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Ghana**



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Examining Professional Training and Continuing Education of Teachers in the Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana



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Abstract

Purpose: Policy document on continuing education and training of teachers after entering the workforce emphasizes that teachers are expected to partake in their career professional training. However, the Ministry of Education (2018), explained that the policy implementation challenges make the policy only good on paper and, make it appear ineffective in Ghana. The study examined the avenues for continuing education, the determinant variables, and the outcomes of continuing education in the region.

Methodology: Survey Design, qualitative and quantitative approaches, and Multi-Stage Cluster Sampling technique were used in addition to an interview guide and a questionnaire for the data. The analysis was done with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Scientists in the form of charts, percentages and quotations from key informants.

Findings: Avenues for continuing education were teacher licensing, inductions, schools and field visits, promotions, workshops, seminars and conferences, collegial discussions, peer group teaching, mentoring, and teaching portfolio. The determinant variables when correlated affected the avenues of continuing education. variables like gender, current educational qualification, the necessity to have incense before being qualified to teach, and being licensed as a teacher were positively related but statistically insignificant. However, marital status was negatively related to teachers' opinions but positively related to promotion. The outcomes of professional training and continuing education included enhanced certification, reflective practitioners, lifelong learning, progressive schemes of service, and subject specialisation. Also, the teachers' marital status had a consequential positive relationship with promotion, current education qualification, and license as a teacher.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: Continuing education, professional training, and continuous education skills are intertwined, an indication of its importance to the teacher and a wakeup call to the government for effective implementation of the policy and put in strategies to improve teachers' skills. Also, the Human Capital Theory has been tested and it reinforced the use of professional training and continuing education avenues for the career growth of the teachers, The Change Theory of In-service Training was also in consonance with the findings of the study and therefore, be upheld. These are significant contribution to knowledge. Teachers should give attention to continuing education and training in order to acquire more knowledge in the Region also, a call for vigorous sensitisation crusade by the study to persuade all teachers in the region to go for further education and training is in the right direction.

Keywords: *Training, Skills, Professional, Education Teacher,*

INTRODUCTION

According to Hyler & Gardner (2017), professional training and continuing education activities develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics of a teacher. This excludes initial teacher training; it could be a regular programme that teachers pursue individually in higher institutions of learning or a mass training programme that they continually undertake in tertiary institutions. Also, it could be a one-off or continuous in-service training that teachers pursue on content, and pedagogy which may be headed by mentors, facilitators or collaboratively with peers. Also, effective professional training among teachers leads to education continuity of experienced teachers. Unfortunately, one of the greatest challenges of teacher educators face is the lack a compelling road-map to follow.

The policy of professional training and education streamlines and makes it a bedrock for sharpening the knowledge and skills of teachers. This policy offers an avenue in the view of Ministry of Education (2018) to transform teachers at the pre-tertiary level into a highly qualified learning team who are motivated to deliver and it becomes extremely important where Hyler & Gardner (2017), explained that public policy makers, politicians, philanthropists, the media and 'think tanks across the political spectrum have continued to assert that the quality of teachers must improve. Their insistence is reinforced. Indeed, many contend that the efficiency and equity of schooling now depends on having highly effective teachers in the classrooms making teacher preparation a target ... Many feels that problems related to education are directly connected to teacher preparation and the professional training.

Ministry of Education (2018) indicated that, Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Training and Continuing Education and Management Policy formulated in 2012 in Ghana offered and re-enforced the career growth through continuous professional training and growth for teachers. The policy envisages and streamlines professional training and continuing education and makes it a bedrock for sharpening the knowledge and skills of teachers. This policy offers an avenue in the view of Ministry of Education (2018) to transform teachers at the pre-tertiary level into a highly qualified learning team who are motivated to deliver. This became extremely important where Imig (2012) explained that public policy makers, politicians, philanthropists, the media and think tanks across the political spectrum have continued to assert that the quality of teachers must improve. Indeed, many contend that the efficiency and equity of schooling now depends on having highly effective teachers in the classrooms making teacher preparation a target. Many feels that problems related to education are directly connected to teacher preparation and the professional development of experienced teachers.

However, educational landscape evolves in response to the changing needs of society, it influences and requires teachers to continuously learn to update their skills to perform their tasks. The working of every organization is fluid with a constantly changing tasks of the employees. So, improved skills of the employees get to be on the search through training where staff development becomes inevitable and has to be continually developed and offered to meet the

changing needs and emerging opportunities (Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner (2017). According to Diedong, Abdulai and Alhassan (2019) this can be done via classes, workshops, attending professional and industrial conferences, or earning a higher certificate to expand one's knowledge in a chosen field.

When six Anglophone countries, the Gambia, Lesotho, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Zambia were studied by Education International (2007), it was found that the pre-service training was observed not to be enough for teachers to meet the changing demand of the teaching profession in those countries. Thus, continuous professional training could be a leverage to addressing this deficit in their career growth, also improves teacher's confidence, and adds to his credibility and also attaining professional designation. The career growth of teachers is dependent on the knowledge, skills and experience that teachers have acquired through professional development in the profession which gives them the opportunity to ascend progressively through the organizational ladder in the Ghana Education Service but the policy for continuing education of teachers and its implementation seemed to be ineffective as reported by Ministry of Education, there concrete measures need to be put in place for effective implantation (MOE, 2018).

Also, on the contrary, bottom-up Professional Education and Training is designed in response to a gap in teachers' skills and knowledge where the teachers co-create knowledge in redress to their professional needs (Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner, 2017). Teaching and Learning International Survey (2020) in its study of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development countries indicated that mentoring is one of the bottom-up professional training and continuing education and growth. Notwithstanding these benefits of professional training and continuing education and growth, Anan (2020) posited that the challenge of policy implementation on continuous professional education and training in Ghana has been irregular, under-funded and the participation of teachers in In-service Education and Training programmes have not been mandatory. Even the policy requires head teachers to take records of participation of their staff and send the report to their respective Districts.

Continuous Professional Education and Training in the region appears ineffective in supporting changes in the work of the teacher and their career growth and this ineffectiveness is the cause of the inconsistent professional training and continuing education of teachers, affecting the career growth among them in the region (Akpem, Tetteh and Adom, (2021); Jangu, (2020); Jangu, (2014). It has also a detrimental effect on the forms of professional education, training and development taking place or the influence it has on the career growth of teachers in the Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Thus, it is important to assess the professional education and continuous training of teachers in Junior High Schools in Upper West Region of Ghana.

Theoretical Bases

The study was guided by Human Capital theory by Alfred Schultz (1961) and change theory of In-service Training by Garuba (2004). Human Capital Theory guides duty bearers to examine the relationship between investment and education. The idea is that, individuals acquire skills (human capital) that will make them more productive (Schultz, 1961) and that the improved productivity then leads to greater income where there seemed a universal connection between human capital, productivity, and income. The Human Capital Theory envisages that investing in people such as teachers to enable them participate in these avenues of professional training and continuing education are ways of enhancing their human capital- knowledge, skills, competencies and experiences. The human capital will make teachers more skilled (Schultz, 1961).

The Framework further indicated that if teachers continuously participate in these professional training and continuing education avenues and maximize the needed benefits, that will lead to positive outcomes of professional development for them including enhanced certification and recertification, the teachers become reflective practitioners, they pursue lifelong learning, they have progressive scheme of service, acquire improved technological, pedagogical content knowledge, they have subject specialization, and improved professional practice, values and ethics which the Human Capital Theory referred to as human capital.

