AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THE ROLE OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISORS IN
TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AS PERCEIVED
BY TEACHERS AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISORS IN THE
KASENA NANKANA WEST DISTRICT OF UPPER EAST REGION,
GHANA

by
PATRICK ATUDEWE ATOLEPWA

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: The Role of Instructional Supervisors in Teachers' Professional Development, as
        Perceived by Teachers and Instructional Supervisors in the Kasena Nankana West
        District of Upper East Region, Ghana

The importance of the role of instructional supervisors in every education system in general, and in teachers' instructional practices in particular, cannot be overemphasised. As the staff that have direct contact with the learners, teachers can benefit in diverse ways from the role of instructional supervisors. Some of these benefits include specific contributions that instructional supervisors make to ensure that teachers experience professional development. Against this background, the study looked into the specific role that supervisors in the Kassena Nankana West District (KNWD), Ghana, play to ensure teachers' Professional Development (PD), possible challenges supervisors face and solutions to deal with the challenges.

The literature indicated that in Ghana instructional supervisors contributed to teachers' PD through delegation, encouragement, guidance, monitoring, INSETs, and promotional supervision. These findings were compared to a few studies from two Africa countries – Nigeria and Ethiopia. It was revealed that some supervisors in these countries guide teachers in implementing new curricula apart from offering general professional guidance to teachers. This suggests there are similarities in supervision among Ghana and those two countries, even though the studies that were reviewed were few.

The literature review was done on equally few studies outside Africa, which showed a certain trend regarding the role of supervisors that promote teachers' PD. In Lebanon, it was found the supervisors were instructional and curriculum specialists as well as PD managers, basically guiding teachers in their instructional practices that ensure PD, whereas in the USA it was revealed supervisors were instructional leaders, collaborating with teachers in educational practices in general and in PD activities in particular. In all these countries, what was common in the instructional supervisors' role was that they guide teachers in instructional and professional practices to ensure the teachers' PD.

The study was guided by five research questions, three of which relate to the role of supervisors in teachers PD: (1) from Circuit Supervisors Handbook, (2) from teachers and supervisors, and (3) from comparison of the views of the teachers and the supervisors. The other two questions were about (1) possible challenges supervisors face in their work and (2) solutions that can be proposed to address the challenges facing supervisors.

As a qualitative descriptive case study, the research recruited thirty-six (36) participants comprising thirty teachers, five instructional supervisors and an assistant director in charge of supervision in the district. Three focus group discussions and eleven individual interviews were used as data collection tools. Apart from using the views of the participants, the study also conducted a document analysis of a book dubbed Circuit Supervisors Handbook. To this end, the data were gathered from the participants and from the book. These data were subjected to thematic analysis within the general framework of deductive, a priori, top-down and pre-determined approach on the one hand, and inductive, bottom-up data driven approach on the other, to generate themes. Whiles the deductive, top-down approach was basically the Error! Reference source not found., the inductive, bottom-up, data-driven style was the views of the participants as well as the information from the document analysis, out of which themes originated.

The findings of this study show that teachers and supervisors have common perceptions that instructional supervisors are responsible for teachers' PD through INSETs, guidance, monitoring and linking teachers to the education office for the needed resources and getting issues resolved. Teachers, however, differ from supervisors in some other respects regarding their perceptions of supervisors. Here, teachers considered supervisors to be a source of encouragement, but supervisors did not mention that as part of their role. Teachers believe monitoring is a force on them, while supervisors see it as a way of helping teachers to excel, and this constituted another area the two groups differed. Challenges supervisors face ranged from transportation issues, logistical constraints, political and leadership flaws and supervisors' lack of supervisory guides (supervisors' handbook), coupled with non-cooperative and inexperienced teachers, to irregular organisation of teachers PD programmes. In terms of solutions, the need for the educational authorities – both within and outside the district – to collaborate in dealing with the challenges was concluded on. Collaboration among authorities was interpreted as not only capable of leading to an intensification of PD programmes, it was also viewed to be an approach that can ensure more exhaustive supervision which was one of the issues the teachers have about instructional supervisors.

