attention seems to be paid to the fact that they require the practical means to complete the DBE successfully. Indeed, as with the case of the UTDBE, the context in which teachers live and work does not seem to have been fully taken into account in policy implementation. Thus, in Ponkujaku in particular, for some teachers taking the DBE, a discretionary financial arrangement would be helpful.

### 8.2.2. The Introduction of ICT into Primary and Junior Secondary School Curricula

As a part of education reform in 2007/08, ICT was introduced into primary and JSS curricula. Young teachers in particular were keen to be exposed to ICT, and some said that they would like to take computer courses, even if it meant studying at private institutions at their own expense. In a focus group discussion, trained teacher in Aumisoë said:

I would like to come to Kumasi, because of education. If you are in Kumasi, it's very easy for you to do so many courses that would help you. Because here in Ghana, they do not respect us, teachers. So we have to do more courses, learn more, so that you go up. The higher you go, the more money you get...I want to do more courses... Here in Kumasi, I will get computers. I will get all teaching facilities and I will learn more.

No matter interested teachers may be in advanced technology, their living and working environments are often not conducive to ICT teaching and learning. Poor physical conditions are one of the main reasons. As both case study districts are rural, most of the communities do not have electricity; and even schools in towns that do have power are not necessarily connected to the national grid. There are no computers in any of the basic schools in Ponkujaku, while in Aumisoë only one JSS – where a young HT raised funds in collaboration with the School Management Committee (SMC) – has two computers.

ICT Syllabuses had been distributed to schools by the middle of the academic year 2007/08, but no textbooks had been provided by the end of the year. Thus, the two case study districts were unprepared in terms of both infrastructure, and teaching and learning materials (TLMs) to teach ICT in the first year of its introduction. One trained teacher in Aumisoë described:

We are facing problems, because the government has changed the school system from JSS to Junior High School. They brought syllabus, but no textbooks. Because this is a village, we don't have electricity, we don't have computers. We are supposed to teacher computers, ICT at the school. We don't have any textbooks. How do we teach? It is a problem. Some of children haven't seen computers before. Whole a lot of problems we are facing in education service.

Another – perhaps more crucial – impediment to the teaching of ICT is that few teachers are comfortable with the use of computers. No training was offered to teachers before the

implementation of the policy. The majority remained computer illiterate even after its introduction, owing to the facts that ICT is a new technology; the districts have little exposure to ICT; and there is at best limited access to commercial ICT service points.

Nevertheless, the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE) and the Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) include some ICT courses, and the participants hope these modules will equip them with sufficient knowledge and skills to teach the subject. However, not all serving teachers pursue these courses and some of them feel that they are being obliged to teach ICT without sufficient training in the subject. On a trained teacher who was taking DBE said:

We need to upgrade certain things, need certain training so that you can upgrade, because day in and day out, things keep on changing. I can say I have some difficulties. The time when I completed a college three years or four years back, different things have come to replace what we have learned... Now they introduced certain new topics or new subject into the curriculum... ICT has been introduced.

Teachers in rural areas are already faced with a greater challenge in the teaching of practical subjects in general – such as science – since they have few TLMs, although some manage remarkably well through improvisation. However, the ICT issue cannot be addressed in the same manner. Teachers are not only concerned about the difficulty of teaching ICT but also anticipate poor performances from their pupils in ICT in the BECE in two years' time. One of the male trained teachers in Aumisoie said, "Teachers are the ones to be blamed for their pupils' unimpressive performance." This is similar to a case in primary schools in India, in which teachers' perceptions of new pedagogical initiatives were negatively shaped due to a lack of TLMs and inadequate training (Dyer 1996). Teachers know that the goal set by the education authorities is not realistically achievable, and "a battle with government" (Dyer 1996) is not only inevitable but the outcome will not be in their favour. In short, particularly in rural areas, teachers tend to feel that they are ignored.

There is a big gap between what is necessary and what is available. In other words, context is not taken into account in policy formulation. ICT introduction does not seem to provide

teachers with the opportunity to learn. Rather, it leaves them to wonder about the usefulness of themselves.

### **8.2.3. Recognition Schemes**

Teachers gain recognition from different levels of society. The closest is their colleagues and head teachers; then members of the community where they work; followed by the wider community: the circuit, district, region and, ultimately, the whole country.

Recognition can be formal – in other words, institutionalised – such as the Best Teacher Award and other incentive packages; or informal such as people’s respect and appreciation. The former is discussed here, the later having been addressed in chapter 6 and 7.

#### ***8.2.3.1. The Best Teacher Award***

The aim of the Best Teacher Award (BTA) is to encourage teachers in the field, boost their morale and provide an incentive for them to continue striving to perform better. The winner of the BTA at primary level in Aumisoie in 2007/08 said that one of her best moments as a teacher was when she found out that she had been nominated for an interview for the district BTA and then went on to win the award:

I was nominated to go for an interview for the Best Teacher Awards. I said, “Eh, what did they see in me as a teacher?” [After the interview and a demonstration lesson] ...they said, “You have come first.” It was a very enjoyable day.

She learned that an officer who often visited her school had recommended her. She was excited, feeling that her efforts had been appreciated and recognised not just by this officer but also by other authorities. She is proud of having won the award and continues to work conscientiously, ensuring that the children learn. However, she is one of very few teachers who talked about the intended function of the BTA.

From his qualitative research in a district in the coastal Central Region, Cobbold (2006b), who studied the policy and practice of teacher retention in Ghana, suggests that the BTA is perceived to be awarded to teachers in towns rather than in rural areas. The present study basically echoes his findings, but with the significant variation that the division is not between rural and urban but between the trained and the untrained.

In both districts, the winners of the BTA at this level are all trained teachers<sup>93</sup>. In Aumisoe, where some pupil teachers have worked for more than 20 years – unlike in Ponkujaku – the level of disgruntlement about being excluded from the award is obvious. One pupil teacher at a rural JSS in Aumisoe, impressed me in his science class because he provided time for pupils to think and a secure atmosphere for them to ask questions. It was not common in Ghanaian schools where most instruction is generalised as ‘chalk and talk’ (Kadingdi 2006). The teacher said:

They say they are doing the Best Teachers Awards, but they don’t come here to find out who is the best teacher. They just select teachers near the town and award [them]. We’ve been left out. We deserve the same package... They are discriminating. Some of us in the field have experienced more than trained teachers... Somebody from training college cannot teach like that, because of the experience I have. I’ve done more research. I’ve got [an] understand[ing of] the way children learn certain things. You assess my teaching. If I’m due for an award, give it to me. Don’t say that I’m not a trained teacher.

Another pupil teacher in Aumisoe was bitter about his award having been cancelled because he was found to be an untrained teacher:

I was the best science teacher in the district. A letter was given to me [saying] that in the whole district I was the best science teacher. But later, they said that I had not attended a teaching college. I have taught for so many years...but they said that I’m not a trained teacher... They did not give that award to me at all.

According to a government leaflet, those eligible for the BTA are “all classroom teachers who have taught for a minimum of five years in primary schools and junior secondary schools” (MoESS 2007c p8). Moreover, *Conditions and Scheme of Service* and the *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers* (GES and GNAT 2000) defines teachers as “all those persons in educational establishments within the Ghana Education Service who are responsible for the education of pupils/students” (p3). These publications could be interpreted to mean that anyone no matter what qualification and contract he or she has may be considered to be a teacher, and that as long as they have taught for more than five years, he or she is eligible for the BTA.

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<sup>93</sup> Interviews with officers in both districts and lists of district BTA winners for 2006/7 and 2007/08 in Aumisoe DEO.

However, untrained teachers are excluded in practice. They are not considered, since “they are not professional teachers or permanent teachers,” according to officers in both districts. The person in charge of the BTA at national level and some DEOs has also clearly stated that the BTA was only for trained teachers. One of the three criteria for the selection of award winners – “professional competence,” which necessarily excludes pupil teachers who are “non-professional teaching staff” (GES and GNAT 2000 p41) – seems to be more important than the other two, that is, personality and contribution to the community. The observations that a teacher’s “work experience in a rural setting is an added advantage,” and that he or she should have “made efforts to upgrade his or her academic and professional qualifications” (MoESS 2007c p9) – are both eminently applicable to many untrained teachers. However, without a recognised certificate, they are invisible in terms of the BTA.

Contrary to the intended aim of the BTA, its selection process discourages serving teachers, in this case, those who are untrained. No matter how hard they work and how effective they are, the contributions of untrained teachers to education service provision go unrecognised. One of the recommendations made by *School Mapping Report in Ponkujaku District* was that “(t)he current BTA scheme should be reviewed and expanded by the District Assembly and District Education Directorate to cover all categories of teacher in the district”(GES Ponkujaku 2005 p74) . Unfortunately, no policy-maker has heeded this advice.

Once teachers are awarded a district BTA, they expect material rewards. However, they may not get them owing to the district’s financial constraints. The best teacher in Aumisoë mentioned earlier added:

They have done nothing to recognise my first position as best teacher. They only gave me a letter saying that I was first. That is all. They said they had no money to give to those who were lucky [enough] to win the best teacher award. So, we have to wait until they get some money and will compensate us.

Since she was not given any of the material rewards generally promised at the ceremony, she did not feel that she had been recognised as the best teacher. She went on, “Nobody knows that I was the best primary school teacher in the district. It was only known by the

panel that did the interviews.” I confirmed this from her colleagues at school, whom it transpired were unaware of her award.

There appears to be a tendency for both local authorities and teachers to believe that the recognition of teachers can only be demonstrated through material rewards and/or ceremonial occasions, which have financial implications. It is for this reason that Ponkujaku has not organised a district BTA for the last three years: there seems too much emphasis on material trappings.

The implications of material rewards in conjunction with incentive packages are further explored in the next session, which aims to address the “low level of teacher commitment due to a lack of incentives” (MoEYS 2003).

#### ***8.2.3.2. The Incentive Package***

An ‘incentive package’ is a general term for any of the various material awards intended to attract teachers to stay in teaching, especially in rural communities. The principal providers of material awards are the state and local government at district level (MoES 2003; MoESS 2007b). Materials<sup>94</sup> recently provided by the former – the GES – included bicycles for ‘deprived’ districts in 2006, through which the two districts under study received 60 bicycles. The District Assembly (DA) and the District Education Office (DEO) can also act on their own initiative, and Aumiso handed out 100 suitcases in 2006. However, Ponkujaku has not made any incentive provision, as it has not organised a district BTA owing to financial constraints.

Incentives are understood to make provision for teachers mainly in rural areas (MoESS 2007a). However, in practice, the process of the selection of beneficiaries follows that of the best teacher award: untrained teachers are simply not taken into consideration, while trained teachers – who might have been serving for a much shorter period – are eligible. Untrained teachers find that their efforts and contributions are not recognised simply because they *are* untrained, although they think that they work as hard or even harder than

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<sup>94</sup> Five thousand radio cassette recorders and 5,000 sets of cooking utensils were provided in 2001; 9,000 bicycles were provided in 2002.

trained teachers, under even more difficult conditions in rural areas. One untrained teacher in Aumisoe said:

If you are not trained, they [the DEO] do not give you [incentives]. Our district lacks trained teachers. A few are in town, so in all the remote areas, we who are called pupil teachers or untrained teachers, are occupying those places. We should be also motivated, but if you are not trained, they do not give you incentives... It is not only trained teachers who are teaching. We untrained teachers are doing better than trained teachers.

Another untrained teacher in Aumisoe said:

Nobody remembers you. If you do not have a name as a trained teacher, nobody remembers you. They [the DEO] discriminate a lot.

An untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

How many of them [trained teachers] stay in rural areas? They are all in towns. Very few stay outside the towns. They are not punctual. They stay today; tomorrow absent; tomorrow today [the day after tomorrow] they will be there.

Some trained teachers may not have a good attendance record or be punctual, as discussed in previous chapter. However, if there are incentives to be had, they are usually the ones who benefit. The most senior trained teacher in Nakaose, whose attendance was less than 40 %<sup>95</sup>, and the HT of Manekanto primary school, whose teachers' attendance register was not up to date, were awarded a bicycle. One of the untrained teachers in Ponkujaku has a HT who behaves in a similar fashion but, again, it was the HT who received a bicycle. The untrained teacher commented:

When they [the DEO] came to my school, they met all of us. No teacher had lesson notes apart from me. My attendance was above them. Finally, they gave the bicycle to our HT, who was not in school. So we are finding problems. If they continue doing that, we will also make sure to follow [in their foot] steps – we won't do the work.

Untrained teachers not only feel that their efforts are not reasonably appreciated, but also wonder what professional attitudes are valued by the DEO. Another untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

If you are doing right things, they [the DEO] should show that you are doing right things. And if you are doing wrong things, they should show that you are doing

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<sup>95</sup> According to the 2007/08 teachers' attendance register

wrong things. But [if] you are doing wrong things they...[react]...as if you are doing right things.

Untrained teachers are frustrated with an official attitude whereby qualifications are valued above merit. In so doing, the DEO gives the impression that hard-working and committed untrained teachers are less valuable to the district than lazy trained teachers, who, moreover, could be rewarded with incentives. However, untrained teachers do not have the courage to address the issue. They are afraid that they could lose their jobs if they say or do something that the DEO does not approve of.

Once untrained teachers were told by the officers, “Oh, you are an untrained teacher,” they said they would have nothing to say. Untrained teachers are not only marginalised but also undervalued by the system.

Nevertheless, trained teachers also suffer discouragement with respect to the BTA and incentive packages. Such incentives encourage teachers who *are* rewarded, like the best teacher in Aumisoe; but she is in a small minority because the number of available awards is limited, especially for the BTA, and the selection process is not transparent for those that are made.

Firstly, there are more trained teachers discouraged than encouraged by the schemes. In the case of the BTA, three or four teachers are selected as winners in different categories, such as primary school and JSS teachers. Because they are small in number, the winners feel excited and privileged. However, the extent of the award is perceived to be too narrow to provide substantial encouragement, especially to hard-working teachers. A trained teacher in Aumisoe said:

The Best Teacher Awards is very scanty. It does not cover a lot of teachers. Only a few teachers are being selected to be given these things. If you are sitting there and about four, five or six teachers are given a television, other things and so on, and you are not given any [thing]...you think, “Am I not working?”

More bicycles are provided to districts (60 to each) than BTAs. However, this is still regarded as insubstantial. A teacher who was awarded a bicycle in Ponkujaku said:

Bicycles were given to [a] few, not all trained teachers. It was not up to 50. If there are 60 something schools, what happens to other [the] teachers?

If recognition of teachers is attached to material rewards, those who are not rewarded feel that their efforts are not appreciated. The assistant HT of Jamune is a hard-working teacher. The DEO knows how hard he works, since he was recommended for this study by three officers. However, he has not been awarded anything since he was posted to Jamune in 2004. On the other hand, his HT received a motorbike at the independence ceremony<sup>96</sup> in 2008, in addition to a television for the district BTA in 2005 and a bicycle in 2006. The assistant HT does not argue that his HT does not deserve a motorbike, as he appreciates his work and support, saying that the HT is a good leader. Indeed, each one appreciates the other. However, the assistant HT feels that his hard work is not recognised by anybody beyond the school. He – like another teacher in Aumisoe – asks, “Why not me; am I not working hard?”

It is not only untrained teachers – who are out of the frame – who consider the DEO’s selection process to be questionable, but also trained teachers. The assistant HT of Jamune said that he could not think about the criteria used for selection. He is not the only one. One trained teacher in Aumisoe, whose school was in a remote area, was bitter about being excluded from consideration for a bicycle:

Most of these things are not coming. Even if it comes, it would not reach the very people things are meant for, like those of us in the field. I heard that this very place is not a rural or is not a remote area, or a deprived area. So, we are not given bicycles. None of us received a bicycle. If this place is taken as a non-deprived area, then if anything of that nature – incentives – comes, we are not going to be beneficiaries. We are not going to enjoy it.