Blair (2018) underscored that what accounts for the productivity differences among employees is the additional training of skilled workers that makes them more productive. (Blair, 2018). The theory assumes that employees are always rational in decision making and will only invest in professional training and continuing education as long as the benefits or valuables outweigh the costs. This means individuals will estimate the future gains and costs from a further increase in human capital investment and make the rational decisions (Hung and Ramsden, 2021). This means that teachers have already acquired human capital since they possess secondary and teacher training qualification already.

The theory allowed the study to highlight the inherent and innate characteristics such as knowledge, skills and competence. Teachers have to improve upon their skills and knowledge to be effective on their work. the deficiencies of human capital theory that undermine the performance of teachers and service training can still be called to question in the face of changing social needs and demands of living in the modern world of technological advancement'. As a result, this necessitated the Change Theory of In-Service Training as the second theory to anchor the study for the continuous change process to occur in order for the teachers to experience career growth.

The change theory of In-service Training by Garuba (2004) cited in Donkor and Banki (2017) explained that, at all stages of life change must occur and the individual must acquire more skills and training to improve his or way of doing things. The theory further explained that every

system should avoid what the author termed ‘caste system’ where upward mobility is not allowed. Many authors like (Blair, 2018), and (Hung and Ramsden, 2021) all collaborated this assertion. The relevance of the theory to the study cannot be over emphasised. All teacher within or out Ghana Education service need to improve their skills and knowledge for effective delivery. Applying this theory, upward mobility within the service is allowed for teachers to improve their lots.

These challenges of teachers which created deficiencies in the work of teachers are what the Change Theory of In-service Training alluded to in the defective pillar of the theory. Taking cognizance of these determinants and making continuous efforts in addressing the challenges when organizing professional training and continuing education, avenues for teachers are inevitable. Thus, frequently organizing these avenues of professional education and training are what the Change Theory of In-service Training alluded to in the problem-solving pillar of the theory. These, when done will lead to the career growth of teachers that brings improvement in the work they do and thereby enhancing the performances of the students in Junior High Schools in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed Survey/ cross-sectional design. Thus, this design permitted collecting diverse data using different methods and instruments to provide thorough, detailed and exhaustive understanding of the issues under investigation. Thus, this design is more or less aligned to the Pragmatic paradigm since both are situated within the mixed method approach. The targeted population a number of stakeholders which are summarized or visualized on the below. Also, the study used multi-stage cluster sampling to sample 6 circuits per district to avoid the said errors.

Table 1: Samples of the Selected Districts

1	722	162
Jirapa Municipality	239	54
Lawra Municipality	212	48
Dafiama Bussie Issah District	100	22
Lambussie-Karni District	110	25
TOTAL	1383	310

Source: Fieldwork 2020

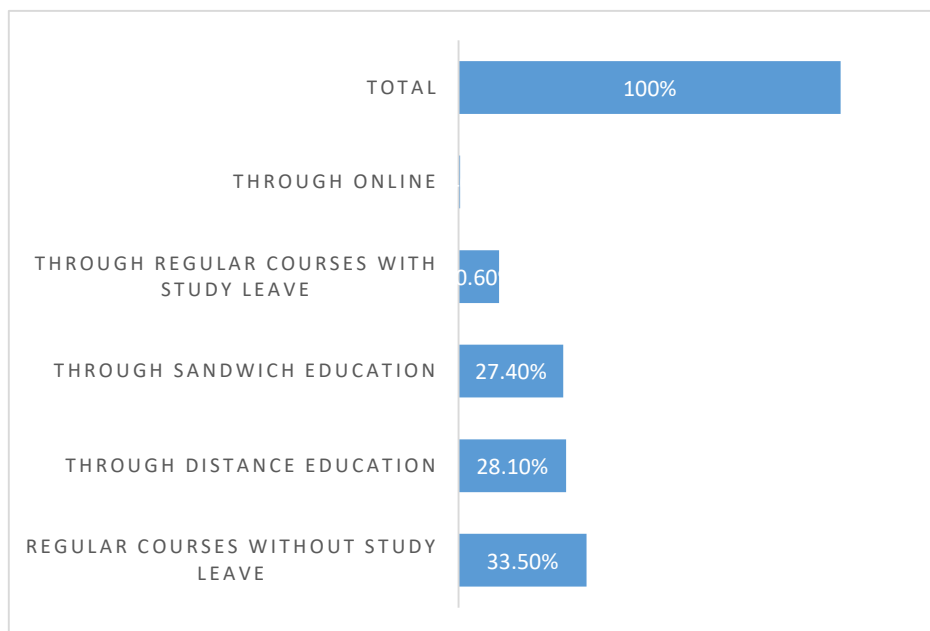
Findings and Discussions

Teachers Earlier Qualification Verses Current Qualifications in the Teaching Profession

The revision of the entry requirement to Diploma in the 2004 educational reform where the first batch were turned out in 2007 led to the domination of the Diploma entrants into the teaching profession. This meant that the Ghana Education Service had kept pace with the directive on making the Diploma as the basic entry requirement into the teaching profession in Upper West Region.

Similarly, the teachers teaching in the Junior High Schools are dominated by Diploma holders (45.1%) followed by First degree holders (44.5%). So, the teacher population that has degree and above qualifications was 52.3% when the First degree, PGDE and Masters' holders are put together). These qualifications are higher and aided these teachers to rise faster in their career growth. here none of the respondents had Masters' degree qualification.

Figure 1: Mode of Pursuing Current qualification



Source: Fieldwork 2020

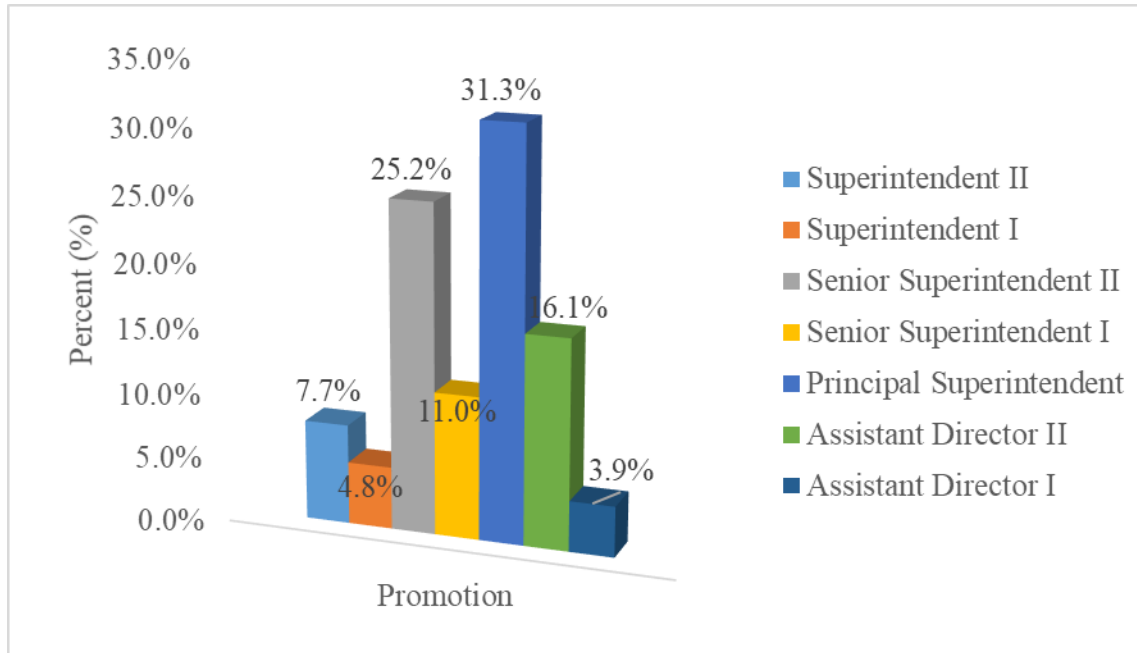
The mode of pursuing further training is illustrated on the chart above. These included online studies, regular courses with study leave, through sandwich courses, through distance education and through regular courses without study leave. All these were made available for teachers who wish to continue developing their skills for effective teaching in the region. This was necessary and could encourage the 47.7% of the respondents as indicated earlier who were still holding qualifications below First Degree and may be required to further their education, thereby enhancing their career growth in the teaching profession.