In conclusion, this study made recommendations for the government, the supervisors and the teachers. Among other recommendations, the government should procure and distribute to supervisors, the Circuit Supervisors Handbook for supervisors to use, as it will guide their supervisory practices. Supervisors should also see and practice *encouragement* of teachers as part of their approach in dealing with the teachers. This can elicit teachers' hard work, commitment and their PD. It is recommended as well that teachers cooperate with supervisors to facilitate effective supervision and teachers' PD.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Quality of education in every country depends largely on the commitment, competence and dedication of teachers and instructional supervisors (Lloyd & Becker, 2007; Mart, 2013). Students' learning outcomes and high performance, as some of the major goals of every education system around the world, depend partly on the professional capacity of the teachers (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). If teachers can serve these purposes and help achieve educational goals, they need support to help them grow professionally and develop the needed competence and capacity in their careers (Zepeda, 2012; Shepherd, 2012). As Guskey and Yoon (2009) put it, "Educators at all levels need just-in-time, job-embedded assistance as they struggle to adapt new curricula and new instructional practices to their unique classroom contexts" (p. 498). Supervisors serve as more experienced professionals; that bring insight and alternative perspective to the work of the teachers. In that regard, both regular and novice teachers need some level of supervision as they progress in their job. The teachers in the Kasena Nanakana West District (KNWD) of Ghana, need similar support in performing their duties and responsibilities in the schools. Next is supervision and teachers' Professional Development (PD).

Instructional Supervision and Teachers' Professional Development

As supervision and teachers' PD are some of the key terms in the study, defining them will give a much clearer direction and meaning to what they stand for in the context of this study.

Definition of Instructional Supervision

Instructional supervision is conceptualised by Pawlas and Oliva (2008), as a process where the principal of a school or any staff in charge of teachers, leaves his office to help other school personnel especially teachers carry out their work effectively. Zepeda (2012), defined instructional supervision as an exercise that "promotes growth, development, interaction, fault-free problem solving, and a commitment to building capacity in teachers" (p. 43). For Bernard and Goodyear (2014), "Supervision is an intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior colleague or colleagues who typically (but not always) are members of that same profession" (p. 9). An instructional supervision is, therefore, an activity performed by an instructional supervisor in the field of education, to help teachers work effectively.

Definition of Teachers' Professional Development

Teachers' PD is defined as "all the activities that help education professionals develop the skills and the knowledge required to achieve their school's educational goals and meet the needs of students" (Chambers, 2008, p. 4). Any experience that increases a teacher's skills, knowledge and appreciation of his or her instructional and professional practices is termed professional development (Desimone, 2009; Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon, 2007). Avalos (2011) also defined PD as a complex process where teachers learn the skills and how to transform their knowledge into instructional and professional practices that eventually benefits the students. Teachers' PD is also defined by Richter, Kunter, Klusmann, Lüdtke, and Baumert (2011), as both formal and informal learning prospects that reinforce teachers' professional competence in the areas of knowledge, motivations, beliefs and self-enhancement skills. These limited definitions suggest teachers' PD is a practice that covers, among other areas, the aspect of developing teachers' skills (Chambers, 2008; Richter et al., 2011), improving teachers'

instructional practices (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007), to serve the needs of the

students (Avalos, 2011). Teachers' PD can, therefore, be defined as any practice that enhances

the professional potential of the teacher to help him/her deliver effectively and serve the interest

of the learners. Next is an overview of instructional supervision in Ghana.