He felt “totally denied.” He suggested that, “Officers, the authorities at the office, they sit down and put down certain criteria.” This is a general perception teachers have of selection. Some even think it is based on education officers’ preferences rather than actual teaching performance. One untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

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<sup>96</sup> At the ceremony, a motorbike and 19 bicycles were presented by a Member of Parliament to serving teachers in Ponkujaku, including untrained teachers. Not only pupil teachers but also YEP teachers were considered and given bicycles, although the majority of beneficiaries were trained teachers.

They [the DEO] sit in the office and think that this is my friend or this man can come and give me something to put in my pocket, so I choose him to give some incentives. They just sit in the office and choose, which is bad.

Another untrained male teacher said, “Maybe they [the DEO] like those [teachers] who go to the office. Everyday, they [the DEO] see them in the office and they think they are working.” As they indicate, the assessment of hard-working teachers does not seem to be made as expected. The same teacher above suggested:

Sometimes it is good that they [the DEO] go to schools to see real workers, those are really working, before they will select motivation.

Teachers also suggested that officers emphasise teachers’ attendance records and lesson plans rather than actual presence in the classroom and teaching delivery. One untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

Some teachers do not prepare lesson notes [plans], but they do teach. Teaching is all right. Some prepare notes, but they do not teach. Look at all these things, not necessarily preparation of lesson notes or writing. I can be at home and call a friend to write my name in the attendance book.

I formed a good impression of the HT of Manekanto Primary School in Aumisoe, seeing her open lesson plan in her classroom on my first visit. However, it turned out that she might not attend regularly<sup>97</sup>. Even checking pupils’ exercise books may not enough to learn what is happening in classrooms. Another teacher in Aumisoe elaborated:

They should not come to check lesson notes. But they should check performance of pupils and that of teachers. Is he imparting the knowledge? Is he helping children? They can just pick an exercise book that indicates whether I am doing a work...Do you see a trick? Some teachers provide question, this is a question and this is a solution and let them write. They just do copy work. You see always, excellent, very good, excellent, very good in the book.

Thus, teachers’ attendance, their lesson plans, even pupils’ exercise books may not always reflect what is going on in school. Indeed, the process of supervision, as Hedges (2002) suggests, is ritualised. It allows some teachers to pretend to be working hard, while the hard work of others can be overlooked. Kummerer (1990) suggests:

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<sup>97</sup> From interviews with her teachers and community members.

An incentive system simply will not work if the means are not compatible with each other or with the goals, if the incentives or motivators are perceived as inadequate, or the distribution of benefits considered unfair (p142).

The current system seems to discourage and demotivate teachers particularly hard-working.

Both districts lack teachers, especially in rural areas. Untrained teachers, more specifically, pupil teachers, are more likely to accept rural postings and could work hard, since their refusal to comply with DEO decisions or any other misbehaviour, including absenteeism, could lead to the termination of their appointments.

However, the contribution of untrained teachers is seldom recognised by the DEO, since it emphasises teachers' qualifications rather than how they work. This tendency is not only manifested at district level, but at central level as well. An officer at the GES headquarters talked about an initiative for teachers. When I asked if it included untrained teachers, he replied, "No, it does not; why are you so into untrained teachers?" Thus, the major teaching force in both districts – untrained teachers – is not considered to be vital to the system.

Moreover, there is a perceived gap between the expectations of those who work hard and deserve incentives, and the attitude of the DEO, whose definition of a committed and motivated teacher is often one who has a good attendance record, and is punctual and long-serving.

There are insufficient material rewards in both districts, given the number of (trained) teachers. The majority who never receive anything tend to think that their work is not recognised or appreciated, then become discouraged and finally put the matter to the back of their minds. This could harm the relationship between teachers, especially in the same school. In the light of this situation, the slogan for the 12<sup>th</sup> national BTA ceremony in 2006, "quality teachers for quality education: uniting to deliver quality education (MoESS 2006 cover page)," does not seem to reflect reality as far as the current administration of the BTA and other incentive packages is concerned.

The DEO and DA, who are responsible for attracting and retaining teachers, seem to believe that if they do not have any funds, they are unable to show recognition to these teachers. There also seems to be a great deal of weight placed on materials, as indicated in the MoESS handbook, which states that the GES tends to “emphasise the material needs of staff,” focusing on “pots, pans, houses and televisions as a way of attracting teachers to deprived schools” (*District Education Office Financial and Operational Capacity Strengthening Training Handbook*, MoESS 2005 p56).

Since ‘recognition’ has financial implications, ‘deprived’ districts faced with financial difficulties may not be able to provide the same level of ‘recognition’ that wealthier districts can offer. The former may thus be less competitive in their attempts to attract teachers. Indeed, Ponkujaku DA is the 6<sup>th</sup> most poorly performing district, whose internal revenue generation constitutes only 2% of total regional income (NDPC 2007 p165). Thus, decentralisation, through which responsibilities and power are devolved to lower levels, could lead to disparities between prosperous regions and those with weaker revenue bases (Behrman et al. 2002). It is therefore critical that the government should revisit its current operational system and understanding of what constitutes recognition.

#### **8.2.4. The Youth Employment Programme**

Secondary school leavers from the locality have been recruited and posted to basic schools – particularly in rural areas – since the 2006/07 academic year, on the president’s initiative as a part of the Youth Employment Programme (YEP). Non-YEP teachers are also intended to benefit from this programme, their workloads being shared with YEP teachers. The aim of the programme was appreciated by many of the variously qualified teachers who were interviewed. However, the *manner* of its implementation has demotivated both YEP and non-YEP teachers.

YEP teachers are frustrated by the manner in which they are treated, by the programme and by the DEO. Firstly, they are dissatisfied with the way the programme is implemented, mainly due to delays in the payment of salaries, which have been up to six months in some cases. None of the YEP teachers I interviewed failed to point out this issue. Additionally, they are not necessarily recruited from the community: two of the three YEP teachers in

Jamune were not even from Ponkujaku District. Moreover, some YEP teachers find it difficult to manage in their everyday lives. A YEP teacher in Aumisoë complained:

I find difficulties. Even when I come to school, in the morning the food I can [get to] eat is difficult to come [by]. At Weekends, [obtaining] the soap I [am] used to using to wash my clothes is going to be a problem for me.

Others struggle to continue studying for the UTDBE; and not being able to rely on financial institutions such as banks or teachers' credit unions, they are forced to fall back on their own resources. Another YEP teacher in Aumisoë said:

If you go for a loan, they will tell you, "Money is not here. So we can't give you a loan." I'm doing distance education. School fees, [are] a big problem. I have to rely on my parents. I am teaching [but] by the end of the term, I'm collecting school fees from my parents.

Delays in the payment of salaries and the unavailability of loans are threatening YEP teachers' well-being and chances of professional development. In general, they find it difficult to make ends meet and teach effectively without support.

Secondly, YEP teachers consider themselves to be victimised by the GES. In Ponkujaku, they have been 'denied' provision of the thick A3-like notebook in which lesson plans are written; and have been given a lower travel and transportation (T&T) allowance than GES teachers participating in the same workshops<sup>98</sup>. Moreover, YEP teachers feel discriminated against by the GES in relation to awards and incentives, as discussed earlier. They also feel undervalued. A YEP teacher in Ponkujaku argued:

They [DEO] are underrating us, which is very wrong. I believe what my colleagues do, we can equally do. Why should we be [abandoned]?

On the other hand, there seems three issues with respect to non-YEP teachers. First, although some YEP teachers' absenteeism is largely a result of their difficulty in managing their lives, as seen earlier, the consequence of this is that non-YEP teachers work harder as they try to make up for their counterparts' absence. If non-YEP teachers do not perceive this state of affairs to be reasonable, as seen in the Jamune case, they begin to question the justice of the situation and become demotivated. Moreover, some YEP teachers avoid

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<sup>98</sup> From group focus discussions.

shouldering their share of responsibility, which frustrates the non-YEP teachers, who expect similar levels of responsibility.

Secondly, teachers – and HTs in particular – find that they are powerless to discipline non-satisfactory YEP teachers. In Jamune – where YEP teacher absenteeism is acute – all the HT could do, having got no response from the YEP office or the DEO to the HT's request to replace those YEP teachers with volunteers from the community – was to manage his school as he did. He explained:

If they appoint people, youth in the village should be appointed. If they sit at the station [stay away from school], the community will drive them to school. And sometimes they fight for their brothers. But people from outside, they don't care. And nobody knows where they live. We can't call them unless we see them coming.

HTs do not have direct authority over YEP teachers, unlike volunteer teachers who are recruited by the HT, although both groups have similar financial and professional challenges. Disciplinary issues are thus largely a result of uncertainty about who is responsible for managing YEP teachers; and also about who pays their salaries. An HT in Ponkujaku argued:

They [the DA/Youth Employment Programme] should have given [the] whole thing to [the] DEO. Now children [the YEP teachers] have some notion that, "You are not [the] ones who employ me. Whether I go to school or I do not go to school, you are not [the] one who is paying me. It is [the] DA or Youth coordinator who does that." So, you do not have much power over them.

The DA (under whose auspices the YEP falls) and the DEO each tend to defer responsibility to the other<sup>99</sup>, both saying that the matter is political. HTs and non-YEP teachers in general are thus frustrated because the way programme has been implemented does not allow YEP teachers to develop their own identity as members of the school or district GES. Moreover, they feel that they are left without the necessary support of higher authorities. The programme has therefore added an extra burden to HTs, who already have limited authority over their GES teachers (as discussed in the previous chapter): that of YEP teachers, over whom they have no organisational authority.

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<sup>99</sup> From interviews with offices of the DEO and the DA.

Third, some YEP teachers' competence is questionable in the eyes of non-YEP teachers, and some find that their YEP colleagues' academic backgrounds are altogether too weak to work alongside them at all. An HT in Ponkujaku said:

They should have screened them. Some cannot read and write. I do not have any adjective to [describe] them... Recruiting just boys...it is not easy.

There seem to be ulterior political motives other than qualifications and personality in selecting YEP teachers. Another HT in Ponkujaku said:

When they [the DA and the DEO] are doing interviews, they ask [about his or her] family...when [they] mention the family [they] come from, if [they] do not tell them what they want, they won't pick [them]. That is what they are doing. Most of them are their people. They do not have qualifications.

The manner in which the YEP is implemented means that teachers are required to work with colleagues who may have little or no loyalty to the school or the DEO, and may not have the skills to teach. HTs are more discouraged than encouraged by the recruitment of YEP teachers, finding themselves in the ambiguous position of being the head of an institution but with no control over some of its staff.

The implications of the YEP may stretch beyond the influence it has had on currently serving teachers. The programme might reinforce the perception in society that basic school teaching is semi or non-professional, with potentially far-reaching consequences. Indeed, basic school teachers in Ghana are already perceived to be of low status (Akyeampong and Stephens 2002; Hedges 2002). This is partly due to the expansion of primary education in the 60s and 70s, which has had the effect of filling schools with untrained teachers. However, the situation could be made still worse by the further 'deprofessionalisation' of teachers, as Bennell and Akyeampong suggest (2007).

#### **8.2.5. The Capitation Grant for Basic Schools**

The general concept of the capitation grant (CG) scheme was appreciated by the teachers in the case study areas. In interviews, they frequently began by saying how much they appreciated it. The assistant HT in Ponkujaku said, "We can repair broken furniture. We can buy a football and other things we need through the capitation grant." However, a list

of the negative aspects of the scheme would immediately follow. There were three major issues: the amount disbursed from the DEO to schools; the process involved in relation to the DEO; and the effect of the CG on teachers' relationships within the school.

First, many teachers claimed that their schools had received a far smaller amount than the ¢3 per pupil that had been promised. The official line that the budget for sports and culture had been cut could not fully explain the discrepancy, accounting for perhaps 50% of the reduction. A trained teacher in Aumisoë voiced the general frustration:

We don't even get one quarter...of the amount to be given. For instance, last term, we had 426 [pupils] and we got only ¢129 – ¢3 times 400 [equals] more than that [¢1,200]. We were only given ¢129. I do not think the capitation grant is good.

The amount of money that had been disbursed termly to each school was not known until the teachers went to the bank where schools had accounts for CG. A teacher in Ponkujaku said, "We don't know the amount until money comes... We expected [a certain amount], but when we went to the bank, the money was small."

Whilst conducting the study, it was observed that the DEO was apt to use the CG for other purposes, leaving a reduced amount for the schools. For example, Ponkujaku DEO used some of the money to print the syllabus for the new curriculum. In the second tranche of 2007/08, the original grants of ¢144.8 for Jamune and ¢79.2 for Lesanyili primary schools were reduced by ¢60 and ¢50 respectively<sup>100</sup>. Similarly, Aumisoë DEO planned to finance mock examinations for the BECE by using CG funds, as the district education director announced at a meeting of head teachers in June 2008. The DEO seems to have had initial control in the implementation of the CG, deciding what was necessary for the district as a whole before disbursing it to the schools. The DEO thus appeared to treat the CG as though it were a line item in its budget.

Schools were expected to use the CG for minor structural repairs; teaching and learning materials TLMs; in-service training; and T&T expenses (GES no date). However, in the case of rural schools in particular, the amount left over for these purposes was severely

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<sup>100</sup> Disclosed in an interview with district accountant.

reduced, mainly due to high transportation costs. Thus, teachers in rural schools tended to find the CG, which could be quite insubstantial in the first place because of the low enrolment, insufficient for school improvement purposes. An HT in Aumisoe explained:

If the GES wants to provide us with some textbooks...then I go – [the] HT conveys these materials... Look at our transportation: from Aumisoe town to Obuasi, then Obuasi to this end, in and out. The driver charges a lot [for] luggage. All of these [things] consume the CG money. So we do not benefit.

In the two districts, schools were responsible for the delivery of TLMs and other items, such as textbooks, exercise books and furniture, which were provided by the GES and its partner organisations. Both DEOs had two official vehicles but they were not used for TLMs delivery. Schools also had to bear teachers' T&T expenses when they attended official meetings and workshops organised by the DEO, including school census and CG meetings; sports competitions; and health education seminars.

With such a drain on the CG, it is not surprising that teachers complained about the gap between what the government officially claimed to provide – “the government provides ₵3 per pupil per year to the school for discretionary use” (The Ghanaian Times 9 April 2008) – and the actual amount they had access to.

Second, there was a reversal of roles between the teachers and the DEO in terms of financial responsibility. It seemed that the DEO was even able to control the use of the CG disbursed to the schools. In Aumisoe, in late June 2008 there was a five-day non-residential workshop for all teachers, including volunteer teachers, on the new curriculum. The district education director announced the event two weeks beforehand with the directive that all costs were expected to be met from the CG.

The teachers did not receive the news well, due to a combination of dissatisfaction with the timing (it was late in the third term), duration, feasibility (commuting without regular transport over long distances) and the cost implications. The last involved additional responsibility for the teachers. The schools had waited for almost two terms for the first tranche of 2007/08, which had only been disbursed in May 2008, by which time some of

the HTs had already spent a portion of the funds. This was the case with the HT of Manekanto JSS, who spent half of it on items of jerseys for sports activities.

An HT of a rural JSS estimated that the cost for all eight of his teachers to attend the workshop would be ₦56, while he had only received a first CG tranche of approximately ₦42. He said:

I told my teachers to manage, to stay with some of their families or friends there. I told them once the CG comes, money would be paid. It is not easy.

Nevertheless, the teachers had to manage somehow, no matter how short the notice and how much money they were expected to raise unexpectedly. Some bought TLMs for the school themselves and were then also expected to bear the cost T&T and other things in order to carry out their official duties. As discussed in the previous chapter, the result of such a situation is that it erodes a teacher's sense of professionalism.