Avenues of Professional Training and Continuing Education

Promotions

Promotions were another professional training and continuing education avenue for the career growth of teachers that the study found. The current ranks that each respondent was promoted to in the Ghana Education Service as shown in Figure 3 below:

Figure 2: Current Ranks of Respondents



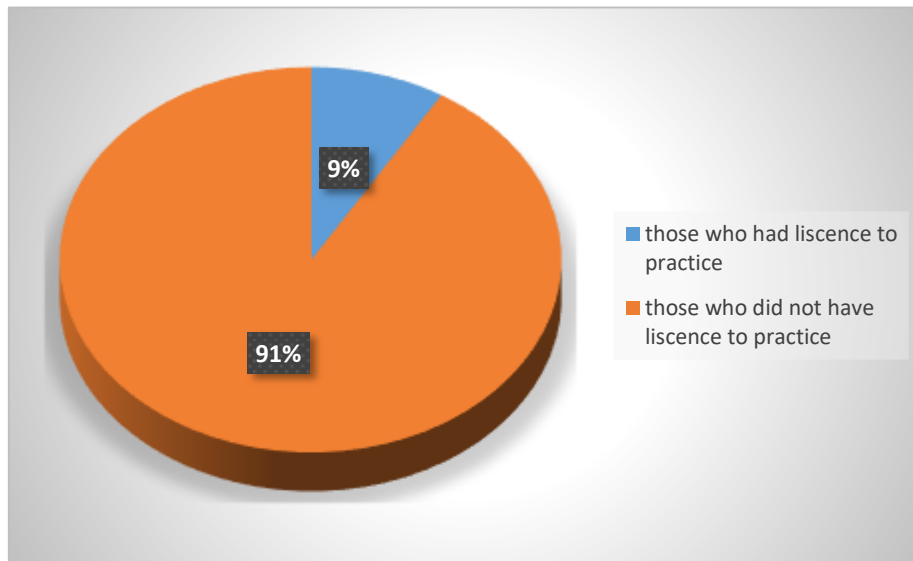
Source: Fieldwork (2020).

From the above, the current ranks of the respondents showed that the least rank in the scheme of service in the Ghana Education Service which was Superintendent II. The second least rank as Superintendent I. This meant that Principal Superintendent Rank had the highest respondents then followed by AD II. It showed that, the career growth of the teachers was not increasing speedily in the region. Meanwhile, the growth pillar in the Change Theory of In-service Training posited that a better professionally developed employees usually demonstrate more perseverance, lower propensities for resignation or absence (Garuba 2004; Hung & Ramsden, 2021).

Teacher Licensing

Teacher licensing was one of the professional training and continuing education avenue investigated in this study.

Figure 3: Responses on Licence to practice



Source: Fieldwork 2020

This meant that majority of the teacher did not have teacher license but they are in the Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The implication is that, practicing teachers feared that if they were required to acquire the license through exams, they may have some of them failing the license examination. This was one of the major reasons why 91% of Junior High Schools in the Upper West Region teachers did not have teachers license.

In spite the fact that majority did not have, as indicated on the chart, all the teachers acknowledged the fact that, licensing sieves quality teachers into the teaching profession, licensing gives teachers' recognition locally and internationally, and also licensing of makes teachers more responsible for their own action or unprofessional conduct which can lead to the seizure of one's license and barring the said teacher from practice.

Induction

Induction was one of the professional training and continuing education avenues the study found out. 73.2% endorsement of induction services by the respondents showed that teachers who were on transfer to new schools and newly trained teachers posted to schools expected induction services to integrate them appropriately into the new schools. This was meant to orientate these teachers to enable them to acclimatize to the new staff, environment, students, school management committee and the community. It was found that induction promotes friendly school climate, where the new teachers eschew isolation and conduct their school activities in a cordial manner.

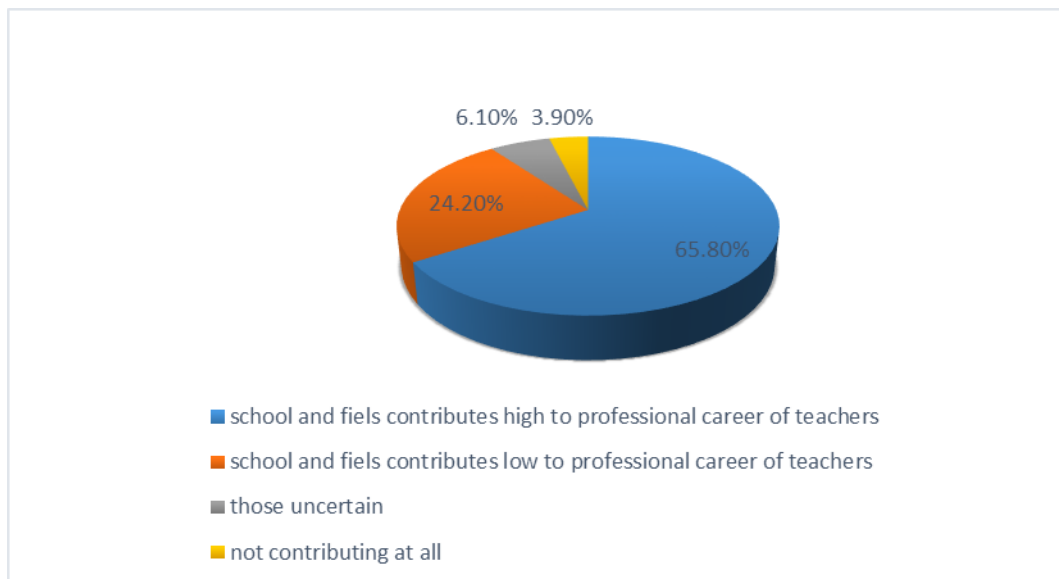
This was collaborated by Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017) assertion that induction fosters cordial relationship among teacher participants. However, the study found that there were times educational authorities whether at the school, District or Municipal Education Office level

failed to organize induction services for teachers who were on transfer to new schools or newly trained teachers posted to schools. It was the basis for some of the respondents to indicate low influence (17.1%) uncertainty (5.2%) and without any influence (4.5%) of the influence of induction to inducing their professional training and continuing education.