Overview of Instructional Supervision in Ghana

In Ghana, monitoring and evaluation division of Ministry of Education was in charge of

supervising education systems (Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014). They operated from the

regional and national offices of education. A couple of decades ago, supervision was known to

be inspection, characterised by punitive and fault-finding measures; where schools and teachers

were 'punished' for doing one thing or the other wrong (Dayelle, 2013). Supervision in some

parts of Ghana is done by supervisors monitoring and evaluating teachers' work to ensure

maximum utilisation of instructional hours (Baffour-Awuah, 2011).

In a district in the southern part of Ghana, Baffour-Awuah (2011) found that some

supervisors correct teachers in front of the students, which was seen as an embarrassment to the

teachers. There was, therefore, a general authoritarian approach that the supervisors use, which

was considered as a challenge of supervision in the country. Till date, some teachers still see

supervisors with such 'punitive' lens, such that even a supervisor with a friendly, collegial and

teacher-centered orientation, can still be judged by some teachers, as a fault-finder, looking for

teachers to punish (Payne, 1875; cited in Sullivan & Glanz 2000).

The supervisory function of the Ministry of Education has, however, been devolved to

the district and the municipal directorates of education to perform, following an introduction of

educational reform in 2007, dubbed Professor Anamuah Mensah Education Reform (Kuyini,

2013). One of the objectives of the reform was that districts and municipalities take charge of

monitoring, evaluating, and supervising education (Apeanti & Asiedu-Addo, 2014). The districts and municipalities, therefore, supervise teachers through instructional supervisors (Dickson, 2011). The duties of the instructional supervisors, among other things, are to visit the schools, moving from one school to the other, to carry out supervision (Behlol, Yousuf, Parveen, & Kayani, 2011; Baffour-Awuah, 2011). A supervisor can visit the school anytime; as and when the need arises (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle, 2013).

Supervisors in Ghana are mostly external ones, even though headteachers (principals) do supervise teachers. The supervisors can also delegate some duties to headteachers to perform. For instance, a headteacher can be asked by an instructional supervisor to mediate and solve a problem in a particular school (Baffour-Awuah, 2011) on his behalf. It is in these contexts that the KNWD Education Directorate is situated.

KNWD is a political division and one of the administrative enclaves of the Upper East Region of Ghana (UER/G). It is in the uppermost part of the country with three major cultural and traditional zones – the east, the west, and the central zones, respectively. Each of these zones has clusters of schools, managed by a group of instructional supervisors (circuit supervisors or educational supervisors in the case of Ghana). Each of the clusters of schools constitutes a circuit. It is in that context that the supervisor for the circuit is known as a circuit supervisor, which in the context of international literature is conceptualised as an instructional supervisor. In Ghana, the instructional supervisor is either called a circuit supervisor or an educational supervisor. These terms (circuit supervisor, educational supervisor or instructional supervisor) are used interchangeably in this study to mean the same.

It is the job of the circuit supervisor to oversee the instructional and other educational practices in the circuit. In Ghana, one can become an educational supervisor at a rank of

Principal Superintendent or above; a title based on years of service, promotion, an academic

qualification which is bachelor's degree or higher; or all of the above (Dayelle, 2013).

Some of the professional development activities in Ghana and for that matter, in the

KNWD include in-service training, workshops, mentoring, peer coaching and study group

activities (Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014). Literature indicates the supervisor can help

or support the teachers with any professional development activity. The idea is to eventually

promote the teachers' professional development (Pawlas & Oliva 2008; Guskey & Yoon, 2009).

This claim can, however, be theoretical in the context of Ghana and KNWD; a scenario that

forms part of the rationale for the current study. The following section defines certain terms.

Understanding Perceptions, and Role of Instructional Supervisors

Just like instructional supervision and teachers' PD, participants' perceptions and the role

of supervisors, equally need to be defined as some of the concepts that provide the necessary

background understanding, and direction for the rest of the discussion. To that end, perceptions

of participants and the role of supervisors are defined, next.