Moreover, another consequence of a reduced CG was that it affected the implementation of improvement plans, requiring schools to reprioritise or reschedule activities. For example, In Manekanto, although the school had no lavatories, the foundation of a latrine was left abandoned. Similarly, an assistant HT in Aumisoe complained:

The capitation cannot cater for anything you have to do or you want to do in the school. Even in our school, we were going to build toilets for the children; now the project stands still.

HTs were thus unable to rely on the CG for the implementation of their plans. This reflected the DEO's priorities and exercise of power rather than the interests of the schools.

The actual conduct of activities could also be influenced by the DEO, in that authorisation had to be obtained from the office for CG disbursement in order to implement the School Improvement Plan (SIP), which was developed in collaboration with the SMC. Although there was an assumption that teachers and SMC members knew what the school should prioritise, they had to defer to the DEO to vet and 'approve' projects. As a result, the process could turn into a form of ritual, placing more importance on the gaining of

authorisation from the DEO than on the project itself. The SMC chairman in Asonbwa observed that HTs had to travel unnecessarily to obtain such authorisation. A primary school HT in a rural area of Tamale metropolis, where I tested my questionnaire, said:

I am copying the SIP [for the] third time. The SIP was vetted but not authorised. They say I shouldn't pay T&T for two teachers. We allocate roles. Nobody can say I misuse the fund. I am copying just to satisfy the person in charge.

Teachers also found that if they did not offer bribes to officials, the process was delayed. A trained teacher in Aumisoe commented:

You have to get somebody to sign for you at the office... You have to give something to them; otherwise, they will not sign. They will not say give me money, but they expect you to give money. They will not tell you bring money, but they delay you. If you give something, you see that the work will be fast, faster, faster.

Schools seemed to have little autonomy in the implementation of the CG, since the DEO had greater control over the grant. In addition, the notion of teachers being 'subordinate' or 'servile' in relation to their superiors seemed to be reinforced through the CG implementation process. Indeed, Osei (2006) argues that teachers are, "in the institutional and societal frames that respect vertical hierarchy and reward obedience to authority" (p449). However, those in the case studies seemed to have no other choice than to obey an authority that can be subject to the misuse of power. Even HTs appeared to be at the mercy of the system and to have little autonomy in the management of their own schools.

Third, the way in which the CG was implemented at school level might have led to some misunderstanding or mistrust among teachers. In some schools, teachers showed me drums, jerseys, maps and so on that had been bought using the CG. In other schools, teachers pointed out that they had few or sometimes no TLMs, or else indicated a part of the school structure that needed renovation. Although they were aware of the CG, many of them told me that I should consult their HT, as he or she would be in a better position to answer my questions. At some schools, the implementation of the CG was only carried out strictly by the HT alone or possibly in collaboration with his or her assistant HT. A trained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

The CG has come to bring a lot of confusions, because most of HTs don't consult the colleagues or teachers in the school how CG should be spent. So we can't say

anything about that. We don't know how it spent. When you sit down, the head call you [and tell you], "You should go and buy this." That is the CG.

Similarly, another teacher in Aumisoe said:

We don't talk. He [her HT] decides and he buys what he thinks the school needs. He bought, let's say, 10 books; one day we were told 5 were missing. We bought 10 dustbins; then one day, 3 were stolen. If we inquire, he would transfer us [to some other schools]. We don't talk.

Where 'democratic' processes and accountability were lacking, teachers tended to hold back. On the other hand, the HT in Tamale mentioned earlier had difficulty in getting his teachers to co-operate. He said:

One day, I...[remarked]...that the cost of chairs was high. I just didn't know the place I could buy chairs. The teacher [who went to buy the chairs] was accused by the SMC. The teacher doesn't do anything anymore. One, two, or more say, "I won't carry [out any] activities." My teachers don't want to take part. I am the one who carries [them] out and [the one who gets] blamed.

The aim of the CG is to bring teachers (and the community) together for the common good of school development, and thus lead to community development. However, since the vertical hierarchy – comprising authorities and subordinates – exists at various levels, the implementation of the CG tends to reinforce such a structure. The basic school teachers in the case studies were at the lowest level of the education system because they invariably had fewer qualifications and less seniority. Therefore, they were allowed very little autonomy and were obliged to acquiesce to the DEO, even in matters concerning the management of their own schools. The implementation of the CG seems more teachers' demotivation than motivation.

### **8.3. Implications of the Operation of the District Education Office**

In addition to general policy, which is formulated mainly by central government, the DEO has a mandate to manage the teachers in its district. This includes teacher deployment and transfer, information dissemination, and promotion. In this section, the implications of these operations are explored.

### 8.3.1. Teacher Deployment and Transfer

In terms of teacher distribution, there were three trends observed in both districts: an uneven distribution of teachers between towns and rural areas, and between primary schools and JSSs; higher numbers of trained and female teachers in town schools; and newly trained teachers first posted to town schools. These trends are first described in brief and then their implications are discussed.

First, the uneven distribution of teachers across basic schools was a general observation made by the teachers themselves, as raised in an HT meeting in Aumisoe in June 2008. Moreover, in both districts, 2007/08 school census data indicates that some primary schools only had 1 or 2 teachers covering 6 classes, while others had many more – one primary school just outside Ponkujaku town had 10 teachers for 6 classes of 40 pupils each on average.

In Ponkujaku, 2 out of 9 JSSs had 4 teachers, while 1 JSS in Ponkujaku town had 13 teachers for 3 classes, including 5 trained teachers and 6 National Service Scheme (NSS) teachers<sup>101</sup>. Similarly, in Aumisoe, 1 rural JSS only had 2 teachers and 2 others had 3 teachers, while 2 town JSSs of 3 classes had 14 teachers each, including 10 or 11 trained teachers. There was thus town–rural as well as primary school–JSS disparity: rural schools – especially primary schools – lacked teachers, while town schools –JSSs in particular – were overstaffed.

Second, trained teachers were concentrated in towns, as the 2007/08 school census clearly shows. Of totals of 87 trained teachers in Ponkujaku and 387 in Aumisoe, 45 and 206 respectively were posted in towns. In addition to the concentration of trained teachers in JSSs, as discussed in chapter 4, there was uneven distribution across and within circuits. Town circuits – circuit 1 and 2 in Ponkujaku (table 49) and circuit 1 and 6 in Aumiose (table 50) – had higher percentages of trained teachers, but, with the exception of one, there were primary schools in all of them that still had no trained staff.

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<sup>101</sup> NSS policy tended to post NSS teachers to towns, as their deployment required the mandatory provision of accommodation, according to NSS district directors. Additionally, since they tended to have diplomas or higher qualifications, there was a tendency to post them to junior or senior secondary schools.

**Table 49 Percentage of trained and female teachers by circuit in Ponkujaku**

| Circuit  | Primary            |     |      |                   |     |      | JSS                |      |       |                   |     |      |
|----------|--------------------|-----|------|-------------------|-----|------|--------------------|------|-------|-------------------|-----|------|
|          | Percentage trained |     |      | Percentage female |     |      | Percentage trained |      |       | Percentage female |     |      |
|          | Ave.               | Low | High | Ave.              | Low | High | Ave.               | Low  | High  | Ave.              | Low | High |
| 1        | 15.6               | 0   | 40.0 | 7.8               | 0   | 40.0 | 65.5               | 57.1 | 73.3  | 10.3              | 7.1 | 13.1 |
| 2        | 13.6               | 0   | 25.0 | 6.8               | 0   | 36.4 | 38.5*              | -    | -     | 7.7*              | -   | -    |
| 3        | 8.1                | 0   | 20.0 | 3.2               | 0   | 50.0 | 89.5               | 83.3 | 100.0 | 0                 | 0   | 0    |
| 4        | 2.3                | 0   | 20.0 | 2.3               | 0   | 16.7 | 66.7*              | -    | -     | 0*                | -   | -    |
| 5        | 18.2               | 0   | 33.3 | 0                 | 0   | 0    | 89.5               | 50.0 | 100.0 | 0                 | 0   | 0    |
| 6        | 4.3                | 0   | 14.3 | 0                 | 0   | 0    | 75.0*              | -    | -     | 0*                | -   | -    |
| Ave.     | 10.4               |     |      | 3.9               |     |      | 66.8               |      |       | 4.8               |     |      |
| <i>N</i> | 309                |     |      |                   |     |      | 83                 |      |       |                   |     |      |

\* Only one JSS in the circuit.

Source: school census 2007/08.

**Table 50 Percentage of trained and female teachers by circuit in Aumisoe**

| Circuit  | Primary            |     |       |                   |     |      | JSS                |      |      |                   |     |      |
|----------|--------------------|-----|-------|-------------------|-----|------|--------------------|------|------|-------------------|-----|------|
|          | Percentage trained |     |       | Percentage female |     |      | Percentage trained |      |      | Percentage female |     |      |
|          | Ave.               | Low | High  | Ave.              | Low | High | Ave.               | Low  | High | Ave.              | Low | High |
| 1        | 60.7               | 20  | 100.0 | 29.6              | 0   | 58.3 | 72.0               | 20.0 | 81.8 | 26.4              | 0   | 41.2 |
| 2        | 29.4               | 0   | 54.6  | 18.8              | 0   | 36.4 | 46.0               | 0    | 66.7 | 8.0               | 0   | 20.0 |
| 3        | 11.5               | 0   | 33.3  | 9.0               | 0   | 33.3 | 11.4               | 0    | 50.0 | 4.6               | 0   | 20.0 |
| 4        | 16.1               | 0   | 50.5  | 21.0              | 0   | 50.0 | 25.9               | 0    | 33.3 | 11.1              | 0   | 33.3 |
| 5        | 41.4               | 0   | 100.0 | 24.1              | 0   | 42.9 | 60.9               | 50.0 | 77.8 | 21.7              | 0   | 33.3 |
| 6        | 39.4               | 0   | 85.7  | 42.4              | 0   | 85.7 | 56.8               | 16.7 | 85.7 | 18.2              | 0   | 42.9 |
| 7        | 36.6               | 0   | 57.1  | 19.5              | 0   | 36.4 | 40.0               | 0    | 66.7 | 23.3              | 0   | 80.0 |
| 8        | 30.3               | 0   | 100.0 | 12.1              | 0   | 40.4 | 40.0               | 37.5 | 50.5 | 0                 | 0   | 0    |
| Ave.     | 36.0               |     |       | 23.3              |     |      | 50.5               |      |      | 16.8              |     |      |
| <i>N</i> | 558                |     |       |                   |     |      | 368                |      |      |                   |     |      |

Source: school census 2007/08.

Similarly, there were more female teachers – trained ones in particular – in town schools. Data from the 2007/08 school census indicates that all five trained female teachers in Ponkujaku (one in a primary school and four in JSSs) were posted in Ponkujaku town. Likewise, of 102 trained female teachers in Aumisoe, only 3 were posted in schools that were not either located in towns or on trunk roads. The study thus found that female teachers in rural Ghanaian communities are more likely to be untrained – either YEP personnel or volunteers.

There is a preference for the DEO to post female teachers to towns. Indeed, a district director was open about his intention not to post female newly trained teachers to rural schools, saying, “I have daughters. How I can put them in rural areas? They need to get good marriage partners.” This echoes the findings in southern Ghana (Hedges 2002) and northern Ghana (Casely-Hayford 2007). However, in this research, I did not hear much

complaint from male (trained) teachers about this tendency. Teachers' perceptions of unfairness seem to focus on the town-rural rather than the male-female aspect of posting.

Third, some teachers perceived that newly trained teachers were more likely to be posted to towns than rural areas at the start of their careers. One trained and experienced male teacher in a rural primary school in Aumisoe said:

If you go to big cities, girls and boys who completed [their teacher training] a year or two years ago, they are working [there]. And old[er] men and women are in villages.

Newly trained teachers sometimes voiced their objection to rural postings, or tried to get transferred to town schools as soon as possible. The HT of Manekanto JSS discovered that two newly trained teachers posted to his school, and who had come to look at the place before the start of the academic year, ended up being posted to the district capital.

A trained teacher from outside the region who was teaching at a JSS in Ponkujaku town made his position clear to me. He said that he had told the DEO that he would have left the district if he had not been posted to Ponkujaku town as soon as he arrived in the locality. A trained teacher in Aumisoe revealed the general mood, saying, "Some people, [as soon as] they complete training college...they want to be posted to town centres. They want to go to big towns."

It was not only unfavourable postings in the locality that were rejected; sometimes the entire district was dismissed out of hand. DEO statistics for the academic year 2007/08 indicate that 11.5% of 26 newly trained teachers posted to Ponkujaku and 22.8% of the 92 posted to Aumisoe did not report to the district. The more extensive records in Aumisoe DEO further reveal that 6.8% of 74 newly trained teachers in 2006/07, and 27.0% of the 115 in 2005/06 did not take up their posts in the district.

Trainee teachers had to get district sponsorship from the DA as an admission requirement before they could attend teacher training college – 98% of the 9,000 trainee teachers

enrolled in 2006 (NDPC 2007 p100). However, a loophole in this bond meant that newly trained teachers were not obliged to serve in the district, as expected.

It was obvious that the policy often quoted by teachers that they were supposed to be posted wherever their services were required was seldom practiced. The official statement that teachers “may be assigned any duties and stations anywhere in Ghana as the exigencies of the Service may demand” in *Conditions and Scheme of Service and the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers* (GES and GNAT 2000 p11) was seemingly not applicable to trained teachers.

Teachers saw the lack of enforcement of the bond as a recent development. A trained teacher in Aumisoe said:

It is [was] never like that. While in training college, you are made to sign a bond stating that wherever you are posted to, you have to go. Wherever you are posted to as a trained teacher, you don't have to [cannot] reject.

Another teacher in Aumisoe said, “It was obligatory to accept the posting when I finished TTC.”

Veteran teachers had accepted rural postings at the beginning of their careers on the understanding that those who gained sufficient experience would be posted to town schools. However, by the time the present study was conducted they had begun to see a reversal in the trend. As a result, trained teachers who had served for some time and wished to be posted to town schools were frustrated when they saw their younger colleagues jumping the queue, and tended to feel deceived. A trained teacher in Aumisoe complained:

There was a policy, when we were in school. They introduced a certain policy that newly trained teachers would be posted to villages. So, go and spend some days there and [then] come to town. But it has been defeated because of who you know. Newly trained teachers go to Kumasi<sup>102</sup> and are posted there. So, it cheats us, those who were posted to villages first.

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<sup>102</sup> The capital of Ashanti Region and the second biggest city after Accra.

Teachers attributed the new trend to a combination of the attitude of the DEO and of the teachers themselves. A trained teacher at a rural primary school in Aumisoe said:

It's all the fault of the officers. But, at the same time, we don't blame them, because as a trained teacher, if you post me to this place, I simply tell you, "I don't have any accommodation there. There is no light there." You see it? And such a person would try as much as possible to convince the one in charge to transfer him [to a town].

Another trained teacher in Aumisoe echoed these sentiments:

If you say you can't go, maybe you know somebody over there [the DEO], the top [of the] hierarchy over there. When you go and see him, he may send you to another place.

Some (newly) trained teachers seemed to be able to persuade the authorities to send them where they wanted to go. The DEO tended to use its personal preference rather than any rationale. Teachers suggested that there were factors involved in decision-making other than simple consideration for teachers' welfare. A trained teacher said, "If you want to get a transfer...internal or external, they [the DEO] refuse. So you need to bribe officers before it can be worked on." Another trained teacher in Aumisoe said:

...I don't have parents who are well off and who can pave the way through to get me in a town... Those who have the means to pave their way through, they are in towns. Extortion, extortion is what takes place in the office.

The teachers did not always have the means – often financial and/or influential – to get the authorities to help them. If they could not get the DEO to empathise with their plight, they became discouraged, finding that they would probably not get the chance of the life they thought they deserved. A trained teacher in Aumisoe said:

People are not honest with themselves; even those who brought in the policy are not honest with themselves. You see, sometimes they connive with or condone others' [actions]. When we see some of these things, it discourages us.