School and Field Visit

School and field visit as one of the professional training and continuing education avenues was brought to light when the respondents noted that school and field visit contributes ‘high’ to the professional career of teachers. Also, a section of the respondents said it contributes ‘low’ to their professional training and continuing education, while some were uncertain, some them noted that school and field visit was not all contributing to their professional training and continuing education. The following chart shows the responses:

Figure 4: Responses on School and Field Visits



Source: Field work 2020

The 65.8% agreement of respondents of school and field visit having ‘high’ contribution to the professional training and continuing education of teachers indicated that teachers learn and share their expertise on the teaching profession whether it is the teachers visiting another school and/or going on an excursion for deliberation on their professional needs or it is officials of the education offices and teacher unions visiting the respective schools the teachers teach.

Thus, the various teacher union leaders and education authorities from the various education offices do not only visit schools for supervision or fault finding from teachers, but to share with them on their professional needs that shape their work. This was in contradiction with Valiandes and Neophytou (2017) that saw school and field visits to be only teachers visiting other schools

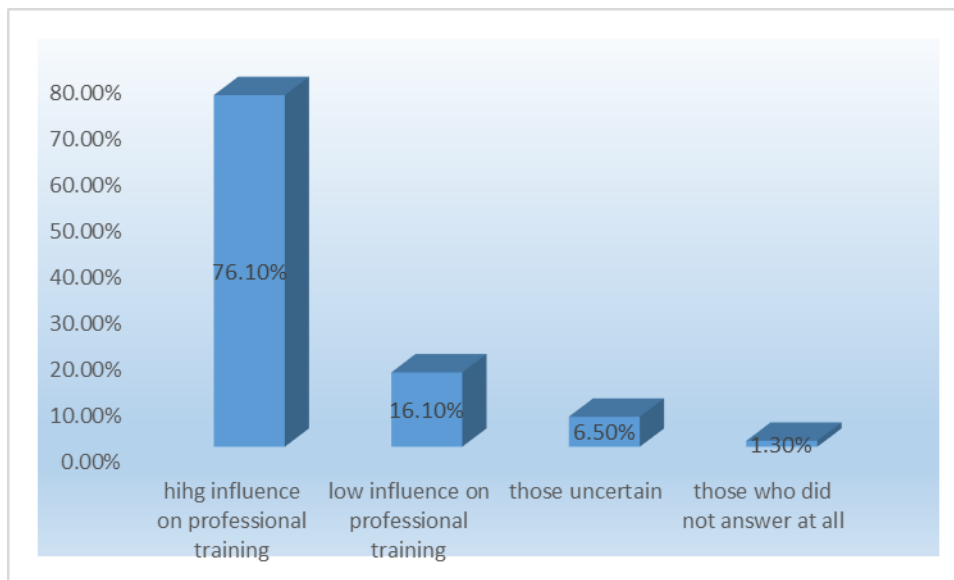
or going on excursion, and not education authorities or teacher union leaders visiting the schools to promote professional training and continuing education of teachers.

However, there were concerns from teachers that saw the visits by the education authorities to schools as overly focused on fault finding rather than applauding teachers for the good work they were doing. This led to the 24.2% of respondents taking school and field visit to have ‘low’ contribution to their professional development, the 6.1% of respondents not being ‘certain’ and 3.9% saying that school and field visit does ‘not at all’ contribute to their professional development.

Workshops, Seminars and Conferences

Workshops, seminars and conferences were another professional training and continuing education avenue. The chart below shows the responses in terms of the influence of workshops, Seminars and conferences:

Figure 5: Influence of Workshops, Seminars and Conferences



The 76.1% agreement was indicative of the learning opportunities that teachers obtain from workshops, seminars and conferences through which the respondents overcome their professional training and continuing education gaps in the teaching profession.

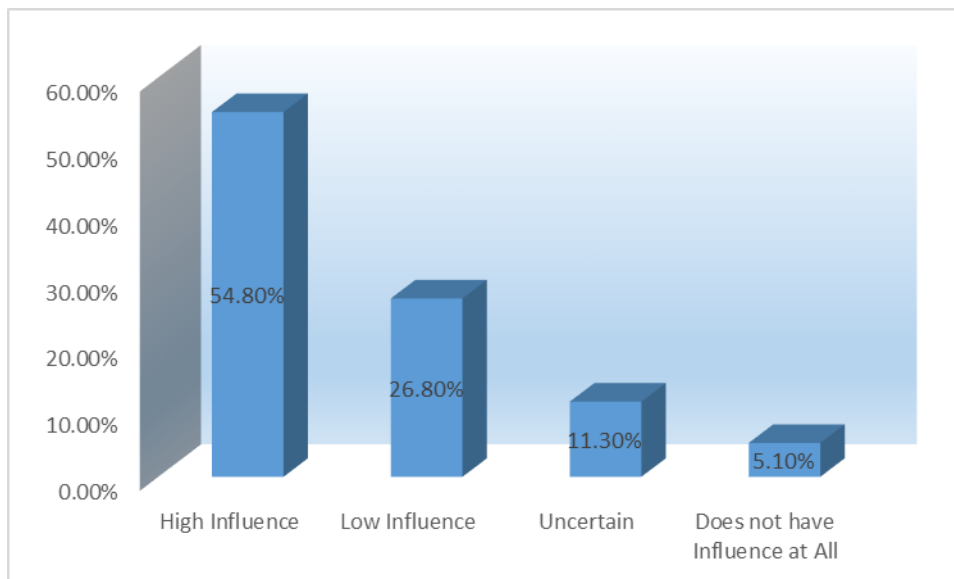
The workshops, seminars and conferences were refresher training programmes where the problem-solving pillar in the Change Theory of In-service Training entreats teachers to use these continuous training avenues as a window of opportunity and when maximized can fill the gap in new skills of the teachers (Garuba, 2004; Asare 2014; NaCCA, 2019). Thus, through workshops, seminars and conferences, teachers clarify issues and seek explanations on topics that hinge on their professional needs in the JHSs in the Upper West Region of Ghana. In the words of Blair (2018), this makes Human Capital Theory underscored that what accounts for the productivity

differences among employees is the additional training of skilled workers that makes them more productive. Thus, Forde and McMahon (2019) concurred that workshops update the knowledge of teachers. However, this does not take away the challenge that, the cost implication was a key hindrance to the participation of teachers in workshops, seminars and conferences. This became the basis of the respondents saying that workshops, seminars and conferences had ‘low’, ‘uncertain’ and ‘not at all’ influenced their professional training and continuing education respectively.

Collegial Discussion

Collegial discussion was also one of the informal professional training and continuing education avenues available to teachers of Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The Chart below indicate the influence of collegial discussions:

Figure 6: Influence of collegial Discussions on Professional Training



Source: Fieldwork, 2020

The 54.8% of respondents’ agreement showed that more than half of the respondents believed in collegial discussion in resolving their professional training and continuing education challenges in Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana. This is because when teachers are confronted with certain difficulties in the profession, they may engage their colleagues in consultations and discussions in order to help find solutions to those challenges encountered.