Perceptions of Teachers and Supervisors

Perception is "the meaning we give to the basic information we receive through our

senses" (Hoy, Miskel & Tarter, 2012, p. 59). People perceive things differently, depending on

the meanings they make out of the information they received. In the same vein, the way people

perceive things determine how they frame problems, and the manner in which they frame

problems, largely spells out how the eventual solution will look like. In this study, perceptions of

participants are basically the names, interpretations and the meanings they give to issues, events, and happenings around them.

Teachers and supervisors, as major players in the education delivery system, have perceptions about themselves, their job and how other players ought to work and relate to them. These perceptions have the potential to determine their commitment to duty and how they solve problems of each other and problems of their students at large. It is in this context that understanding perception, as it relates to this study, is key to understanding the subsequent discussions.

Role of Instructional Supervisors

Roles are "the official blueprints for action, the organizational givens of the office" (Hoy, Miskel, & Tarter, 2012, p. 26). Role of supervisors can be seen as the design and predetermined activities they perform as their duty that has an influence on and can be influenced by, other members of the school community: headteachers, teachers, and students. Role can also be explained as the power and bureaucratic official interactions among employees in a given school.

Roles are complementary – supervisors' role in teachers PD derives its meaning from the roles of the teachers, the students and the other members of the school community. It can be illustrated that supervisors can only supervise if teachers are doing their job of teaching the students, and so the meaning of supervision is connected to the practice of teaching. These complementary role dynamics could be the force behind every success story of a school and educational system – success or otherwise of a school can be linked to the role teachers and supervisors play. As Hoy, Miskel and Tarter (2012) indicated: "…the effectiveness and efficiency levels of schools are likely to be the highest when leadership *roles* are performed by

people who are competent, enterprising, committed to the organization, and free to do their jobs"
(p. 447). Against this background, the importance of the role of teachers and supervisors in any
education system cannot be overemphasised; the role of these stakeholders may also not be fully
comprehended if framed in isolation. A comprehensive and all-encompassing conceptualisation
of these roles is more likely to reveal the depth of work of teachers and supervisors in our
educational systems, than isolated definitions of same.

Problem Statement

In Ghana instructional supervisors are basically external supervisors – one supervisor
taking care of a number of schools within his jurisdiction. One of the practices about the teaching
profession that many teachers talked about, was the way instructional supervisors conduct
supervision of teachers (Baffour-Awuah, 2011). Supervisors would visit schools at will and some
of the things they check were teachers' lesson notebooks and attendance registers of teachers and
students. The interesting part was that they would sometimes request for a sample of students'
notes and exercise books and read through. The idea, as they would always explain, was to make
sure all these records were up to date and accurate – the level of effectiveness of a teacher was
measured by the accuracy and up-to-date information in these records. In the event that these
records were not updated, the teachers or teacher (as the case may be), would be held responsible
for not being effective, and for not living up to standard. This made some teachers fear circuit
supervisors because it was always difficult for instructional supervisors to not find an error in
these records, especially with the students' books. Against this background, some teachers would
start shivering any time they hear an instructional supervisor was coming to their school. This
has the potential to affect the perceptions of teachers about the role of instructional supervisors in
the teaching profession in general and teachers' PD in particular.

Theoretical literature, however, revealed that instructional supervision may not be as it was perceived by some of the teachers in Ghana. Pawlas and Oliva (2008) indicated supervisors' role is to help teachers do their work better. Zepeda (2012) posited that instructional supervisors' role is to facilitate teachers' professional development and help them succeed in and out of the classroom. Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2007) argued that supervision is the main practice behind a successful school. This brought two perspectives into focus – the traditional approach of supervision, that some teachers in Ghana fear, and the supportive, developmental and collegial approach indicated by theoretical literature.

The literature, therefore, raised the question of how to reconcile theory and practice; theory as in what the literature shows, and practice indicating the one some teachers fear. It is, therefore, important to find out from the teachers in the KNWD about their perceptions of the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' professional development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to: (1) understand the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' professional development, as it is perceived by the teachers and instructional supervisors in a selected district in Ghana, (2) assess the challenges supervisors face, if any in the district, and (3) obtain solutions from the participants, to address those challenges.