Such an organisational culture demotivates teachers, especially hardworking ones. One untrained teacher in Aumisoe described the system as being fishlike: "the DEO is a fish's head and teachers are its body. If a fish's head is rotten, it affects [the] body; the body becomes rotten, too." Inexperienced teachers' preference for town postings may have been

partly influenced by the pervading organisational culture. This finding echoes Hedges' (2002) observation:

The maladministration of the bond...reveal[s] a bureaucracy perceived to be in crisis, open to influence, unwilling to discipline...and carrying out practices that undermine professionalism (p359).

The teachers were well aware that it was necessary to gain the favour of the DEO if they were to get what they wanted. They also knew whether they had the means to achieve this or not. They were thus disheartened at the inevitable realisation that the system in which they operated granted favours based on personal inclination rather than any professional consideration of the welfare or development of the district's teachers.

### **8.3.2. Information Dissemination**

DEO officers were supposed to travel around the district making sure that every school was kept up to date with developments. Although they tended to live in towns themselves<sup>103</sup>, they were expected to act as a liaison between the DEO and the teachers. However, this was not always the case and the officers admitted that their visits were infrequent, which, although they had motorcycles, they attributed to logistical problems.

For example, in the questionnaire and in interviews, circuit supervisors (CSs) indicated that less than 30% of the fuel they needed for the job was provided by the DEO, while both directors claimed that the office provided 100%. The CSs were frustrated by what they regarded as a lack of support from the DEO. One CS in Ponkujaku explained:

I like my CS job. I like it. But, what is the essence of a CS...here? I have a motorbike, but I cannot visit schools...We suggested to ACE [a local NGO] not to give money for fuel to the director. But they still do...I don't have money to buy fuel. We cannot ask how and why.

While officers' movements were restricted, a few alternative measures were available. The first was the utilisation of existing public transport. I saw letters, messages and materials being sent from the office with bus and taxi drivers; and happened to see a letter for Manekanto about a sports competition at circuit level at a taxi rank in the closest town to

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<sup>103</sup> From ethnographic research. In Ponkujaku, all DEO personnel, including six circuit supervisors, lived in Ponkujaku town; in Aumisoe, all eight circuit supervisors and several other personnel lived in the two major towns.

the school. However, the reliability of this method of communication was questionable, as one trained teacher in Aumisoe pointed out:

They [the DEO] bring it to the station and give it to drivers. That's all. If the driver wishes, that person may bring it to you. If he doesn't, that's all. By the time you get to know what is happening, it is almost over.

The second method was to communicate by mobile phone; and a third was via the notice board at the DEO. The last seemed the most widespread strategy for rural teachers, for whom communication by public transport or mobile phone was more difficult. One trained teacher at a rural JSS in Aumisoe said:

That one [an HT meeting], also we didn't receive any letter over here. A colleague of ours went to the office on his own matters [business]; then he found on the notice board that the director would meet all HTs on such and such and a date, so he came back to school with the information. The following day whatever you were doing, you had to stop to go to the meeting.

In general, teachers perceived information dissemination to be unsatisfactory. They thought that if they did not visit the office regularly to check the notice board they would miss vital information. A trained teacher in Aumisoe said:

If we are here and we do not go there [the DEO], we do not get it. Communication is very poor. The means of reaching us here, the means they get information down is very, very bad; very, very poor, except that [when] these phones [are] working. If you have a good network in your area, fine. If not, you may not know, unless you get down there.

The onus was on the teachers to try and find out what was going on. They called the DEO and/or colleagues in town for all necessary information, from the payment of salaries; the provision of TLMs and welfare; to notification of workshops and meetings. Without a mobile phone network and the use of their own initiative, they would have been cut out of the communications loop. The same teacher, whose family, including her school-age child, lived in an adjacent district in another region, said:

I personally call the office when information is not clear. I do call if they [the DEO] have materials to collect and then I ask if something is going on. If things are being distributed in [our] sister district here [where her family lived], then I ring to ask if books are around or available... If you call and cannot reach, you keep calling. Then one day, one day you probably get an answer.

There seemed to be a priority gap between the DEO and the teachers in terms of the reliable communication of the type of information the latter needed the most. Teachers pointed out that the information that was most eagerly awaited, such as notification of TLM provision and welfare – including promotion – was the least likely to reach them. One trained female teacher in Aumisoe said:

When the GES [DEO] needs us, they come to us. They circulate information to us. Let's say, meetings or sports activities, maybe our particulars Accra [the headquarters of the GES] needs. When they need us, information reaches us. But welfare they do not care [about]. For promotion, if we happen to meet the deadline, fine; if we miss it, fine. They do not care... Best Teacher Awards, we did not know when the deadline was. We can call, but they may not say. They may not know. So we have to go to the office regularly, otherwise you miss a lot of things.

Another in Aumisoe elaborated, taking the district BTA as a case:

This Best Teacher Awards, they do not go to interior to get information from deserving teachers. All you hear is it is being organised. All you know is this date, that day, they are doing... When we go villages, teachers are working... All we hear is they are doing it. This year I never heard anything, it has been done.

Teachers interpreted the situation they found themselves in as the result of the DEO's lack of concern for its staff. Another trained teacher in Aumisoe summarised:

Sometimes, I think how some of our people, those in authority, how are they considering or taking us? Do they think that we are not part of the system or we are part of the system?

In rural areas in particular, teachers were demotivated, not only feeling that they were 'forgotten', but also that the withholding of critical information hindered them in carrying out their work in a professional manner. Teachers in both districts also complained about the slow promotion process, which is discussed in the following section.

### **8.3.3. Promotion**

One of the consequences of the lack of information was the perceived slowing down of the promotion process. Trained teachers considered that they had less seniority – *rank* and thus, lower salaries – than their contemporaries in town. One trained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

If you complete college and come here, and your friend is also sent to another district, the next time you see him you see the differences, especially [in] salary. The man outside this district earns higher than in this district. In terms of promotion, our district is always behind.

Similarly, two trained teacher in Aumisoe commented further:

Sometimes, you go some place and hear from your colleagues who came out with us, “I am rank this and that.” But here, to get that level is difficult. It is very bad.

Information, information that does not reach rural areas in time. Before you hear that they are doing this in town, time might has passed. When you get there – too late. That is why some of us do not have correct ranks.

If the deadline for promotion was missed, it was necessary to wait for a further year. Possible early promotion as part of an incentive package for teachers who had accepted rural postings – as mentioned by the director of Teacher Education Division, GES in an interview – did not seem to be taken into consideration in these two districts. On the contrary, teachers were further demotivated by lack of promotion in circumstances that were already subject to disadvantageous living and working conditions.

While teachers were frustrated by the slow promotion process, they also felt that they were being taken advantage of in other ways: they were even obliged to pay for routine paperwork that the DEO was supposed to do. One trained teacher in Aumisoe confronted the DEO, but later changed his mind in order to avoid further embarrassment:

Nowadays, if you want somebody to do something for you, you have to pay something to the person. Something they are supposed to do in order to collect their salary, they expect you to do something. We were applying for promotion. They asked us to pay ø3. When we ask [queried it], they said [that it was the] processing fee: ø3 from each of us. I did not pay. I decided not to pay. Later on, I saw that my form was not filled [in], so I paid the money, so it was filled [in].

Trained teachers were dismayed to learn that not only was their welfare considered to be unimportant by the authorities, but that they were also being taken advantage of by DEO officers for their own ends. It is obvious that such an attitude affected teachers’ commitment and motivation. Therefore, these issues are further explored in the following section.

### 8.3.4. The Attitude of the District Education Office

Teachers' lives were significantly affected by DEO decisions, from postings to promotion and incentive provision for trained teachers. Untrained teachers were not exempt either, being subject to DEO decisions on their appointments as pupil teachers and for the locations of their postings. Bribery seemed to be endemic, not only as a resort for teachers attempting to obtain 'favours' such as postings, appointments and promotion, but also for the facilitation of routine paperwork, such as the disbursement of the CG and the endorsement of loans. The offer of a bribe seemed to be obligatory if the process was to run smoothly.

One HT who had been awarded a bicycle was asked for money by an officer who claimed that he had gone out of his way to add the HT's name to the list of those who were eligible for them. Some teachers also suggested that they had to offer bribes before they could get their CSs to attempt to improve the challenges they faced. One untrained teacher in Ponkujaku explained:

You have a problem and you go and report it; they [the CS] may not act on it. They sit in the office and tell you to bring some money before they go to visit your school, which is bad.

The DEO seemed to misuse its authority over the teachers, which made them even more vulnerable. The teachers were constantly reminded that they were subordinates, but they remained stoical in trying to accommodate the situation. A trained teacher in Aumisoe said:

I am subordinate. I go there [to the DEO]; the person [in charge] is not there. I go tomorrow. He is not there. I have to wait [for a] long [time].

Similarly, an untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

We are asked to bring a form. After filling [in] the form, I brought it. They [the DEO] tell you they have no time and go and bring it later. Meanwhile, we use our own money to transport ourselves. Sometimes we borrow a bicycle from a friend. You are asked to come back. You may come back and he is not there – go and come back.

The teachers might have done their best to carry out their duties inside and outside school, but the DEO seemed to show little appreciation in terms of being available to listen to their problems. Nevertheless, when the district director of Aumisoe met all the capital circuit

teachers in June 2008, he promised that no paperwork would require any monetary involvement. He gave his mobile phone number to them, ‘just in case’.

Many of the teachers I talked with immediately after the meeting were inspired. However, when a five-day non-residential workshop was announced after two weeks, which was to be financed from the capitation grant, teachers’ hopes that their relationship with the DEO might have improved were dashed. A trained teacher said, “Officers say whatever. Nothing happens. Nothing changes.”

Teachers’ needs were seldom addressed, even when they ostensibly had the opportunity to share their views with the DEO, for example, in an open forum. However, meetings and forums were largely ceremonial. A trained teacher in Aumisoe complained:

They [the DEO] give [us the] chance for open forum and we give our views. When we say [express them], that is all – no response. Just they say, blah, blah, blah; that is the end.

As can be seen from the above examples, the teachers had a very close relationship with the DEO whether they liked it or not, and they often visited the office (although sometimes, this might have been used as an excuse to mask private reasons for going to the district capital). On the other hand, the officers – especially high-ranking ones such as directors – seldom visited the teachers.

The teachers knew that higher ranking DEO officers in particular travelled a lot on official and/or private business, since their families often lived in larger towns outside the district. However, the officers hardly ever stopped at the schools. When I was in Jamune, an official car stopped at the turn-off to the primary school. I thought that the occupants were going to visit the school, but they just bought some sacks of charcoal and left. The teacher with me, seeing what had happened, remarked, “You see, they don’t come; they just pass by.”

The five case study schools were visited by their CSs – who were the most frequent visitors to the schools of all DEO officers – between two and six times during the 2007/08

academic year, according to the log books that GES-related personnel signed each time he or she visited. One school in the district capital circuit of Ponkujaku was only visited once by its CS during the same period. That this school was on the main (albeit untarred) road only about 16 km from the capital, suggests that the situation for more remote schools in the ‘interior’ could be much worse.

It was not only schools that suffered from rare or, in some cases, no visits at all; teacher training colleges (TTCs), where both trained and untrained teachers studied on residential upgrade courses, also suffered from the same treatment. In the case of Ponkujaku, the DEO simply failed to appoint a UTDBE co-ordinator. Naturally, the signal this gave to the teachers was that they were not worth bothering about. One untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

When we came [last time], he [the previous co-ordinator] registered us. Who registers us this time? Whatever problems we have, we have to pass through school [TTC] administration. Look at the person over there. That is the co-ordinator of Tamale Metro. In case of problems, the co-ordinator comes to talk with school administration to see how problems can best be solved.

Both trained and untrained teachers were simply looking for recognition and encouragement from the heads of organisations when they visited. One untrained teacher in Aumisoe said:

Just come to give us encouragement. Just come to talk: “I’m happy to see my people, my district people.” It would give us encouragement.

Similarly, an untrained teacher in Ponkujaku complained:

Looking at our situation, they don’t care if we attend school or we fail and drive [are driven] back home; they do not care. That is why we are saying that we have not gotten – we are not receiving – support. We are not being helped. GES directorate should come with its full support by coming here to meet us to give words of advice, and also [to advise us] where they think we can get support to continue our school [UTDBE].

Since the teachers received little moral support from the DEO or the DA, they concluded that their superiors did not care about them, they were not appreciated and they were unimportant. Consequently, they became demotivated. Teachers seldom felt empathy from their officers. A trained teacher in Aumisoe said:

They taught before, most of them; they are supposed to be in our shoes... Because of us, that is why they are there. We, too, are here for them. But I don't know... You see, sometimes, maybe because of power, sometimes, when people are crown [rise] to [a] certain level, you see, their attitude, their behaviour, emotion changes; maybe because of superiority [the seniority] that they have than [over] others.

In interviews, teachers often argued that they were not materially motivated. However, it was not only material things that they desired. They wanted to be recognised and appreciated within the system and by the system. Nevertheless, the fact that teachers were at the bottom of the hierarchy in terms of qualifications and rank simply meant that there was more likelihood of them being taken advantage of.

#### **8.4. Conclusion**

Teachers in Ghana are affected by policy and its implementation in the same manner as those in other countries, including the West. However, the degree of its impact was disproportionately pervasive in the case study districts, as it not only affected teachers' professional lives but also their personal lives, as may be seen from the UTDBE/DBE implementation. Moreover, teachers who live professionally and personally at subsistence level seem to be vulnerable to any change.

All the policies explored in this study are well meant in their intention to attract, motivate and develop teachers, which they appreciate. In this sense, as Kemmerer (1990) and Chapman (1994) suggest, there are incentives. On the other hand, the impact of policy is not always positive and may actually demotivate teachers. The result depends mainly on the way in which policies are interpreted and implemented. In the case of Ghana, most of the time it is the DEO that implements policy rather than those who must work with it: teachers are the recipients of the implications of policy. Therefore, the DEO's role is crucial and much more attention should be paid to the manner in which policies are implemented, in addition to what is implemented.

In the context of Ghana, authority in terms of school management lies with the DEO and not with the head teachers of basic schools. The DEO is powerful, as it deploys, transfers, awards and sanctions teachers; and even controls the usage of the capitation grant.

As a consequence of this, in the study areas, teachers' professional and private well-being was subject to decisions made by the DEO. On the other hand, teachers found that the attitude and behaviour of the DEO was not a good role model for them. An untrained teacher in Ponkujaku said:

Sometimes they do not encourage trained teachers. Any trained teachers who come, maybe one or two years, they leave the district because it is the attitude of the top officers in the district. If they forget whom you know and bring what you know, the district will progress.

This tendency for people to perceive that an opportunity or favour is given to somebody who knows the 'right' person is not specific to the DEO, but is a Ghanaian trait. In a survey, Rolleston and Oketch (2009) found that university students identified 'people you know' as the second most important prerequisite after 'qualifications' (followed by 'skills needed for the job' and 'ability') to securing a job in Ghana. In his list, *Cross Cultural Dos and Don'ts in Ghana* (a course handout), Kirby (no date) of the Tamale Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies suggests that one of the 'don'ts' is to "rely on what you know" and one of the 'dos' is to "rely on who you know." Thus, organisational culture is not necessarily fair or rational, but it is deeply rooted in the Ghanaian culture.

Overall, the government's message that teachers are the key to high quality education does not seem to be reaching the teachers themselves. Rather, they tend to feel that they are exploited or blamed for a school's underachievement. At a district BTA ceremony, voicing his concern about teacher absenteeism, a national level director commented:

I am not against any teacher undertaking an activity to earn extra income, but I certainly do not appreciate teachers earning extra income at the expense of school hours (Daily Graphic 04/02/08).