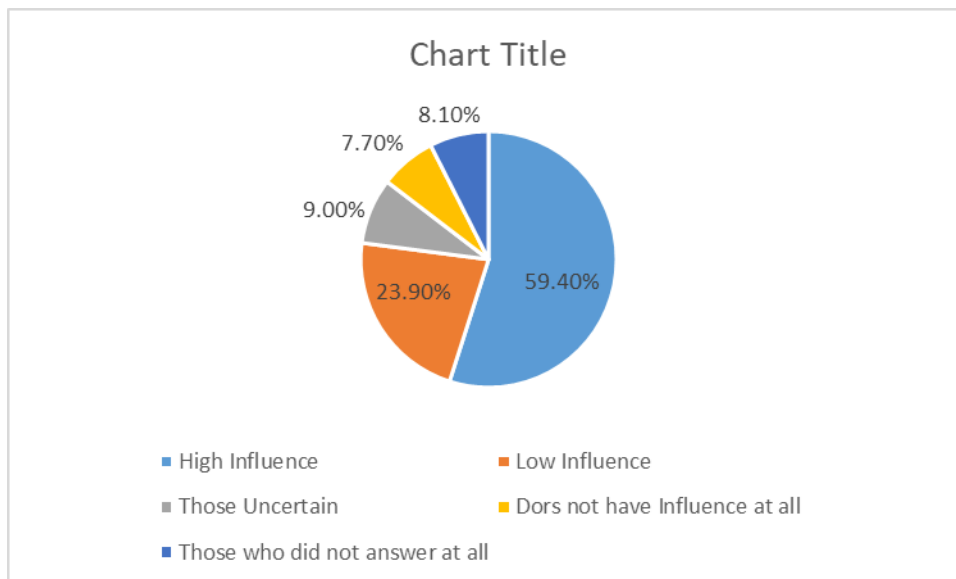
Those teacher respondents who indicated that collegial discussion had ‘low’ influence, the respondents who were ‘uncertain and those noting collegial discussion not to have any influence ‘at all’ as shown above on their professional training and continuing education had their fears borne out of instances of jealousy, hatred, mistrust and backbiting among the teachers. These make it challenging for teachers in one school or with teachers from other schools to engage in

collegial discussions that foster their professional training and continuing education in Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The case where a head teacher becomes the centre of the controversies makes it complex for teachers to come together in discussing central issues to their professional training and continuing education let alone the tangential ones. This was in consonance with Kwarteng (2014, p.5) that indicated that ‘the level of autocracy in schools is jeopardizing the existence of collegiality and reciprocity of respect’ for the professional training and continuing education of teachers.

Peer-group Teaching

Another important avenue which has an influence on professional training is the peer-group teaching available to teachers in Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The chart below indicates the extent of influence on professional training avenue:

Figure 7: Influence of Peer Group Teaching on Professional Training



Source: Fieldwork 2020

The 59.4% attestation of the respondents’ agreement that peer-group teaching had ‘high’ inducement on their professional training and continuing education pointed out the fact that teachers on their own accord can independently initiate and facilitate training activities within a classroom for their professional training and continuing education. This is particularly the case since peer-group teaching involves teachers taking turns to teach their colleagues including explaining content that is difficult for the understanding of their colleagues in the model classroom.

This may come at no cost to the participating teacher students since each teacher presenting does not charge the colleagues. Each of the teachers who is to present, identifies an area he or she is competent in and yet within the difficult areas that the participating teachers have all agreed on

as a challenging area. Thus, when any of them takes turns to deliver their part, the colleagues sitting as students ask questions whilst the one delivering answers and the vice versa.

The case where the respondents of 23.9%, 9% and 7.7% had ‘low’, were ‘uncertain’ and did not ‘at all’ respectively believed that peer-group teaching could influence their professional training and continuing education, was because of the challenge that in peer-group teaching, extroverts may tend to dominate the introverts if not properly managed. However, the one presenting has to assume a firm and fair posture such that everyone whether as a participating teacher or participating student has a fair share of time to clarify issues that baffle him or her. Similarly, there were concerns from the respondents that in some cases, peer-group teaching was difficult to be organized because of pride among the teachers. The feeling of superiority complex and inferiority complex makes it a challenge for some teachers to reach out to one another. Thus, Francis and Gould (2014) study upheld that in peer-group teaching, ‘the purpose of this ... is to develop your and their teaching rather than finding faults.’

Belonging to Professional Unions

Belonging to professional unions was another professional training and continuing education avenue found to be available for the professionalism of teachers in the Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana. This was the case, when 67.4% of the teachers’ endorsed that, belonging to a professional union had ‘high’ inducement on their professional training and continuing education. Also, 17.4% of the respondents said that belonging to professional unions had ‘low’ inducement on their professional training and continuing education, 7.7% of the respondents were ‘uncertain’ and 7.4% of the respondents said belonging to a professional union did not ‘at all’ have any influence on their professional development. The 67.4% endorsement was evident that teachers learn a lot from belonging to either their teacher unions such as GNAT, NAGRAT and CCT or teacher subject unions.

When the teacher respondents were asked whether their professional unions organized professional training and continuing education training for them, 47.7% of them ‘agreed’, 30% of them ‘disagreed’ and 22.3% of them were ‘uncertain’. This indicated that a larger number of the respondents (47.7%) indicated that their teacher unions organized professional training and continuing education training sessions for them. This was because the respondents had participated or known about the occurrences of such training sessions. The 22.3% who were ‘uncertain’ was because they had not heard of such training sessions and/or had not availed themselves for such training and therefore could not attest to the relevance of such training programmes to teachers’ professional development. Similarly, the 30% of respondents who ‘disagreed’ were possibly not satisfied with the nature, relevance and frequency of professional development training sessions organized by the unions for their members in the Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

Mentoring

Mentoring was another professional development avenue that enhanced the professional training and continuing education of the teachers where 71% of the respondents said it had ‘high’ support on their professional training and continuing education. Also, 18.1% of the respondents said mentoring had ‘low’ inducement on their professional development, 5.5% of them were ‘uncertain’ and 4.5% said mentoring did not ‘at all’ have inducement on their professional training and continuing education. The majority of the teachers (71%) believed colleagues of theirs who have garnered enough experiences in the teaching career have enough expertise which when made available to colleague teachers particularly, the inexperienced ones, would promote professional learning.

Also, this does not only afford the teachers to learn from these mentors, but to respect the roles of these mentors in the professional learning process. This is why the National Teaching Council (2018a) emphasized on trained mentors for effective mentoring to take place that meets the National Teaching Standards.

Teaching Portfolio

Lastly, teaching portfolio was one other professional training and continuing education avenue available to teachers where 73.2% of the respondents said it had ‘high’ enhancement on their professional training and continuing education. Also, 14.8% of the respondents indicated that teaching portfolio had ‘low’ inducement on their professional training and continuing education, 9% of them were ‘uncertain’ and only 2.9% of the respondents said teaching portfolio did not ‘at all’ influence their professional training and continuing education. The 73.2% endorsement as ‘high’ from the respondents showed that teachers deemed teaching portfolio as critical in keeping works of their teaching career which serves as pieces of evidence of the challenges, successes and prospects of their career.

The teaching portfolio allows teachers to identify the difficulties and challenges of their work for corrective measures to be taken. This does not only enhance teaching and learning outcomes but positions the teachers to keep track and be abreast of the progress in their teaching career. This involves teachers keeping records of the performances of their students, places where past students either work or school, trends of exams questions, colleagues who are model stars, areas of the teachers that need improvement and any other thing that the teachers deem relevant in keeping for reference in their teaching career. This was upheld by Hayford (2019) study that teaching portfolio is a source of continuous professional development from induction to the end of the career of the teacher.