The fundamental assumption of the researcher for these three-fold purposes is that (1) participants who experience the phenomenon of teachers' PD have answers about how it is, and how they go about it in the district (Creswell & Poth, 2007), (2) instructional supervisors could have one challenge or the other based on previous studies in Ghana (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011) that need to be addressed, and (3) people who experience a

particular challenge can provide solutions as to how it can be solved. With these understandings, the study made recommendations for practice and for further studies.

The Rationale

The purpose of this study is to understand the perceptions of public basic schoolteachers about the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' Professional Development (PD), in one district; the Kasena Nankana West District in Ghana. Many current studies conducted in Ghana that are related to the topic explored instructional supervision and teachers' professional development, but not the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' professional development (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011; Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014; Mensah, 2016; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). These studies can be explored more detailly as follows.

Baffour-Awuah (2011), Dickson (2011) and Esia-Donkoh and Ofosu-Dwamena (2014), specifically investigated the perceptions of teachers and instructional supervisors about the state of supervision and supervisory practices in Ghana. Their aim was to understand the state of instructional supervision as perceived by teachers and instructional supervisors, and as it relates to teachers' professional development. It can be observed that they did not look into the role supervisors play in teachers' PD. Mensah (2016), and Sofo and Abonyi (2018) also investigated the effects of leadership skills and teachers' continuous professional development, on the performance of students in selected schools in Ghana. Equally, Abonyi (2017) explored the relationship between supervision of instructions and PD in some basic schools in Ghana, but the role of supervisors has not been studied. With these six different studies in the context of Ghana, one would have thought that the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' PD would have been explored, however, it has not been studies. The phenomenon of teachers PD as a function of

the role of instructional supervisors has, therefore, not been studied in Ghana; a justification of the rationale for this (current) study.

Similarly, many of the studies that took place outside the context of Ghana, about supervision and PD did not look into the role of supervisors in teachers PD, and the few who did, employed mainly quantitative methodologies (Kalule & Bouchamma, 2014; Behlol, Yousuf, Parveen, & Kayani, 2011; Abera, 2017; Stosich, Bocala & Forman, 2018; Mette, Range, Anderson, Hvidston, & Nieuwenhuizen 2015; Tesfaw & Hofman, 2014). More specifically, Abera (2017) in Ethiopia used the quantitative methodology to explore perceptions of teachers and supervisors about school supervision and supervisory practices. In a similar study, Mette et al. (2015) in the USA employed quantitative design to investigate the perceptions of teachers about practices of supervision to promote students' performance. Stosich, Bocala, and Forman in their 2018 study, also used a design-based implementation approach to examine the nature of the response by school teams concerning a professional development programme designed to improve leadership and schools in California.

None of these studies explored the role of supervisors in teachers' PD. Even though some studies, in the context of Lebanon (Chmeissani, 2013; El-Murr, 2015; Shabeeb, 2011), and the UAE (Ghanem, 2017) have employed qualitative designs to explore the topic, their focus was about comparison of teachers and supervisors' perspectives on supervisory practices and PD programmes that enhance teachers' reflective practices. The purpose of their studies, therefore, was at variance with the current studies' purpose, even though they employed qualitative methodology. More in-depth qualitative designs have, therefore, not been used to explore the phenomenon of teachers' professional development as a function of the role of instructional

supervisors, perceived by teachers and instructional supervisors in the context of Ghana and elsewhere; a second justification for the current study, in Ghana and in the KNWD.