Paraphrasing the director's words, the newspaper continued:

[The director's name] therefore advised teachers who engaged in such an act to desist from it and have a change of attitude, and rededicate themselves to the profession they had chosen for themselves.

This implies that teacher absenteeism is an issue that concerns the individual rather than being an organisational challenge. Teachers tend to feel that they are not supported by the government. Teachers tend to be demoralised, finding a distance from their superiors, as Barrett (2005) finds in Tanzania. Yet, the present study indicates that teachers who know they are appreciated and respected by the community are more likely to be motivated. Similarly, teachers need to feel appreciated and respected by the GES itself.

## 9. Conclusion

### 9.1. Key Findings and Contribution of the Thesis

In light of previous research that has found that teachers are poorly motivated in Sub-Saharan African countries, including Ghana, this study has aimed to investigate the social and professional experiences that promote commitment in basic education teachers, allowing them to enjoy teaching and thus fulfil their goals.

Generally, basic (primary and JSS) school teachers in the case study districts are young (on average 32.6 years old) with an average of 7.5 years' work experience. The majority are untrained (64%) and male (84%). Most teachers are more likely to be first generation secondary or tertiary educated and sons and daughters of farmers and/or traders, as suggested by other studies (see Bame 1991; Akyeampong and Stephens 2002).

The most common reason that teachers gave for becoming a teacher could be characterised as altruistic – mainly to support the younger generation in terms of helping them to learn and become future leaders or good citizens. About 38% of the surveyed teachers gave this as a reason for becoming a teacher. The next common reason given was to advance their own knowledge or as a 'stepping stone' to other careers (21%). This was followed by contribution to the community and the nation (20%). An important finding is that teachers in Ghana seem to have school related aspirations as far as their motivation to teach but also link their aspirations to community level issues – a similar aspiration is found by Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2006) in the case of Cyprus.

Generally, teachers' overall job satisfaction is low which echoes previous research findings that physical disadvantages such as lack of infrastructure and teaching and learning materials – particularly in rural schools – in addition to poor salaries, are factors that contribute to a lower commitment to the profession. In addition, teachers seem seldom satisfied with the benefits and services that the job provides and show low satisfaction with the system of teacher management and organisation support for teachers in particular the

system of transfers and promotions for teachers. They are more satisfied with their relationships with the community and within the school. This suggests that what the job offers materially and organisationally has a greater impact on teachers' low satisfaction than the social relationships involved in their profession. In other words, teachers' low satisfaction cannot be addressed, focusing on only material aspects: organisational culture should be taken into consideration for teacher motivation.

There are some differences between teachers in the north and the south in terms of the degree of job satisfaction. Teachers in Aumisoie are less likely to be satisfied with the job than those in Ponkujaku. Similarly, trained teachers are less likely to be satisfied with the job than untrained teachers whereas male and female teachers do not exhibit statistically significant differences in the degree of job satisfaction.

While most of basic school teachers say that they enjoy teaching (86%) and teaching is not temporary (66%), they tend to perceive their current jobs as temporary – only 29% of teachers regard them as long term. What this suggests is that teachers have aspirations beyond the profession. Only less than half of teachers (45%) indicate that they would choose the current job, if they could go back to their earlier days and start over again. What is revealing is that only a third of trained teachers (34%) – who have higher salaries, better benefits, and job security compared to untrained teachers – would choose a teaching job if they could start all over again. This underscores trained teachers' lower job satisfaction and perception that their current job is temporary.

This study found that in general teachers are eager to further their education. Indeed, this is the most common ambition of a basic school teacher. While about a fifth of teachers (22%) would like to be a professional teacher or teach effectively, a similar percentage would want to teach at higher level (19%) and work in education administration (e.g. work at the district education office). One out of eight teachers (13%) would like to work in another field, such as law and medicine. Teachers tend to perceive teaching as a stepping stone: either to climb the ladder of the GES system or to change career (Bame 1991; Peil 1995; Hedges 2002; Akyeampong and Asante 2005).

This research also found that teachers' living conditions are generally challenging. Even trained and long-serving teachers are not always able to sustain a livelihood on their salary alone: many take a second job to supplement their income, mainly farming or trading. Even with a second job, teachers may not be able to procure basic necessities, especially their food needs which put their health at risk especially as they have to work also under poor working conditions. Indeed, they are expected to teach effectively under conditions that are more demanding than the authorities care to admit.

Teachers' working conditions are also challenging. Lack of facilities and teaching and learning materials is common. Some teachers, especially in rural areas, have to teach two or more classes because of the shortage of teachers. Moreover, teachers are expected to work with their colleagues who might have different levels of preparedness and different expectations of the job, partly due to different qualification and academic background as well as employment conditions (e.g. trained teachers and untrained teachers may be on the same staff). Most often teachers have to manage their professional lives under materially challenging though frequently unstimulating conditions.

The Ghanaian government has implemented several strategies in the attempt to enhance teacher motivation. Upgrade programmes for both trained and untrained teachers, the introduction of ICT as part of education reform, and study leave with pay for trained teachers, are all initiatives that have been introduced to promote opportunities for professional development. Recognition schemes – the Best Teacher Award and other incentive packages – have aimed at attracting and motivating basic teachers in rural areas.

GES upgrade programmes, which are open to all serving teachers during school holidays, are seen as big motivators for teachers in general, as teachers – both trained and untrained – try to persevere with the course in spite of financial difficulties. However, not all teachers see these as particularly motivating. In the case study districts, more than 40% of untrained teachers had not benefitted from the UTDBE mainly because of its design – a 4-year programme with only a single intake. For those unable to access the UTDBE programme this becomes a source of demotivation and for these teachers their school attendance tends

to be low. On the other hand, those taking the UTDBE face additional financial burden as they have to pay for attending, while teachers already live at subsistence level. Some teachers indicated that they would have to give up the programme because of financial difficulties (especially for untrained teachers). The programme is laudable, however, it does not seem to take into account cost factors that might affect access and completion. Loans for example would offer many teachers a welcome opportunity to enrol and complete the programme as a result teachers appear to feel that they are not cared for, as their needs are not well addressed.

Teachers see the introduction of ICT into primary and JSS curricula without adequate preparation for them as another example of the system not thinking about their professional needs when it comes to reforms at the basic school level. They are expected to teach this new subject without textbooks and computers – there was only one JSS with two computers in the two case study districts. More critically, few teachers are comfortable with the use of computers, as no training was offered before the implementation of the policy. Teachers are not only concerned about the difficulty of teaching ICT but also anticipate poor performances from their pupils in ICT in the BECE in two years' time, and feel that they will be blamed for this. This is similar to a case in primary schools in India, in which teachers' perceptions of new pedagogical initiatives were negatively shaped due to a lack of TLMs and inadequate training (Dyer 1996). Teachers particularly in rural areas, tend to feel that they are ignored, when it comes to the introduction of ICT in schools.

Recognition schemes – the Best Teacher Awards scheme and incentive packages – are good in its intentions, as winners of the award and those otherwise rewarded feel that their efforts are recognised. However, some teachers have issues with how such schemes are implemented and also feel that it does not provide sufficient material rewards in both districts, given the number of (trained) teachers. Because the criteria for inclusion – untrained teachers are out of the frame – and selection processes are perceived to be unfair and unclear. Indeed, the majority who never receive any material rewards tend to think that their work is not recognised or appreciated. It is thus clear that it is vital to implement a

better way of fairly recognising the contributions of hardworking teachers, including untrained, especially in rural areas.

This research suggests that in addition to the teachers themselves, three other stakeholders play key roles in teacher motivation: their colleagues; the communities in which teachers live and work; and the education establishment that is meant to oversee and support their work – in this case, the Ghana Education Service (GES) and District Education Office (DEO).

This study finds that in the Ghanaian context, teachers' lives are very closely related to that of others, especially the community. Both colleagues and the community make a difference to how teachers perceive the profession. Indeed, even though they may farm or have other jobs, they still cannot always secure their well-being unaided; thus, the support of the community in terms of the provision of accommodation and food for some teachers is indispensable.

Teachers also tend to regard such assistance as a form of appreciation or recognition for their efforts, which encourages them to remain in their posts – as seen in the case of Asonbwa. Yet, community support cannot be assumed – clearly if the community is not convinced that its teachers are working hard; it shows its reluctance to support them which in turn discourages the teachers even more. In such situations, the relationship between the teacher and the community could become a negative spiral, as seen in the case of Manekanto. What this does is to create a depreciative coexistence with both teachers and the community dissatisfied with each others contribution.

One of the interesting finding from this research is that teachers can demonstrate different levels of commitment in the same school, as seen in the case studies. In this sense, motivation is highly individual (Evans 1998). Some teachers – including trained ones – do choose to work in rural areas, being convinced that not only do such districts have no disadvantages but that they are also better off there. Such teachers tend to think that they can offer less fortunate pupils much more in terms of educational opportunities, partly as a

result of their religious beliefs and/or their socio-economic backgrounds. Teachers appear to use religion to articulate a sense of mission – to serve people in need –and to believe they will be rewarded in some form, maybe their pupils’ success or the esteem they attract at some time, as some interestingly put it “ a reward in heaven”. Those teachers who have themselves struggled to gain and continue their own formal education or feel they received less (and lower quality) educational opportunity seem to have a greater interest in supporting children in less endowed areas. They tend to find their vocation in life and a greater meaning to their work teaching in more challenging conditions as far as they are able.

On the other hand, how long they serve in their current posts depends on their future plans. Teachers gauge what their current jobs offer in relation to their aspirations and goals in life, and then make their decisions to stay, apply for a transfer or leave teaching altogether.

Although the community and colleagues’ support – such as material provision and appreciation and recognition shown to teachers– tends to encourage teachers on a daily basis, it can still be insufficient to promote the long-term intention to remain in teaching if more attractive opportunities arise. For teachers’ long-term job prospects, attitudes of the education establishment in this case the GES and the DEO play an important role.

Trained teachers (as well as untrained teachers) acknowledge a culture within the GES that tolerates malpractice – absenteeism and influence over the bureaucracy, from postings, transfers, and promotion to beneficiary selection for rewards such as the incentive package. The GES system is perceived as neither fair nor rational, which undermines professionalism (Hedges 2002). As Hedges continues:

The maladministration of the bond and the late payment of salaries reveal a bureaucracy perceived to be in crisis, open to influence, unwilling to discipline, unable to pay on time, and carrying out practices that undermine professionalism; an open door waiting to be pushed by teachers driven to ‘deviance’ (Hedges 2002 p359).

Moreover, head teachers in particular tend to find that they do not have the necessary authority to administer their schools. Indeed, they have little authority over GES and non-

GES teachers alike, as actual decision-making, such as the penalisation of underperforming staff, lies with the DEO. Some head teachers express the view that they are not free to utilise the entire capitation grant due their school as they see fit either, since they are required to get authorisation from the DEO; and thus, they are subject to its influence over the usage of funds. Thus, this study finds that teachers are working and managing schools under circumstances in which their autonomy is easily undermined.

One of the critical finding is that the feeling among teachers that the organisational culture of the GES does not promote teamwork amongst basic school teachers, who are heterogeneous in terms of qualifications and affiliations. The prevailing dichotomy – trained teachers and untrained teachers – is more than an indicator of quality of education. Its reluctance to acknowledge those who are untrained as their teachers or partners, despite indication to the contrary in official documents – including *Conditions and Scheme of Service and the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers* (GES and GNAT 2000) – discourages and frustrates them, since their efforts may go undervalued no matter how hard they work.

Current DEO practice does not seem to promote *high expectancy* – that teachers' efforts will lead to the desired outcome; indeed, this is a more than infrequent assessment of their merit. Teachers' powerlessness – little belief that their achievements are fairly recognised – is reinforced within a bureaucracy in which teachers believe that it is not what they know that is important, but who they know. In short, teachers are frustrated and at the mercy of the DEO. Too much emphasis on teacher motivation at school level may overlook the importance of the DEO's role, since teachers' lives are much more related to how the DEO manages them than is the case with similar hierarchical relationships in the West.

There seem to be three necessary preconditions if teachers are to actively and contentedly live and work in rural areas: their security and well-being must be assured; their contributions need to be appreciated and recognised; and there must be no disadvantage in their future career prospects. Colleagues and the communities in which they work can

provide the first two; but a long-term interest in teaching seems to require a sense of appreciation in the system, as well as a guarantee of personal and professional development. Personal and professional development does not only mean higher qualifications. It is also associated with teachers' aspirations for their careers. Upgrade programmes might achieve this in part. However, it is dangerous to merely assume that such opportunities exist. Whether teachers are able to achieve their goals or not seems to be related to how they are perceived and treated by others, especially the GES.

Neither trained nor untrained teachers hesitated in sharing the likelihood of their leaving the profession unless they felt that they were supported and appreciated. One teacher in Ponkujaku said:

If the situation doesn't change, some of us go and join NGOs. If the office puts us frustration, the District Assembly is the same thing, then the community is the same thing; then we go [sic].

In summary, teacher motivation is dependent on the different layers of their environment. In the Ghanaian context, the community and the DEO play key roles in shaping teachers' perceptions of the job. The DEO is particularly influential, as it affects teachers' long-term vision. Teacher motivation is apt to focus on material incentive – such as the provision of accommodation, resources and even upgrade programmes – which tends to propagate the 'rural deficit model'. However, such preoccupations are short-sighted, since they do not necessarily provide teachers with personal and professional development and thus a sense of usefulness to others. Therefore, the range of incentives offered to teachers should be widened in its scope. A rural posting in itself may be regarded as an incentive if the government realises that it is an opportunity to enrich teachers' experience and broaden their views, and provides the necessary support, as Ankrah-Dove (1982) suggests as the 'rural challenge model'. To begin with, it needs to sift its perception from urban bias – for example, transfer to rural areas is regarded as punishment (Woode 1997) – to rural emphasis. It also needs to nourish empathy to teachers rather than elite mentality – public administration tend to 'load' it over the people (ibid p5). Sensitisation and awareness raising for the government officers might be necessary. Some DEO's good practice with

little emphasis on material rewards to motivate teachers need to be sought and shared. The ‘rural challenge model’ could be possible, if the government has professional conscience.

## **9.2. Implications for Policy**

There is a particular urgency for governments in developing countries that face similar teacher challenges as Ghana to devise a method of recognising the contributions of untrained teachers. Teacher initiatives should look at the intended and unintended consequences of policies and develop responses that reassure teachers they matter to education and development. For example, although the upgrade programme for untrained teachers has been implemented, two thirds of untrained teachers in Ponkujaku and one third in Aumisoe are not currently participating in the programme, mainly because it only had a single intake. Moreover, a third of its participants have dropped out in the two districts due to financial constraints. Thus, there is little evidence that the two districts will be able to meet the target that the government has set: that, as a result of the implementation of the upgrade programme, basic schools will be completely staffed by trained teachers within three to four years. In reality, untrained teachers are a major teaching force at basic level in the district and it is more likely that they will soon be in the majority. Therefore, if the government is to achieve its goals, measures that make untrained teachers feel appreciated and encourage them to work as a part of the education service should be considered and implemented.

Teachers have different motives for joining the profession. Some have a strong desire to serve children and communities due to their beliefs and previous experiences, while others see the job as a stepping stone. The current admission system for teacher training college is seen as biased towards formal educational qualifications that people in deprived areas may not have. The selection process may thus need to widen the criteria and consider individuals’ personalities and identities as well. This echoes a similar suggestion by Cobbold’s (2006a) in his study of another district in the south of the region.

Teachers’ voices are seldom heard by policy-makers, as is demonstrated by the example of the introduction of ICT into the basic education curriculum. Teachers are given a mandate,

but the government fails to recognise the context and to prepare them to meet its demands. Annual education reviews at district level take place before those at national level, but teachers do not often take part in such a process. In the light of this situation, the authorities should make an effort to listen more to the views of those at the grassroots level, especially in rural areas.