Pearson Correlation of Determinants of Professional Training and Continuing Education with Professional Training Avenues.

This section presents the findings on the effect of determinants of professional training of teachers on professional training and continues education avenues using Pearson Correlation Statistical Test.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation of Gender, Age, Marital Status, Household Size and Qualification in Teaching Profession with Professional Training Avenues

Determinants	Statistical Test	Avenues of Professional Training and continuous education			
		Promotions	Current Education Qualification	Necessity for every teacher to have a license before qualified to teach	Teacher License
Gender	Pearson Correlation	0.061	0.002	0.075	0.083
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.285	0.970	0.186	0.144
	N	310	310	310	310
Age	Pearson Correlation	0.500**	0.217**	-0.055	0.174**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.337	0.002
	N	310	310	310	310
Marital Status	Pearson Correlation	0.312**	0.169**	-0.018	0.226**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.003	0.750	0.000
	N	310	310	310	310
	Pearson	0.192**	0.148**	0.006	0.031

Household Size	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.009	0.919	0.586
	N	310	310	310	310
Entry Education qualification into the teaching profession	Pearson Correlation	-0.007	-0.026	0.013	0.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.900	0.648	0.826	0.988
	N	310	310	310	310

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

NB: *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

- Each determinant was correlated with the avenues for professional development of teachers.

From Table 1 the determinants of professional training and continues education of teachers had mixed (positive and negative) effect on the formal avenues of professional development where some of the statistical results of the variables measured were significantly related whilst others were not at the 0.01 and or 0.05 levels (2-tailed). For example, the effect of gender on formal avenues of professional training and continues education of teachers was found to be positively related on promotion (0.061; p -value>0.05); current education qualification (0.002; p -value>0, 05); necessity for every teacher to have a license before being qualified to teach (0.075; p -value>0.05) and licensed as a teacher (0.083; p -value>0.05). The statistical results implied that gender as a determinant though positively related, does not have significant effect on the professional training and continuing education avenues of teachers in JHSs in the Upper West Region of Ghana. This is because many (69%) of the respondents were males whilst few (31%) of them were females. This meant that there were many male teachers than females in Junior High Schools in the Upper West Region of Ghana. This contradicted Li and Dervin (2018) findings that in Finland, female teachers dominated the males at the basic level.

Also, from Table 3, the effect of the ages of teachers on formal professional training and continues education avenues showed that teachers' ages have a positive relationship with

promotion (0.500; p -value<0.01); current education qualification (0.217; p -value<0.01); and licensed as a teacher (0.174; p -value<0.01). However, it showed a negative relation with teachers' opinion about the necessity for every teacher to have a license before being qualified to teach (-0.055; p -value>0.05). The statistical findings implication is that, the ages of teachers have a significant effect on their promotion, current education qualification, licensed as a teacher but do not significantly make licensing a necessity for every teacher before being qualified to teach in the JHSs at the 0.01 and or 0.05 levels (2-tailed). This was because many (63%) of the respondents were between the ages of 18 to 35 years old.

This category of teachers falls within the youthful age cohort and may be deemed inexperienced in the teaching profession since they may not have taught for long. The implication is that these teachers would need more continuous and regular professional training and continuing education training to navigate their professional difficulties. This is being acknowledged by Mereku (2016). Thus, offering them such professional training and continues education means that they will gather more skills, knowledge and experience to boost their performance and aid in their career growth. This is because this youthful teacher population still have longer years to work in the teaching field before retirement, provided they do not quit the teaching profession. However, it is worth acknowledging that their youthful exuberance has to be managed and accommodated well by educational authorities in order not to endanger their professional training and continues education.

Similarly, about 32.9% of the respondents were from the ages of 36 to 50 years old. This category of teachers falls within the middle age group who have garnered a lot of experience in the teaching profession. The implication is that when education authorities offer them the opportunities to pursue continuous and regular professional development, they could serve as mentors and facilitators to their colleague teachers.

Lastly, 4.1% of the respondents were 51 to 59 years old. The implication is that, though few, this category of teachers had gathered more than enough experience having taught for long in the teaching profession. Hence, their experiences can then be tapped into by education authorities as resource persons, facilitators, mentors, head teachers, circuit supervisors and in other management positions that are akin to improving teachers' professional development in JHSs. However, it must be noted that as these teachers are nearing retirement, if education authorities do not persuade them enough, they may not see the need for offering such services or pursuing professional training and continuing education trainings. Also, as this category of teachers will soon retire, that would create teaching vacancies. Notwithstanding, it is refreshing to note that these teachers were in the minority (4.1%) and their retirement may not create large teaching vacancies in the JHSs in the Upper West Region. This is being acknowledged by Mereku (2016).

For marital status in Table 5, the study found that teachers' marital status has a consequential positive relationship on promotion (0.312; p -value<0.01); current education qualification (0.169; p -value<0.01); and licensed as a teacher (0.226; p -value<0.01). However, marital status was

negatively related to the teachers' opinion about the necessity for every teacher to be licensed before being qualified to teach (-0.018 ; $p\text{-value}>0.05$). Statistically, it implies that teachers' marital status significantly affects their promotion, current education qualification and licensed as teachers. However, marital status does not significantly affect their opinion on the necessity for every teacher to be licensed before being qualified to teach at the 0.01 and or 0.5 levels (2-tailed).

From the descriptive statistics, it was found that 19.4% of the respondents were single, 6.1% were cohabitating, 71.9% were married, 1.3% were separated and another 1.3% were widows. Thus, majority of teachers who were married (71.9%) had mixed implications on the couples' choice of formal professional training and continuing education avenues. Thus, when the couples are not financially sound and are all teachers, one may have to sacrifice for the other in opting for professional training and continuing education avenues particularly when the participants are to sponsor out of their pockets. Also, even when only one partner of the couple is a teacher, he or she may decline in taking up certain professional training and continues education avenues because of marital disagreement, financial difficulties, and burden of sickness of the other party or household chores. This is in support of Adasi (2017). However, in rare cases, the results could be significant if the couple are united and collaborate to pool resources in support of the professional training and continues education for all.

The effect of teachers' household size on professional training and continues education avenues, the results disclosed that there exists a positive relationship between teachers' household size and promotion (0.192 ; $p\text{-value}<0.01$); current education qualification (0.148 ; $p\text{-value}<0.01$); the necessity for every teacher to be licensed before being qualified to teach (0.006 ; $p\text{-value}>0.05$) and licensed as a teacher (0.031 ; $p\text{-value}>0.05$). This statistically implied that teachers' household size has a significant positive effect on promotion, and current education qualification at 0.01 level (2-tailed) but not statistically significant to that of the necessity for every teacher to be licensed before being qualified to teach and licensed as a teacher at the 0.01 and or 0.05 levels (2-tailed).

The descriptive results showed that 29.4% of the teacher respondents had more than five household size, 19.7% had five household size, 21.9% of them had four household size, and 18.1% of the respondents had three household size. Also, 5.8% of the respondents had two household size and only 5.2% of respondents had one household size. This meant that majority of teachers (89.1%) had their household size of three and more and the implication is that the burden of care may limit the ability of this category of teachers to have enough resources to still finance their professional training and continues education programmes in JHSs in the Upper West Region of Ghana. As a result, this endorsed ISRC (2009) findings on the Resource Dilution Hypothesis that when the size of household increases the amount of resources available to each member of the household decreases as well.