In-depth, qualitative methodologies would have given a clearer understanding of the phenomenon in Ghana to set the stage for a quantitative, large scale participants research to be carried out. But since these studies did not look at the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' professional development as a perception of teachers and supervisors using qualitative designs, the researcher makes a case for the current study in that context. The gaps – regarding the focus of the previous studies and the methodology they employed, justify this study. Against this background, the current study explored the perceptions of both supervisors and teachers, about the role of supervisors in teachers' professional development, using qualitative design. Consequently, the results can be used for further studies that may have generalisation potential.

Research Questions

The research was guided by these questions,

1. What are the Ghana Education Service (GES) documented guidelines and directives about the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' professional development in the Kasena Nankana West District of Ghana?

2. What is the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' professional development:

    a. from the perspective of teachers in the Kasena Nankana West District?

    b. from the perspective of instructional supervisors in the Kasena Nankana West District?

3. In what ways are the perceptions of teachers and instructional supervisors about the role of supervisors, similar and in what ways are they different?

4. What are the challenges facing instructional supervisors in their role in teachers' professional development as perceived by teachers and instructional supervisors in the Kasena Nankana West District?

5. What are the solutions that can be proposed to solve the challenges of instructional supervisors, as perceived by teachers and the instructional supervisors, to facilitate supervision in teachers' Professional Development in the Kasena Nankana West District?

Significance of the Study

The study can have significant implications on the practice of supervision on the one hand, and research about supervision on the other.

1. By way of practice, the findings can help instructional supervisors in KNWD to understand what the perceptions of teachers are, regarding the role of instructional supervisors, thereby allowing the supervisors to adopt more teacher-centered approaches in their supervisory practices.

2. With the findings, the KNWD education directorate can understand how instructional supervisors perceive their own role in teachers' PD. With this understanding, the directorate can educate teachers to relate more effectively with instructional supervisors, if the need arises.

3. The district education directorate can use the research findings to institute training programmes that will enhance effective supervision and facilitate teachers' professional development, should there be the need.

4. In terms of its implication on research, this study will extend the literature about the role instructional supervisors play in teachers' professional development.

5. Further studies with large scale participants that can be generalised on the whole district, can be conducted, building on this research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of literature related to the topic provides background information about what is known and what is yet to be discovered, thereby setting the 'stage' and giving the rationale for the current research (Denney & Tewksbury, 2013). This chapter explores the literature on the topic of the current study. The chapter discusses the theoretical framework, instructional supervision, practices that ensure teachers' PD, teachers PD, role of supervisors in teachers' PD, role of supervisors in teachers' PD in Ghana, role of supervisors in teachers' PD in two countries in Africa and two other countries outside Africa. It also reviewed the literature on the challenges faced by instructional supervisors. The chapter then summarises and concludes with a conceptual framework that represents the role of supervisors in teachers' PD in the Ghanaian literature. This framework is also the conceptual understanding of the researcher about the literature from the Ghanaian perspective. Next is the theoretical framework that guided parts of the study.

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework helps frame and guide a study (Dickson, Adu-Agyem, & Emad Kamil, 2018). Green (2014) also argued that the use of a theoretical framework ensures the researcher organises his ideas and structures how the data would be represented and analysed. Against this background, this study is guided by the Symbolic Interaction Theory (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934). The theory has a unique approach to the study of human life and human conduct. Scholars who used this theory and thus contributed to the development of its foundation are many but the key among them is George Hebert Mead (Blumer, 1969). One of the students of Mead was Hebert Blumer, who later built on, and extended the ideas of Mead; structuring the theory to its current position (Blumer, 1969). To this end, basic assumptions and premises of the

theory especially the guiding principles of its application that are relied upon in this study, are the thinking of Blumer.

It is important to add that the current study relies on the theory as advanced by Herbert Blumer (Blumer,1969) because it has been used and relied upon by different scholars (Carter & Fuller, 2015; Cole, 2018; Munson, 1979) indicating its usability and applicability. However, the researcher is well aware of Snow (2001) and other scholars' views and how they attempted extending the views of Herbert Blumer. The ideas of Blumer are relied upon in this study because they facilitate understanding of how participants interpret, make meaning and relate to one another in any given context that can contribute to teachers' PD.