The current low status of basic school teachers may be due in part to the hierarchical nature of the system. Basic school teaching is an entry point into the GES and, as they progress, they expect (and are also expected by others) to teach at a higher level or secure a more prestigious job at the DEO. Addae-Mensah (2000) argues:

The current situation where experienced teachers who manage to acquire higher qualification are immediately transferred into office and management positions does not augur well for quality education (p86)

Teaching at basic school level should be recognised as an option in its own right and a life-long career. One strategy could be a narrowing of the gap in terms of the level of benefits entitled to basic school teachers and those teaching at higher level and officers. This could include the provision of accommodation and offers of material goods such as motorbikes at reduced cost for basic school teachers. Other types of incentives for basic school teachers could include access to affordable loans and free (or heavily subsidised) regular health check-ups. At the same time, basic teaching needs to be made parallel to secondary teaching and administration positions of the DEO in the GES system, so that basic school teachers are not located at the bottom of the entire system. There seems to be a necessity to have different notion of the status of teaching at the basic level within the system.

Teachers know whether their work is appreciated or not. The community can make a difference to teachers' perception of the profession with its provision of care, security, support and so on. However, some communities are able to support teachers and others are not. Similarly, some districts can and others cannot. Therefore, it should not be left up to communities and districts to encourage teachers merely because this is in line with decentralisation. The local authorities need to minimise the disparities between well-endowed and less well-endowed communities, as should central government between well-endowed and less-endowed districts. The central government must acknowledge the reality

of the field where teachers live and work, and show its appreciation of teachers' efforts to become role models in their communities and districts, listening to their voices and recognising their endeavours. It may be necessary to sensitise education officers to empathise with teachers and perceive them as their professional partners.

### **9.3. Some Lessons Learnt from the Research Process**

I appreciate that my work with central government and brief visits to basic schools do not mean that I came to know all that was going on in rural Ghana in terms of basic education. My teaching experience at a primary and junior secondary school in a Nepali village at first made me believe that I was familiar with rural situations. Both experiences are good reminders that there is a limit – unless the researcher is prepared to immerse herself in the context for a lifetime – to the understanding of any particular reality in social science (although an in-depth study of course also involves more time, energy and financial input).

Taking a five-week cross-cultural course at the beginning of the field research was useful preparation for entering unfamiliar communities; knowing what to do and what not to do; and recognising how to show respect, especially to the elderly, including the chiefs. Staying in districts and communities, eating their food in their manner, wearing Ghanaian clothes, travelling by the same means that they used and attempting to speak the local languages were appreciated and brought me closer to the researched.

### **9.4. Areas for Further Research**

More research into teacher motivation is needed: although it is not a new area, little has been conducted in developing countries, especially with the use of qualitative research approaches. As issues around how bureaucracy operates emerge as elements of teacher motivation – and some teachers talked about some of their former district directors (DDs) positively – ways in which DDs might encourage teachers should be explored.

This research finds that teachers tend to receive little empathy from the authorities – the DEO officers and DA members, and the GES/MoESS. Most of these people are however

former basic school teachers. Although I assume that they know how teachers live and work and what they want – not necessarily material rewards, but recognition and encouragement from the authorities – those in power seem to behave as if they did not go through the same experiences. Why people in power tend to behave in an authoritarian manner needs to be investigated, since it would provide further understanding of occupational and organisational environment, which has been shown by this study to affect teacher motivation.

It would also be useful to find out how teachers in other districts perceive the profession, since Ghana is geographically and socio-culturally diverse; and support from communities, for example, might differ considerably.

It is important that teachers have the opportunity to further their education and qualifications. Such opportunities should be available to all those who are willing to continue to teach, as discussed earlier. The current UTDBE/DBE provides qualifications, but does not necessarily promote higher career aspirations: such courses seem to be a means to climb the education ladder or change careers. On the other hand, the case of Lesanyili suggests that a series of INSET sessions open to all the teachers at a school could encourage a positive attitude amongst them. Nevertheless, the question of how teachers' professional development can be supported and how it might enhance their commitment to the job seems to be an important area that warrants further exploration.

A survey finding in this study suggests that trained teachers are less likely to be satisfied with the job compared to untrained teachers. Similarly, teachers in Aumisoë are less satisfied with the job than those in Ponkujaku. One explanation could be that teachers with more choice find that the 'opportunity cost' of staying in the profession is higher (Rodgers-Jenkinson and Chapman 1990). Another might be the social distance between teacher and pupil, as well as parent. This would seem to be an interesting topic to explore further.

### 9.5. The Last Word

Basic teachers' satisfaction is generally low, but this is not only because their living and working conditions are challenging. Rather, they see themselves in a situation of powerlessness within a bureaucracy whose operation they do not perceive to be either fair or rational. Government policy – as exemplified by the incentive package – in addressing the “low level of teacher commitment due to a lack of incentives and poor working conditions” (Education Strategic Plan 2003–2015 p9) does not look promising, since the implementation of the strategy also demonstrates unfairness and irrational in the system. The majority of teachers are discouraged and frustrated, being reminded of their powerlessness and hopelessness in the face of bureaucracy.

Teachers cannot cope with challenging conditions by themselves. They need support. Just as teachers can be encouraged through day-to-day appreciation and respect from the community, this should also be the case with their superiors. Recognition and appreciation by the GES does not necessarily have to mean a big ceremony for the BTA, or other ‘incentives’. Rather, it can be demonstrated through, attitude, empathy with teachers and concern for their well-being. It may be realised in assistance from the GES in teacher development and promotion of self-assurance. It may be seen in the value it places on teachers whose contributions are indispensable. If a teacher has a poor attendance record, the GES should try to treat the problem as its own rather than heaping all the blame on the teacher. The altruistic motives of teachers should be nourished. Teachers need to feel appreciated and valued in the system if they are to play their very important role effectively.

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# **Appendix**

**Appendix A: The Results of Survey**

**Appendix B: Questionnaires**

**Appendix C: Semi- Structured Interviews**

## Appendix A

**Table 1 Teachers' age**

|          | Pooled | District  |          | Gender |          | Qualification |           |
|----------|--------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|---------------|-----------|
|          |        | Ponkujaku | Aumisoie | Male   | Female   | Trained       | Untrained |
| <i>N</i> | 811    | 266       | 545      | 657    | 154      | 284           | 527       |
| Mean     | 32.6   | 27.5      | 35.1     | 33.0   | 30.9     | 35.9          | 30.8      |
| S.D.     | 10.7   | 6.4       | 11.5     | 10.6   | 11.0     | 11.5          | 9.8       |
| Mode     | 25     | 25        | 24       | 25     | 23,24,25 | 25            | 25        |
| Medium   | 29     | 26        | 31       | 30     | 26       | 32            | 28        |
| Range    | 15-73  | 15-56     | 17-73    | 15-73  | 18-59    | 21-60         | 15-73     |

**Table 2 Teachers' age distribution**

|          | Pool-<br>ed | District       |          | Gender |        | Qualification |        |       |           |        |       |
|----------|-------------|----------------|----------|--------|--------|---------------|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
|          |             | Ponkuja-<br>ku | Aumisoie | Male   | Female | Trained       |        |       | Untrained |        |       |
| <i>N</i> | 811         | 266            | 545      | 657    | 154    | Male          | Female | Total | Male      | Female | Total |
| -18      | .5          | .8             | .4       | .5     | .6     | .0            | .0     | .0    | 0.7       | 1.1    | .8    |
| 19-25    | 33.0        | 49.0           | 25.1     | 29.7   | 46.8   | 16.1          | 43.9   | 22.5  | 36.4      | 48.9   | 38.5  |
| 26-32    | 29.3        | 33.1           | 27.5     | 30.6   | 24.0   | 30.3          | 25.8   | 29.2  | 30.8      | 22.7   | 29.4  |
| 33-40    | 16.6        | 13.5           | 18.2     | 18.7   | 7.8    | 22.9          | 3.0    | 18.3  | 16.6      | 11.4   | 15.7  |
| 41-50    | 11.0        | 3.0            | 14.9     | 10.8   | 11.7   | 13.3          | 9.1    | 12.3  | 9.6       | 13.6   | 10.2  |
| 51-60    | 8.6         | 0.8            | 12.5     | 8.5    | 9.1    | 17.4          | 18.2   | 17.6  | 4.1       | 2.3    | 3.8   |
| 61-      | 1.0         | .0             | 1.5      | 1.2    | 0.0    | -             | -      | -     | 1.8       | 0.0    | 1.5   |

**Table 3 Teachers' marital status**

|          | Pooled | District  |          | Gender |        | Qualification |           |
|----------|--------|-----------|----------|--------|--------|---------------|-----------|
|          |        | Ponkujaku | Aumisoie | Male   | Female | Trained       | Untrained |
| <i>N</i> | 832    | 277       | 555      | 676    | 156    | 297           | 535       |
| Single   | 40.0   | 40.1      | 40.0     | 37.3   | 51.9   | 38.7          | 40.7      |
| Married  | 56.9   | 58.5      | 56.0     | 60.7   | 40.4   | 58.2          | 56.1      |
| Others   | 3.1    | 1.4       | 4.0      | 2.1    | 7.7    | 3.0           | 3.2       |

**Table 4 Teachers' Age and Marital Status**

|       | Male                |                           |            |          | Female              |                           |           |          |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------|----------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------|
|       | Number in<br>Sample | Percent by Marital Status |            |          | Number in<br>Sample | Percent by Marital Status |           |          |
|       |                     | Single                    | Married    | Others   |                     | Single                    | Married   | Others   |
| <19   | 2                   | 50.0 (1)                  | 50.0(1)    | 0 (0)    | 1                   | 100.0 (1)                 | 0 (0)     | 0(0)     |
| 19-25 | 191                 | 75.4 (144)                | 23.6 (45)  | 1.0 (2)  | 71                  | 76.1 (54)                 | 23.9 (17) | 0(0)     |
| 26-32 | 197                 | 42.1 (83)                 | 55.3 (109) | 2.5 (5)  | 36                  | 50.0 (18)                 | 41.7 (15) | 8.3 (3)  |
| 33-40 | 122                 | 12.3 (15)                 | 85.2 (104) | 2.5 (3)  | 11                  | 18.2 (2)                  | 72.7 (8)  | 9.1 (1)  |
| 41-50 | 71                  | 0 (0)                     | 97.2 (69)  | 2.8 (2)  | 18                  | 16.7 (3)                  | 55.6 (10) | 27.8 (5) |
| 51-60 | 56                  | 0 (0)                     | 96.4 (54)  | 3.6 (2)  | 14                  | 7.1 (1)                   | 71.4 (10) | 21.4 (3) |
| 61<   | 8                   | 0 (0)                     | 100.0 (8)  | 0 (0)    | 0                   | 0                         | 0         | 0        |
| Total | 647                 | 37.6 (243)                | 60.3 (390) | 2.2 (14) | 151                 | 52.3 (79)                 | 39.7 (60) | 7.9 (12) |

**Table 5 Trained Teacher's Age and Marital Status**

|       | Male             |                           |            |         | Female           |                           |           |          |
|-------|------------------|---------------------------|------------|---------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------|
|       | Number in Sample | Percent by Marital Status |            |         | Number in Sample | Percent by Marital Status |           |          |
|       |                  | Single                    | Married    | Others  |                  | Single                    | Married   | Others   |
| 19-25 | 16.1 (35)        | 88.6 (31)                 | 8.6 (3)    | 2.9 (1) | 44.6 (29)        | 89.7 (26)                 | 10.3 (3)  | .0 (0)   |
| 26-32 | 30.3 (66)        | 54.5 (36)                 | 43.9 (29)  | 1.5(1)  | 24.6 (16)        | 68.8 (11)                 | 31.2 (5)  | .0 (0)   |
| 33-40 | 22.9 (50)        | 10.0 (5)                  | 88.0 (44)  | 2.0 (1) | 3.1 (2)          | .0 (0)                    | 50.0 (1)  | 50.0 (1) |
| 41-50 | 13.3 (29)        | .0 (0)                    | 100.0 (29) | .0 (0)  | 9.2 (6)          | .0 (0)                    | 83.3 (5)  | 16.7 (1) |
| 51-60 | 17.4 (38)        | .0 (0)                    | 97.4 (37)  | 2.6 (1) | 18.5 (12)        | .0 (0)                    | 75.0 (9)  | 25.0 (3) |
| Total | 100.0 (218)      | 33.0 (72)                 | 65.1 (142) | 1.8 (4) | 100.0 (65)       | 56.9 (37)                 | 35.4 (23) | 7.7 (5)  |

**Table 6 Education of teachers' fathers**

|                                       | Pool-<br>ed | District  |      |      |         |      |      | Qualification |      |      |           |      |      |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------|------|---------|------|------|---------------|------|------|-----------|------|------|
|                                       |             | Ponkujaku |      |      | Aumisoe |      |      | Trained       |      |      | Untrained |      |      |
|                                       |             | M         | F    | T    | M       | F    | T    | M             | F    | T    | M         | F    | T    |
| <i>N</i>                              | 758         | 234       | 16   | 250  | 392     | 116  | 508  | 218           | 60   | 278  | 408       | 72   | 480  |
| No formal education                   | 47.2        | 79.5      | 62.5 | 78.4 | 35.5    | 19.8 | 31.9 | 47.2          | 18.3 | 41.0 | 54.4      | 30.6 | 50.8 |
| Some or completed basic education     | 29.7        | 11.5      | 18.8 | 12.0 | 38.3    | 38.8 | 38.4 | 29.8          | 31.7 | 30.2 | 27.5      | 40.3 | 29.4 |
| Some or completed secondary education | 7.1         | 1.7       | 6.2  | 2.0  | 7.7     | 16.4 | 9.6  | 5.0           | 18.3 | 7.9  | 5.6       | 12.5 | 6.7  |
| College education                     | 7.8         | 3.0       | 6.2  | 3.2  | 9.4     | 12.1 | 10.0 | 7.8           | 15.0 | 9.4  | 6.6       | 8.3  | 6.9  |
| University education                  | 4.0         | .4        | 6.2  | 0.8  | 2.8     | 5.2  | 3.3  | 5.5           | 13.3 | 7.2  | 2.0       | 2.8  | 2.1  |
| Others                                | 3.2         | 3.0       | .0   | 2.8  | 2.8     | 5.2  | 3.3  | 4.1           | 3.3  | 4.0  | 2.2       | 5.6  | 2.7  |
| I do not know                         | 1.1         | 0.9       | .0   | 0.8  | 1.5     | 0.0  | 1.2  | .5            | .0   | .4   | 1.7       | .0   | 1.5  |

**Table 7 Education of teachers' mothers**

|                                       | Pool-<br>ed | District  |      |      |         |      |      | Qualification |      |      |           |      |      |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------|------|---------|------|------|---------------|------|------|-----------|------|------|
|                                       |             | Ponkujaku |      |      | Aumisoe |      |      | Trained       |      |      | Untrained |      |      |
|                                       |             | M         | F    | T    | M       | F    | T    | M             | F    | T    | M         | F    | T    |
| <i>N</i>                              | 776         | 233       | 17   | 250  | 400     | 126  | 526  | 222           | 65   | 287  | 411       | 78   | 489  |
| No formal education                   | 63.8        | 89.3      | 94.1 | 89.6 | 57.0    | 34.1 | 51.5 | 62.6          | 29.2 | 55.1 | 72.3      | 51.3 | 68.9 |
| Some or completed basic education     | 28.2        | 7.3       | 5.9  | 7.2  | 34.8    | 49.2 | 38.2 | 30.6          | 53.8 | 35.9 | 21.4      | 35.9 | 23.7 |
| Some or completed secondary education | 3.1         | .0        | .0   | .0   | 3.8     | 7.1  | 4.6  | 2.7           | 6.2  | 3.5  | 2.2       | 6.4  | 2.9  |
| College education                     | 1.9         | .0        | .0   | .0   | 2.3     | 4.8  | 2.9  | 2.3           | 6.2  | 3.1  | 1.0       | 2.6  | 1.2  |
| University education                  | 0.3         | .0        | .0   | 0.0  | .3      | .8   | .4   | .5            | .0   | .3   | .0        | 1.3  | .2   |
| Others                                | 1.4         | .9        | .0   | 0.8  | 1.0     | 4.0  | 1.7  | .9            | 4.6  | 1.7  | 1.0       | 2.6  | 1.2  |
| I do not know                         | 1.3         | 2.6       | .0   | 2.4  | 1.0     | 0.0  | 0.8  | .5            | .0   | .3   | 2.2       | .0   | 1.8  |