Finally, from Table 5 on how teachers earlier entry education qualification affects their participation in professional training and continues education avenues, the study found an inverse relationship between teachers' education qualification on promotion (-0.007 ; p -value >0.05); current education qualification (-0.026 ; p -value >0.05); and positively related to their opinion about the necessity for every teacher to be licensed before being qualified to teach (0.013 ; p -value >0.05) and licensed as a teacher (0.001 ; p -value >0.05). Thus, the statistical implication of the findings is that, teachers' education qualifications do not statistically significantly affect their participation in professional training and continuing education avenues in JHSs at the 0.01 and or 0.05 levels (2-tailed). This was premised on the growth pillar of the Change Theory of In-service Training which explained that teachers are required to continue to add knowledge. Similarly, the findings were in tandem with Change pillar of the theory that requires teachers to be abreast with the societal dynamics (Garuba, 2004; Donkor & Banki, 2017). However, these findings contradicted EU and OECD (2010) findings that teachers' nonparticipation in professional training and continues education avenues was based on their levels of qualification.

From the foregoing analyses made, the implication is that the ages of the teachers', their marital status and household size are the most determinants that significantly affect their professional training and continues education avenues (i.e., promotion and current education qualification) and should be highly monitored when working on professional education and continues education of teachers in JHSs of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

Outcomes of Professional Training and Continuing Education of Teachers

The outcomes before and after teachers' participation in the various avenues of professional development were solicited

Enhanced Certification and Recertification

The study found that, enhanced certification and recertification were the outcomes of professional training and continues education of teachers in the Region. As a result, the respondents were asked to indicate their experiences before and after participation in the various professional training and continuing education venues. The results showed that before participating in any of the professional training and continues education avenues, 34.2% admitted of having enhanced certification and recertification compared to 75.2% of the respondents who said it was after taking part in the avenues of professional training and continues education that they had enhanced certification and recertification. Also, it was found that 54.1% of the respondents disagreed that they had enhanced certification and recertification before the participation compared to only 13.9% who disagreed. The study further found that 11.7% of the respondents were neutral to have had enhanced certification and recertification prior to participating in any of the avenues compared to 11% being neutral after participating. The overwhelming endorsement of 75.2% enhanced certification and recertification as an

outcome after participation in any of the avenues explained that teachers may be awarded certificates after undertaking professional training and continuing education programmes. In affirmation of this, a teacher in an interview in the Lambussie-Karni District said;

'At the end of some professional training and continues education courses, qualified participants are awarded certificates as evidence of undergoing the course of trainings. This certifies that, the teacher has participated in that training. During teachers' promotions, they are required to show proof of earlier professional training and continuing education courses that they have undertaken. As such, the certificates that are awarded teachers for participating in professional training and continues education can be adduced to help in the promotion of the individual teachers. And if a teacher has a good number of these certificates, these certificates attract points for the said teacher(s) ahead of the colleagues'

This meant that if these points are usually awarded based on level, credibility or authenticity and the number of these certificates that a teacher obtains, then that will be the way to go. Then this will boost the teacher's chances of accruing more points and thereby passing the promotion interviews and exams in the teaching career.

This assertion admonished that not all professional training and continuing education trainings that teachers participated in, awarded the certificates to the participating teachers. So, in such instances, teachers might have acquired knowledge and skills alright, but without pieces of evidence of certification. The case where there is no specific rank that holders of masters' degree can be promoted to does not encourage teachers to pursue Masters' qualifications, let alone Doctorate degree. Teachers who have no intention of leaving the teaching profession may just be comfortable with pursuing first degree as their highest qualification. After all, long service promotion can still send them to the ranks they want, aside the position of District Directors and above.

Reflective Practitioners

Also, 40.3% of respondents agreed they were already using reflective practice in the profession before undertaking one professional training and continues Education Avenue or the other compared to an overwhelming 82.6% of the respondents who upheld it was after their participation that made them to be reflective practitioners. Similarly, 52.1% of the respondents disagreed of becoming reflective practitioners before participating in professional training and continuing education compared to a meagre 10.6% disagreeing. The study revealed that 7.6% of the respondents were uncertain of being reflective practitioners prior to participating in professional training and continues education avenues compared to 6.8% of them disagreeing. The majority, 82.6% endorsement meant that teachers that continuously participate in professional training and continues education programmes undertake reflective practice in the

teaching profession. This was in tandem with the Regional Secretary of GNAT's submission that,

'When teachers gain reflective practice through professional training and continues education, they think through every action and inaction they undertake in their work. This enables the teachers to recall, revise and rehearse their teaching experiences and teaching methods for improving their works professionally. This allows teachers to model, mimic, forecast and predict their daily works to forestall professional errors in their line of duty. This is not necessarily to eschew mistakes but reduce the occurrence of these errors.'

This meant that professional training and continuing education inculcate reflective practice in teacher participants. Thus, reflective practice makes teachers become critical of the job they do, such that the daily practices teachers engage in as professionals, get to be called to memory, planned, executed, reviewed and lessons learnt for remedial actions to be taken. This makes teachers bring their professional practice under scrutiny and with the desired skills. The teachers put their job not only as an art but embedded with science of teaching. The implication is that professional training and continues education imbibe in teachers, reflective practice which facilitates teachers to teach from the known to the unknown. So, teacher participants that continuously participate in professional training and continuing education refresh their relevant previous knowledge, explore and recall all the activities that improve upon their work. This enables teachers to activate and increase their instinctual abilities in their daily work. This may require teachers to discuss with other colleagues in sharing ideas and experience. Thus, reflective practice helps teachers to revise, remember and learn effectively to deliver their work.

This corroborated National Teaching Council (2017) explanation that reflective practice makes teachers to recall and reflect their school experiences. The 10.6% of the teachers who disagreed that professional training and continues education does not promote reflective practice points to teachers undergoing professional training and continuing education yet learnt little let alone to deliver the skills, knowledge and competencies acquired from the training. However, this may not be strong grounds enough for teachers to downplay the reflective practice as a critical outcome of professional training and continues education.

Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning was one important outcome of professional training and continues education that the study found among teachers of Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region. This came to reality where 45.4% of the respondents indicated of having cultivated the spirit of lifelong learning before participating in professional training and continues education compared to 82.6% of the teacher respondents who admitted to have cultivated the spirit after participating. Also, 50.1% of respondents disagreed that they have cultivated the spirit of lifelong learning

before participating in professional training and continues education compared to 9.7% disagreeing their lifelong learning spirit was after their participation in professional training and continues education avenues. Those who were uncertain to have the spirit of lifelong learning prior to their participation in professional training and continues education were 4.5% of the respondents compared to 6.1% of them being uncertain of this outcome after participating in professional training and continues education.