Carter and Fuller (2015) reflected on the ideas of Blumer and argued that to understand perspectives of people regarding an issue of importance, it is imperative to understand how they interpret the issue and how they construct their understanding in the context of social interaction. In connection with that, the three premises of Blumer's thinking regarding the theory can help understand the teachers' and supervisors' perceptions in the current study.

 The Symbolic Interaction Theory (SIT) has three fundamental premises, that can be used to frame this study. The first premise is that "human beings act towards things on the basis of meanings which these things have for them" (Blumer, 1969, p. 2). By implication, individuals and society interpret things, interactions and behaviours of others, and that interpretations guide their behaviour towards those things or those people. With this, it can be inferred that supervisors' and teachers' perceptions about the role of supervisors in teachers' PD is a function of the individual and shared interpretations and meanings they associate with the supervisors.

The second premise of the theory is that "the meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act towards the person with regard to the thing" (Blumer, 1969, p. 4) By implication, meaning of a thing arises out of social interaction that one has with others (Blumer, 1969). More specifically, the supervisors' role in the school context, is a construct of the school community; which arises out of their interaction with members of the community. School community refers to the teachers, the students, the instructional supervisors and other educational leaders within the school context, who may or may not be within the school's walls – such as the deputy director of education – but invariably form part of the school community (Hoy, Miskel, & Tarter, 2012). The role of supervisors in teachers' PD can be relative; it could depend on how the school community constructs it and the meanings they make of it. The question, therefore, is, what meaning does the school community make of supervisors' role in teachers' professional development? This is partly the reason for this research.

The third fundamental premise of the theory is that "these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things they encounter" (Blumer, 1969, p. 5). The understanding people make about others, about themselves and about situations are not necessarily absolute; they are ongoing in an interpretive process, such that they can either change fundamentally or remain the same, based on the needs, perceptions and interpretations of the people at the time (Blumer, 1969; Cole, 2018; Mead, 1934). The meaning of something today may change tomorrow. This makes the current study critical because meanings can change with time, and so are the findings in previous studies in Ghana. The perceptions of the supervisors and teachers about the role of supervisors in teachers PD can be seen and interpreted differently today than it would, a few years ago, it can be inferred.

SIT was commonly employed in the fields of Psychology and Sociology for research as a theoretical framework that guided the studies (Rous, 2004). It was used to study the interaction between teachers and instructional supervisors as well as the interaction between teachers and students (Blase & Blase, 1999; Yogan, 2000, cited in Rous, 2004). For this research, the SIT is used to frame the interaction between teachers and instructional supervisors in the district, where such interactions are based on the perceptive interpretations and the meanings the teachers and supervisors make of supervisors and their role in teachers' PD. Interaction in this context arises as the supervisors' work with teachers. This theory is relied upon in the literature review and in the rest of the study.

Instructional Supervision (IS)

To understand the interpretations and meaning making of participants (in the next chapter) about supervision as a role of supervisors, it is important to understand, the meaning of instructional supervision from the perspective of the literature, first. The cruciality of instructional supervision in the teaching profession cannot be overemphasised. Instructional supervision is done by instructional supervisors. Instructional supervisors can work with teachers in classroom instructions. This is partly the reason they are called instructional supervisors. In this study, the focus is on the impact of the instructional supervisors on teachers' professional development. It is in this context, supervisors conduct instructional supervision, that help teachers to learn:

> "Supervision is a cousin to teacher learning. Building the capacity of teachers is important because it is a key factor in improving student achievement…clearly, the overarching purpose of supervision is to help teachers improve" (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007 p. 214).

In the framework of SIT, reviewing the literature on instructional supervision situates the study within the relevant context to help interpret and make the meaning that is sought for.