**Table 8 Occupation of teachers' fathers**

|                                 | Pool-<br>ed | District  |      |      |         |      |      | Qualification |      |      |           |      |      |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------|------|---------|------|------|---------------|------|------|-----------|------|------|
|                                 |             | Ponkujaku |      |      | Aumisoe |      |      | Trained       |      |      | Untrained |      |      |
|                                 |             | M         | F    | T    | M       | F    | T    | M             | F    | T    | M         | F    | T    |
| <i>N</i>                        | 781         | 238       | 16   | 254  | 403     | 124  | 527  | 212           | 60   | 272  | 429       | 80   | 509  |
| Farmer, hunter                  | 65.4        | 81.9      | 62.5 | 80.7 | 63.5    | 40.3 | 58.1 | 60.8          | 23.3 | 52.6 | 75.1      | 57.5 | 72.3 |
| Trader, business                | 3.6         | 2.9       | 12.5 | 3.5  | 2.2     | 8.1  | 3.6  | 2.8           | 8.3  | 4.0  | 2.3       | 8.8  | 3.3  |
| Teacher                         | 9.2         | 3.4       | 6.2  | 3.5  | 11.2    | 14.5 | 12.0 | 10.8          | 16.7 | 12.1 | 7.0       | 11.2 | 7.7  |
| Government worker               | 4.9         | 5.0       | .0   | 4.7  | 4.2     | 7.3  | 4.9  | 5.2           | 8.3  | 5.9  | 4.2       | 5.0  | 4.3  |
| Semi-skilled                    | 6.9         | 2.5       | 6.2  | 2.8  | 7.4     | 13.7 | 8.9  | 8.0           | 26.7 | 12.1 | 4.4       | 2.5  | 4.1  |
| Technical                       | 4.0         | 1.3       | .0   | 1.2  | 5.2     | 5.6  | 5.3  | 4.7           | 5.0  | 4.8  | 3.3       | 5.0  | 3.5  |
| Managerial, administrative      | 1.9         | 1.3       | .0   | 1.2  | 2.0     | 3.2  | 2.3  | 2.4           | 3.3  | 2.6  | 1.4       | 2.5  | 1.6  |
| Professional other than teacher | 2.8         | .4        | 6.2  | .8   | 3.2     | 5.6  | 3.8  | 4.2           | 6.7  | 4.8  | 1.2       | 5.0  | 1.8  |
| House Wife                      | .0          | .0        | .0   | .0   | .0      | .0   | .0   | .0            | .0   | .0   | .0        | .0   | .0   |
| Others                          | 1.2         | 1.3       | 6.2  | 1.6  | .7      | 1.6  | .9   | .9            | 1.7  | 1.1  | .9        | 2.5  | 1.2  |
| No                              | 0.1         | .0        | .0   | .0   | .2      | .0   | .2   | .0            | .0   | .0   | .2        | .0   | .2   |

**Table 9 Occupation of teachers' mothers**

|                                 | Pool-<br>ed | District  |      |      |         |      |      | Qualification |      |      |           |      |      |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------|------|---------|------|------|---------------|------|------|-----------|------|------|
|                                 |             | Ponkujaku |      |      | Aumisoe |      |      | Trained       |      |      | Untrained |      |      |
|                                 |             | M         | F    | T    | M       | F    | T    | M             | F    | T    | M         | F    | T    |
| <i>N</i>                        | 785         | 241       | 16   | 257  | 401     | 127  | 528  | 213           | 64   | 277  | 429       | 79   | 508  |
| Farmer, hunter                  | 54.4        | 49.4      | 18.8 | 47.5 | 63.6    | 39.4 | 57.8 | 52.1          | 25.0 | 45.8 | 61.3      | 46.8 | 59.1 |
| Trader, business                | 32.6        | 33.2      | 68.8 | 35.4 | 26.4    | 46.5 | 31.3 | 31.9          | 60.9 | 38.6 | 27.5      | 39.2 | 29.3 |
| Teacher                         | 3.6         | .4        | .0   | .4   | 3.7     | 9.4  | 5.1  | 4.2           | 7.8  | 5.1  | 1.6       | 8.9  | 2.8  |
| Government worker               | .0          | .0        | .0   | .0   | .0      | .0   | .0   | .0            | .0   | .0   | .0        | .0   | .0   |
| Semi-skilled                    | .0          | .0        | .0   | .0   | .0      | .0   | .0   | .0            | .0   | .0   | .0        | .0   | .0   |
| Technical                       | 1.1         | 1.2       | .0   | 1.2  | 1.0     | 1.6  | 1.1  | 1.9           | 1.6  | 1.8  | 0.7       | 1.3  | 0.8  |
| Managerial, administrative      | .0          | .0        | .0   | .0   | .0      | .0   | .0   | .0            | .0   | .0   | .0        | .0   | .0   |
| Professional other than teacher | 0.8         | .0        | .0   | .0   | .7      | 2.4  | 1.1  | 0.9           | 3.1  | 1.4  | .2        | 1.3  | .4   |
| House Wife                      | 5.1         | 14.5      | 12.5 | 14.4 | .5      | .8   | .6   | 4.2           | 1.6  | 3.6  | 6.5       | 2.5  | 5.9  |
| Others                          | 1.9         | .8        | .0   | .8   | 3.2     | .0   | 2.5  | 3.8           | .0   | 2.9  | 1.6       | .0   | 1.4  |
| No                              | 0.5         | .4        | .0   | .4   | .7      | .0   | .6   | .9            | .0   | .7   | .5        | .0   | .4   |

**Table 10 Teachers' teaching years**

|          | Pooled | District  |         | Gender |        | Qualification |           |
|----------|--------|-----------|---------|--------|--------|---------------|-----------|
|          |        | Ponkujaku | Aumisoe | Male   | Female | Trained       | Untrained |
| <i>N</i> | 825    | 270       | 555     | 669    | 156    | 290           | 535       |
| Mean     | 7.5    | 3.9       | 9.2     | 7.5    | 7.3    | 10.3          | 5.9       |
| S.D.     | 8.8    | 4.5       | 9.8     | 8.5    | 9.9    | 10.6          | 7.2       |
| Mode     | 1      | 1         | 3       | 1      | 1      | 1             | 1         |
| Medium   | 4      | 2         | 5       | 4      | 3      | 5             | 3         |
| Range    | 1-43   | 1-30      | 1-43    | 1-43   | 1-37   | 1-39          | 1-43      |

## **Appendix B**

Dear Head Teacher in Ponkujaku District

I, doctoral research student as well as former teacher, would like to request you to support my field research in Ponkujaku District. My research topic is teacher motivation. In other words, I am very interested in what makes basic school teachers committed and dedicated to teaching.

You find the questionnaires with a cover letter and envelopes for ALL teacher in your school. Would you give all teachers, including National Service personnel, Volunteer/Community Support Teachers, and retired teachers, one questionnaire and an envelop. You also take one questionnaire and an envelop. Then please advise them to read the cover letter carefully and fill the questionnaire. Please give teacher some time (for example 3 days) to fill in the questionnaire, by using their spare time.

After some time you set like 3 days, please collect sealed white envelopes with questionnaire from teachers and put them into the big brown envelop.

I appreciate it if you would bring the big envelop to Ponkujaku District Office where I am on the day you receive your payment in December.

I really appreciate your support.

Chisato Tanaka  
PhD candidate  
University of Sussex, UK  
0245-123491

Dear Teacher

Since I believe that the teacher is the key for good education, I, doctoral research student as well as former teacher, would like to request you to tell me about your life as a basic school teacher as much as you can. This questionnaire, which you are being requested to kindly complete, forms part of a teacher motivation study in two districts in this country.

Please do NOT write your name on the questionnaire. Your responses will be treated as confidential and you as an individual will not be identified. No one else but myself will see your questionnaire.

Please tell me your thinking as truthfully and accurately as you can so that I can get clear knowledge about the situation of basic teachers in Ghana. Please do not think what I would like to hear from you. I will be happy to communicate with you the general findings of this study when it is completed through your district office. Moreover, I would like to share the general findings with the GES/MoESS.

There are no right or wrong responses. Your honest views will be very much appreciated. Please, do not therefore discuss with anybody. Please tell me your own feelings and views. Once you finish filling this questionnaire, please remove this cover page for you, put the rest (questionnaire) in an envelop provided, seal it, and hand over the sealed envelop to your head teacher.

I am also interested in learning at a deeper level, teachers' lives. If you are willing to allow me to interview you, for example, please indicate your name and contact number, if available, at the end of the questionnaire.

There are ten pages of questions, apart from this first page. Questions are in both front and back sides of a paper. When there are options to choose, please choose by ticking the appropriate response or fill in with the relevant information. If you want to change a response please just cross it out and tick your preferred response.

Thanks for taking time to fill this questionnaire. I really appreciate your participation.

Chisato Tanaka  
PhD candidate  
University of Sussex, UK  
0245-123491

**First, I would like to ask you some questions about yourself and your family. Please tick (✓) the appropriate response or fill in the blank with the relevant information.**

- 1) Your age is [            ] years old.
- 2) Your gender is...    1. (    ) Male    2. (    ) Female
- 3) Your marital status is... 1. (    ) Single    2. (    ) Married    3. (    ) Separated  
4. (    ) Divorced    5. (    ) Widowed
- 4) How many children do you have?  
1. The number of your own [            ]. 2. The number of your dependents [            ]
- 5) Where is your birth place?  
1. Name of village or town [            ] 2. Name of district [            ]  
3. Name of region [            ] 4. Name of country [            ]
- 6) How many years have you been a teacher? [            ] years
- 7) How many years have you been teaching at your current school? [            ] years
- 8) How many schools have you worked at? [            ] school(s)
- 9) What is your highest educational / professional qualification?  
1. (    ) First degree or higher [Please specify:    ]    2. (    ) Diploma  
3. (    ) 3-year Post Secondary Certificate “A”    4. (    ) 2-year Post Secondary Certificate “A”  
5. (    ) 4-Year Post Middle Certificate “A”    6. (    ) 2-Year Post Middle Certificate “B”  
7. (    ) DBS (Polytechnic)    8. (    ) HND    9. (    ) Senior Secondary School Graduate  
10. (    ) GCE A Level    11. (    ) GCE O Level Others  
12. (    ) Others [ Please specify:    ]
- 10) Where did you receive your initial teacher training?  
1. (    ) from Teacher Training College (TTC). The name of TTC is [    ]  
2. (    ) from University.    The name of University [    ]  
3. (    ) Any other institutions [Please specify:    ]  
4. (    ) no training so far
- 11) Are you teaching currently as National Service, finishing university or polytechnic?  
1. (    ) Yes    2. (    ) No
- 12) Are you teaching currently as National Service after your retirement?  
1. (    ) Yes    2. (    ) No
- 13) Are you teaching currently through the Youth Employment Programme?  
1. (    ) Yes    2. (    ) No
- 14) Are you a volunteer teacher?  
1. (    ) Yes    2. (    ) No    If Yes, who pays you? [    ]
- 15) What is your rank in the Ghana Education Service (GES)? If you are not on GES payroll, please tick 11.  
(Not applicable).  
1. (    ) Pupil Teacher ( on GES payroll)    2. (    ) Superintendent (Supt.) II    3. (    ) Supt. I  
4. (    ) Senior Supt. II    5. (    ) Senior Supt. I    6. (    ) Principal Supt.  
7. (    ) Assistant Director II    8. (    ) Assistant Director I    9. (    ) Deputy Director  
10. (    ) Director II    11. (    ) Not applicable (**NOT** on GES payroll)

- 16) What did you mainly study (as your specialization) at the educational/professional institution where you obtained the highest educational/professional qualification?
1. ( ) Arts 2. ( ) Science / Mathematics 3. ( ) No specialization but General Studies  
4. ( ) Others [Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_]
- 17) What is your religion? [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]
- 18) The language you use at home with your family is...
1. ( ) Akan-Twi 2. ( ) Akan-Fanti 3. ( ) Akan-Akuapem 4. ( ) Dagaare-Wali  
5. ( ) Dagbali 6. ( ) Dangme 7. ( ) Ewe 8. ( ) Ga 9. ( ) Gonja  
10. ( ) Kasem 11. ( ) Nzema 12. ( ) Hausa and Moshie  
13. ( ) Others [ Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ ]
- 19) Your tribe is...
1. ( ) Akan 2. ( ) Fanti 3. ( ) Dagbani 4. ( ) Ewe 5. ( ) Ga  
6. ( ) Gonja 7. ( ) Others [ Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ ]
- 20) Please tick in the box opposite the highest level of education of your parents.
- |     | Father | Mother |                                   |
|-----|--------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.  | ( )    | ( )    | Did not go to school              |
| 2.  | ( )    | ( )    | Had some primary school           |
| 3.  | ( )    | ( )    | Finished primary school           |
| 4.  | ( )    | ( )    | Had some middle school            |
| 5.  | ( )    | ( )    | Finished middle school            |
| 6.  | ( )    | ( )    | Had some secondary school         |
| 7.  | ( )    | ( )    | Finished secondary school         |
| 8.  | ( )    | ( )    | Attended Teacher Training College |
| 9.  | ( )    | ( )    | Went to University                |
| 10. | ( )    | ( )    | Finished another kind of school   |
|     |        |        | [If so, please indicate _____ ]   |
| 11. | ( )    | ( )    | Do not know                       |
- 21) Your father's present occupation is.... (Please explain exactly the work he does. If deceased, write down the work he used to do, if you know)
- [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]
- 22) Your mother's present occupation is....(Please explain exactly the work she does If deceased write down the work she used to do, if you know)
- [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]
- 23) Has anyone had an influence on your becoming a teacher? 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No
- If Yes, who influenced you? [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

## Section 2.

Now I would like to ask you some questions about your life as teacher.

- 24) The name of your school is...[ \_\_\_\_\_ ] primary school.
- 25) You are a...
1. ( ) Classroom teacher 2. ( ) Head teacher as well as classroom teacher  
3. ( ) Head teacher, not teaching classes (if you tick here, please skip 26).