In one breath, the 9.7% disagreement on this outcome after the respondents participated in professional training and continues education showed that some teachers may undertake professional training and continuing education yet unable to exhibit and apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the profession. In another breath, these categories of teachers may be content particularly with the level of qualification that they hold and may not see it as necessary to pursue professional training and continues education particularly the formal ones. However, this is injurious and undermines the professional alacrity that teachers are required to imbibe in professional training and continues education in their teaching profession. The whopping endorsement of 82.6% showed that professional training and continues education are conduit for teachers to continuously build their knowledge to keep pace with the modern trends of teaching. This is in tandem with the Human Capital Theory where Derkong-Dery and Agleby (2021) explained that the theory emphasized on enhancement in training that upgrades the skills of teachers.

Affirming this assertion, a Curriculum Leader in a Junior High School of the Lawra Municipality in an interview said;

'Some of us as teachers are becoming 'rusty' for not regularly taking up professional training and continues education courses. Professional training and continuing education help refresh the knowledge of teachers. This is because when you a teacher continue to attend professional training and continues education programmes, you will continue to acquire new skills. Lifelong learning requires teachers to continuously attend workshops, undergo mentorship, peer teaching or undertake further studies to obtain certificates.'

This meant that professional training and continues education are inevitable since it will keep teachers adding knowledge, skills and competencies as the way to go in lifelong learning. This can only come when teachers are in collaboration with others in sharing ideas and reading literature that opens the teachers to the happenings in the professional world or world of work. Thus, the work of a teacher requires him or her to be current and up to date with happenings such that they are able to incentivize and induce the effective learning in students. This means teachers cannot say that their ages limit their participation in professional training and continues education. As such, teachers are required to keep pursuing courses since the teaching content and pedagogies are never static. In a global teaching environment, old content and pedagogies get to be revised and new ones included. As such, new skills, knowledge, competencies and

experiences keep surfacing and this becomes the antidote for lifelong learning since the teaching profession is dynamic. So, teachers have to continuously refresh themselves with professional training and continues education to abreast themselves with events pertaining to the profession as a way of adopting new methods of teaching. This is what the Change pillar in the Change Theory of In-service Training (Garuba, 2004) advocates for teachers to do.

Progressive Scheme of Service

In Figure 9, progressive scheme of service was another outcome of professional training and continues education discovered in the study. This manifested when 18.8% of the respondents agreed to have had this before their participation in professional training and continues education avenues unlike 63.2% of them who indicated they had progressive scheme of service after their participation. Similarly, a whopping 76.5% of respondents disagreed of making progressive scheme before participating in professional development compared to only 22.6% of respondents of respondents who disagreed of not making improvement in their scheme of service after participating in professional training and continues education. A negligible 5.1% of respondents deemed to be uncertain in progressing in their scheme of service prior to their participation in professional training and continues education avenues unlike 14.2% who were uncertain. The 63.2% respondents' agreement with this outcome that they have progressed in their scheme of service after participating in professional training and continues education avenues alludes to the fact that as teachers obtain certain certificates, they may tend to be promoted.

In an interview with the District Director of Education, he said;

'Progressive scheme of service is one of the prime outcomes that every teacher undertaking professional training and continues education should put an eye on. Progressive scheme of service allows you the teacher to move from lower ranks through higher ranks after undergoing further training or learning. The teachers acquire certificates for increased ranks and improved salaries. As a result, teachers get the opportunity to be elevated and go through the ranks in the profession. The fortunate ones may reach the echelon of the profession by being Heads of Second cycle institutions, District Directors, Regional Directors, Divisional Directors or even Director General of the Ghana Education Service. The incentives for this progressive scheme of service span beyond the teaching profession where the qualifications, skills and experiences that teachers obtain from professional training and continuing education can transcend into other sectors' (Male Director of Education).

This meant that teachers obtain certificates through professional training and continues education avenues and these certificates are what they use to apply for promotions and then get upgraded to different ranks. So, it is an indisputable fact that professional training and continuing education is a key ingredient for promotions.

Subject Specialization

Subject specialization was one of the outcomes of professional training and continues education where 13.4% of the respondents admitted to have gotten before participating in any form of professional training and continuing education and this increased to 72.3% after having participated in professional development avenues. As such, as high as 49.7% of respondents declined in specializing in a subject area prior to pursuing these avenues compared to a lower 18.1% of respondents disagreeing after having gone through one professional training and continues education or another. It was found that 36.9% of the respondents were uncertain to have specialized in subject areas prior to their participation in professional training and continuing education. This was significantly reduced to 9.7% of the respondents who after participating in professional training and continues education avenues were uncertain of specializing in a subject area. The overwhelming endorsement of 72.3% showed that professional training and continues education offer teachers the opportunity to pursue courses that were within their areas of interest. This was in tandem with the opinion of the Regional Chairman of the Coalition of Concerned Teachers, who said;

‘Professional training and continues education allow teachers to be certificated in specific direction that they have interest in. This gives the teachers much in-depth knowledge in such areas since continuous or periodic training on specific subject areas for particular teachers make them specialized in those areas. The most important thing is that; the training should be organized continuously to enable the teachers meet regularly with their colleague teachers on the same subject area(s) to share ideas at the training. This enables the teachers to master in their subject areas in order to teach well in the classroom. As a result, that increases the expertise and knowledge of the participating teachers in the said subject area(s).’

This meant that subject or course specializations as an outcome of professional training and continues education allow teachers to focus and concentrate in subject areas that were within their strengths and in short supply within the teaching service in the Junior High School of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Such professional training and continues education moved teachers away from pursuing general courses in education to specialized course areas. As teachers continuously participate in specific subject training, they become conversant with the teaching methodology and content of the particular subject areas. This makes the teachers in such areas to have an in-depth knowledge and to build confidence in content delivery in the subject areas. So, it is very necessary and good for one to specialize in one subject area where one is knowledgeable. This accounts for the reasons for some of these professional training and continues education trainings to be organized based on subject areas.

Conclusion

Professional training and continues education avenues were inextricably intertwined and were key in improving the knowledge, skills, experiences and competences of teachers in Junior High Schools of the Upper West Region of Ghana. It is on the basis of this that the defective pillar in the Change Theory of In-service Training explained that there are deficiencies or gaps in the work of teachers. Thus, addressing these gaps are what the Problem-solving Pillar of the Change Theory of In-service Training then advocated the use of professional training and continues education avenues in improving the professional growth of teachers. Human Capital Theory used in the study reinforced the use of professional training and continues education avenues for the career growth of teachers. Thus, the proposition of the Change Theory of In-service Training and Scultz (1961) Human Capital Theory were in consonance with the findings of the study and the two theories should therefore be upheld.

The study recommended the following:

- Sensitisation by Ghana Education Service in collaboration with stakeholders will create awareness of the need for teachers to acquire more skills in their professions.
- Districts and Municipal Directors of education should revamp District Implementation Committees to take its critical position of implementing and promoting professional training and continues education avenues of teachers.
- Head teachers and Curriculum Leaders in the various districts and Municipalities Should be the focal persons on professional training and continues education at the school
- They personalities above should continuously undertake their roles in initiating and implementing professional training and continues education activities.
- The Ghana Education Service, and other stakeholders should take the determinants seriously and persuade teachers to pursue further training.
- Moreover, teachers should not renege and throw their hands in despair because they encounter challenges in the pursuit of their professional training and continues education in the region
- The Ministry of Education should lobby and raise funding to financially support educational authorities in the region.

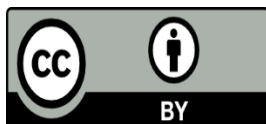
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