- 26) You teach class of  
 1. ( ) Primary 1 2. ( ) Primary 2 3. ( ) Primary 3 4. ( ) Primary 4  
 5. ( ) Primary 5 6. ( ) Primary 6  
 7. ( ) more than one grade Please specify [ ]
- 27) I plan to remain in teaching for [ ] year(s).
- 28) I plan to remain in teaching at basic level for [ ] year(s).
- 29) Who do you turn to for professional advice and support as a teacher?  
 [ ]
- 30) What is the main issue for which you seek professional advice and support?  
 [ ]
- 31) To whom do you think you are accountable as a teacher? Please tick as many as you are.  
 1. ( ) Headteacher 2. ( ) Circuit Supervisor 3. ( ) Parents/Guardians  
 4. Pupils ( ) 5. ( ) District Director 6. ( ) Community where school is located  
 7. ( ) Others Please specify [ ]
- 32) Are you a beneficiary of the government sponsored 'study leave' (study leave with pay)?  
 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No  
 If Yes, what did you study? [ ]  
 Which year did you complete? [ ]
- 33) Have you studied or are you currently studying to upgrade your qualification except 'study leave'?  
 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No  
 If Yes, which programme? [ ]  
 Which year did you complete or do you expect to complete? [ ]
- 34) Did you participate in induction/orientation training when you became a teacher in a district?  
 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No  
 If Yes, who provided the training? [ ] Which year? [ ]  
 How many days is the training? [ ] day(s)  
 What are main contents of the training? [ ]
- 35) How often have you participated in training(s) since 2002/03 (exclude induction/orientation)?  
 1. ( ) None 2. ( ) Once 3. ( ) 2-3 times 4. ( ) 4-5 times  
 5. ( ) More than 6 times 6. ( ) I do not know
- 36) Does your school get some support (financial, material, technical, etc.) from any organization apart from the Ghana Education Service (GES)?  
 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No  
 If Yes, which organization? [ ]  
 For what is your school supported? [ ]
- 37) Have you requested or are you planning to request a transfer from your current school?  
 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No  
 If Yes, what are your main reasons? [ ]  
 Where will you wish to be transferred? [ ]
- 38) Do you live in a community where your school is based during weekdays when the school is in session?  
 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No. If **No**, where do you live?  
 The name of community [ ] The name of district [ ]

39) Your accommodation is...

1. ( ) Your own/ your family's 2. ( ) You rent 3. ( ) Provided by school  
4. ( ) Provided by community 5. ( ) Others [Specify: \_\_\_\_\_]

40) How do you get to school?

1. ( ) On foot 2. ( ) By bicycle 3. ( ) By motorbike 4. ( ) By taxi  
5. ( ) By bus (e.g., trotro, lorri, market track) 6. ( ) Others [Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_]

41) How long does it take you to commute to school on weekdays during.....?

- Dry season [ ] hour(s) [ ] minutes  
Rainy season [ ] hour(s) [ ] minutes

42) Do you live with your spouse (husband or wife) on weekdays during school terms? If you do not have a spouse, please skip this question. 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No.

If **No**, any reasons? [ ]

43) Do you live with your children on weekdays during school terms? If you do not have children, please skip this. 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No.

If **No**, what is your reason? [ ]

44) Have you taken jobs during vacation periods since you became a teacher?

1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No

If Yes, what kind of job? [ ]

45) Do you supplement your income as a teacher by other activities (such as farming, trading, etc. during the school year? 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No

If Yes, please specify the type of activity. [ ]

46) Do you think you have health problems? 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No

If Yes, what are problems? [ ]

47) Are you a member of a teacher association? 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No

If Yes, which association are you a member of? [ ]

From which year? [ ]

Have you received any benefit as a member of that association? 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No

If Yes, what is it? [ ]

### Section 3.

**In this section, I would like to ask you about the village (community) in which your school is located. Please tick (✓) the appropriate response where options are provided with ( ) or fill in the blanks with the relevant information.**

48) What are other educational institutions in the village? Please tick as many as appropriate.

1. ( ) Kindergarten/nursery 2. ( ) Other primary school 3. ( ) Junior secondary School  
4. ( ) Senior secondary School  
5. ( ) Other educational setting [Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_]

49) What are languages spoken in this community? Please tick as many as appropriate.

1. ( ) Akan-Twi 2. ( ) Akan-Fanti 3. ( ) Akan-Akuapem 4. ( ) Dagaare-Wali  
5. ( ) Dagbali 6. ( ) Dangme 7. ( ) Ewe 8. ( ) Ga 9. ( ) Gonja  
10. ( ) Kasem 11. ( ) Nzema 12. ( ) Hausa and Moshie  
13. ( ) Others [ Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_]

- 50) Which of these languages do you speak fluently? [ ]
- 51) Which is the most used language in the village community? [ ]
- 52) What are the tribes of the people in the community? Please tick as many as appropriate.  
 1. ( ) Akan 2. ( ) Fanti 3. ( ) Dagbani 4. ( ) Ewe 5. ( ) Ga  
 6. ( ) Gonja 7. ( ) Others [ Please specify: ]
- 53) What is the predominant (popular) religion in the community? [ ]
- 54) What is the major entertainment you think in the community? [ ]
- 55) What do you think this community needs the most? Please tell me as many as 3.  
 1. [ ] 2. [ ] 3. [ ]

**Section 4.** In this section, I would like to ask how you feel about your job as a teacher. For each statement, please circle only ONE out of 5 (Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neither (N: you can not tell), Agree (A), or Strongly Agree (SA)) for the most appropriate to express your opinions.

Strongly Disagree (SD)   Disagree (D)   Neither (N)   Agree (A)   Strongly Agree (SA)

**1) Your perceptions toward your profession**

|  |    |   |   |   |    |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. I enjoy teaching.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. I sometimes feel it is a waste of time to try to do my best as a teacher.                                   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. After vacation, I am very reluctant to go back to teaching.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. If I can go back to my earlier days and start over again, I will choose to be a teacher in primary schools. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. I remember I felt disappointed when I was first posted to my school to begin my professional career.        | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6. I believe that teaching at primary level is my life-long career.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 7. I will continue teaching but at a higher level.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 8. Teaching is just a temporal job.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 9. I will leave the Ghana Education Service (GES) system as soon as possible.                                  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 10. I will leave the GES system eventually.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 11. I hope to go for further study.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 12. I hope to upgrade my professional qualification even if it means by self-financing.                        | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 13. The working conditions have become better for last 5 years.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 14. I believe the working conditions will be much better for next 5 years.                                     | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 15. I encourage my pupils to be a teacher.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 16. My family and friends are happy about my being a teacher.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 17. I am/will be happy to have my children as teacher.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 18. I am fully capable of handling my teaching work.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 19. My teaching work has a bad effect on my health.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 20. I think about today rather than tomorrow.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |

|                                       |                         |                        |                      |                                    |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Strongly<br/>Disagree<br/>(SD)</b> | <b>Disagree<br/>(D)</b> | <b>Neither<br/>(N)</b> | <b>Agree<br/>(A)</b> | <b>Strongly<br/>Agree<br/>(SA)</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|

**2) Your satisfaction**

|  |           |          |          |          |           |
|--|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. I am satisfied with my salary and allowance as a teacher.                               | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 2. I am satisfied with the posting to my current school.                                   | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 3. I am satisfied with working with children.  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 4. I am satisfied with my school facilities.   | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 5. I am satisfied with teaching and leaning materials available.                           | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 6. I am satisfied with how pupils participate in my classroom.                             | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 7. I am satisfied with my head teacher in the current school.                              | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 8. I am satisfied with my colleagues excluding the head teacher in the current school.     | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 9. I am satisfied with the opportunity for in-service training.                            | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 10. I am satisfied with my current living conditions.                                      | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 11. I am satisfied with the relationship with the village (community) where our school is. | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 12. I am satisfied with the relationship with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).        | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 13. I am satisfied with the relationship with School Management Committee (SMC).           | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 14. I am satisfied with my health conditions.  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 15. I am satisfied that teaching is a steady and secure job.                               | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 16. I am satisfied with my savings.  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 17. I am satisfied to see the progress of my pupils' learning.                             | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 18. I am satisfied with my workload as teacher.  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 19. I am satisfied with spare time I have as teacher.                                      | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 20. I am satisfied with how media projects teachers.                                       | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 21. I am satisfied with prestige and respect I have as teacher.                            | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 22. I am satisfied with the GES promotion system.  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 23. I am satisfied with the policy of transfer.  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 24. I am satisfied with opportunities to express my own ideas.                             | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 25. I am satisfied with retirement security in the teaching.                               | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 26. I am satisfied with safety (not life threatening).                                     | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 27. I am satisfied with health service I am entitled.                                      | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 28. I am satisfied with financial service (e.g. loans) I am entitled.                      | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 29. I am satisfied with food I can get and eat.  | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 30. I am satisfied with the intervention of Capitation Grant.                              | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 31. I am satisfied with the intervention of De-Worming (primary only).                     | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |

**3) Your school environment**

|   |           |          |          |          |           |
|---|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. My colleagues and I generally share ideas about teaching and learning. | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 2. My colleagues and I often work collaboratively in preparing lessons.   | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |
| 3. My colleagues and I often observe each other's lesson.                 | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> |

|  | Strongly<br>Disagree<br>(SD) | Disagree<br>(D) | Neither<br>(N) | Agree<br>(A) | Strongly<br>Agree<br>(SA) |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| 4. My colleagues and I use the same instruments to assess pupils' academic performance continuously. | SD                           | D               | N              | A            | SA                        |
| 5. I participate in school planning and decision-making fully.                                       | SD                           | D               | N              | A            | SA                        |
| 6. We have regular school-based training/workshop in our school.                                     | SD                           | D               | N              | A            | SA                        |
| 7. I know that my colleagues appreciate my effort and work.  | SD                           | D               | N              | A            | SA                        |
| 8. My colleagues and I often share our personal concerns.  | SD                           | D               | N              | A            | SA                        |
| 9. Without my colleagues, it is very difficult to be a teacher here.                                 | SD                           | D               | N              | A            | SA                        |

#### 4) Your teaching and learning

|   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. I use lots of different Teaching Learning Materials(TLMs) in my class.                             | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. I am able to make TLMs from local resources.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. My pupils understand my lessons well.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. I feel there is a language barrier between my pupils and myself.                                   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. Multi-grade teaching (combining more than one grade to teach) makes teaching difficult.            | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6. I often share my professional knowledge and skill with teachers in other schools in this district. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 7. I have access to information and support for the topic which I find difficult to teach.            | SD | D | N | A | SA |

#### 5) Your headteachers (If you are head teacher, please talk about yourself.)

|   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Without my headteacher, it is very difficult to be a teacher here.                                 | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. My headteacher calls staff meetings to discuss general school issues.                              | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. My headteacher calls school Management Committee (SMC) to discuss general school issues.           | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. My headteacher assists me in preparing my lesson notes.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. My headteacher observes my lessons and discusses his/her comments with me.                         | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6. My headteacher appreciates my work.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 7. My headteacher welcomes new things or any changes to improve the quality of teaching in my school. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 8. My headteacher shows understanding of my personal concerns.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 9. My headteacher recognizes/rewards good practice of teachers.                                       | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 10. My headteacher queries teachers' not attending school.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 11. My headteacher has a good relationship with the village community.                                | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 12. My headteacher introduced me to the SMC appropriately.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 13. My headteacher introduced me to the village community appropriately.                              | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 14. My headteacher provided induction for me, when I was posted here.                                 | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 15. My headteacher is a model of teachers.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 16. My headteacher treats teachers fairly.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 17. My headteacher manages/uses resources well.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |

Strongly Disagree (SD)      Disagree (D)      Neither (N)      Agree (A)      Strongly Agree (SA)

**6) Your pupils**

|   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. My pupils are often absent from school.                                    | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. My pupils are often late for school.                                       | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. Most of pupils are hungry in my classroom.                                 | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. My pupils communicate in English very well.                                | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. My pupils are often very busy to do house chores.                          | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6. My pupils have good understanding of my lessons.                           | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 7. I believe that my pupils want me to stay here as teacher as long as I can. | SD | D | N | A | SA |

**7) Your conditions**

|   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. I often feel sick during terms.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. I am always hungry while I am in school.                                     | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. I feel tired every day.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. I am always worried about food.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. I am always worried about my financial situation.                            | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6. The living condition now is much more challenging than that of my childhood. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 7. I travel most of weekends to see my family.                                  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 8. I have very little contact with school community during vacations.           | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 9. I always feel lonely.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |

**8) Parents/Guardians**

|  |    |   |   |   |    |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Without support from parents, it is very difficult to stay here as a teacher.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. Parents are interested in their children's education.                           | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. Parents give enough support for their children to learn.                        | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. Parents have financial difficulties.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. Parents are willing to share their concerns with me about children's education. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6. I believe parents appreciate my efforts to help their children.                 | SD | D | N | A | SA |

**9) Village (Community ) where your school is located**

|  |    |   |   |   |    |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Without support from village (community) members, it is very difficult to stay here as a teacher. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. I always inform village members when I am out of village.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. I always inform the village chief when I am out of village.                                       | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. I believe that community appreciates my being a teacher here.                                     | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. I believe that community wishes me to stay here as a teacher as long as I can.                    | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6. I believe that I play an important role in the community.   | SD | D | N | A | SA |

Strongly Disagree (SD)    Disagree (D)    Neither (N)    Agree (A)    Strongly Agree (SA)

### 10) Your School Management Committee (SMC)

|   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. My SMC is very active to manage our school.                            | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. My SMC has been trying to improve the conditions of my school.         | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. My SMC has been trying to improve the conditions of teachers.          | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. My SMC appreciates my work.  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. I believe that SMC wishes me to stay here as teacher as long as I can. | SD | D | N | A | SA |

### 11) Your district officials

|   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Without my Circuit Supervisor, it is difficult to stay here as a teacher.            | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2. My Circuit Supervisor often comes to our school to visit me.                         | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3. I like Circuit Supervisor's attitude towards me.                                     | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4. I appreciate my Circuit Supervisor's advice for me.                                  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5. My Circuit Supervisor knows my efforts and work and appreciates it.                  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6. My Circuit Supervisor knows my concerns as teacher.                                  | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 7. My Circuit Supervisor treats teachers in the Circuit fairly.                         | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 8. My District Education Office (DEO) distributes textbook and other materials on time. | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 9. My DEO deals with my professional concerns well.                                     | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 10. My DEO knows my efforts and work and appreciates it.                                | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 11. My DEO rewards teachers with good practice well.                                    | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 12. My DEO sanctions teachers with bad practice reasonably.                             | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 13. My DEO gives relevant information to me promptly.                                   | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 14. My DEO provides induction training for newly recruited basic school teachers.       | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 15. My DEO provides training for serving basic school teachers.                         | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 16. I believe that my DEO treats teachers fairly.                                       | SD | D | N | A | SA |

### Section 5. In this section, I would like to ask you about you experience and thoughts as a teacher in greater depth.

1. What were the major influences, reasons and/or events for becoming a teacher?

2. Do you think you are committed and dedicated to teaching? 1. ( ) Yes 2. ( ) No  
Why do you say so?

3. In your opinion, what makes you be committed and dedicated to teaching?

4. What are your goals in your life?

5. What are your professional goals?

6. How would you describe your career plan for your future? For example 5 years from now, where do you think you will be and what you will be doing?

**One year** later from today I will

**5 years** later from today I will

**15 years** later from today I will

**25 years** later from today I will

7. I am very glad to have your further comments on basic school teaching in Ghana, if you have any.

**Section 6** I would like to ask some of you to be a volunteer for my in-depth study. I would like to do interview you and/or live in the community where you stay to learn how you live as a teacher. If you are willing to share how you think and live with me, please indicate your name, contact address and/or number. Your information will not be disclosed in any place.

Your name is....[ ]

Your contact address is [ ]

Your contact number is... [ ]

*Thank you for your cooperation!*

## **Semi-structured Interviews**

### **For teachers**

1. What are reasons you reasons for your becoming a basic school teacher?
2. Why have you chosen to be a teacher in [district name]?
3. How do you find the job? Why do you say so?
4. How do you find your DEO?
5. What are your goals?
6. What makes you be committed to teaching?
7. Would you tell me anything regarding your job?

For ethnographic research

8. How do you describe your relationship with:  
    Your colleagues?  
    Your community?  
    And others?
9. Would you tell me about your life (history)?

For focus group discussion

10. Why did you decide to take the UTDBE/DBE?
11. How do you find the programme?
12. What are you going to do, after finishing the programme?

### **For community members**

1. How do people here think about sending children to school? Why do you so?
2. How do you think people here think about your teachers?

### **For officers**

1. Please tell me about the situation of teachers?
2. Are their any strategies to attract and motivate teachers?
3. How do you think you can encourage teachers?