Practices of IS that Enhance Teachers' Professional Development

Instructional supervisors perform many functions that support and promote teachers' instructional efficiency and teachers' professional development, to help them succeed in and out of the classroom (Pawlas & Oliva, 2008; Zepeda, 2012). In the views of Zepeda (2012), the purpose of instructional supervision is to support the teachers to conceptualize and maximise their self-worth and capacity to achieve teaching and learning goals for the students. Some of the practices that enhance teachers' professional development include clinical supervision, collegial supervision, and developmental supervision. The researcher chose to limit the review to these three because they are more interactive (for clinical supervision and collegial supervision) and have a symbolic representation of authority and support for teachers (in the case of development supervision). These, therefore, fit so well in the symbolic interaction theory perspective.

Clinical supervision. The model of clinical supervision came into existence in the 1970s, with the aim of focusing supervision on the teacher as a major actor in the education delivery system (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). Glatthorn (1990) conceptualized clinical supervision as a process designed to help improve teaching and learning in the areas of lesson planning, lesson observation, lesson observational data analysis, and provision of feedback to the teacher about the whole exercise. According to Zepeda (2012), clinical supervision as a model embraces the act of pre-observation conference, a lengthy classroom observation, and a post-observation discussion. This allows the teacher to reflect on her learning and construct the knowledge that she needs, in the situation. Also, Acheson and Gall (2010) define clinical supervision as the one that evaluates the performance of teachers and provides objective feedback, to enable them to solve problems regarding teaching and learning, with the view to helping them develop needed skills.

From these definitions, lesson planning, lesson observations, performance evaluation and provision of feedback, are the major characteristics of clinical supervision as an instructional supervisory option. These are not only features of clinical supervision, but they are some of the major aspects of the teaching profession such that in the event a supervisor employs clinical supervision, the teacher is involved fully. This helps the teachers to conceptualise the lesson, based on their understanding of the discussion during the pre-observation conference. The teachers also learns from their mistakes during the post-observation conference to help improve their practices for better instructional and lesson delivery.

As the teacher actively participates in the planning of what would be supervised, and in the discussion of the observation feedback, during the pre-observation phase and the post-observation conference respectively, it helps both the teacher and the supervisor to see the professional development needs of the teacher, so they can work on fixing them. The teacher masters his own professional development needs through the practice of clinical supervision.

Collegial Supervision. Collegial supervision is conceptualised differently in literature. While some referred to it as collegial inquiry (Drago-Severson, 2004), other sources named it as peer supervision (Sergiovanni, & Starratt, 2007). In the context of this paper, the term is conceptualised as collegial supervision to mean the same as collegial inquiry and peer learning, but with emphasis on the supervision aspect. It is defined as a dialogue and learning platform that allow teachers to supervise the work of their colleagues while reflecting on their own assumptions and values, the totality of which promotes their professional development (Drago-Severson, 2004; Tshuma & Bhebhe, 2016). Collegial supervision can also be seen as the act of teachers working together in a supportive and reflective environment (Tshuma & Bhebhe, 2016). It is an exercise where teachers are given the chance to see each other's instructional practices,

the values and the assumptions underpinning the decisions that guide such practices, to learn and support each other in the process (Tshuma & Bhebhe, 2016; Owusu-Mensah, 2014).

Collegial supervision, if employed by a supervisor, creates for teachers and supervisors, a context of openness, trust, leadership sharing, change management and rich diversity of knowledge (Drago-Severson, 2004). Essentially, it creates a community that allows for professional development in a progressive fashion, due to teachers' active participation in the process (Drago-Severson, 2004; Owusu-Mensah, 2014; Tshuma & Bhebhe, 2016).

Tshuma and Bhebhe (2016) conducted a study to explore the level of usage of collegial supervision by Zimbabwean teacher education, teaching practice programme, to promote teaching competencies of student-teachers. They found that collegial supervision benefited the student-teachers during their teaching practice programme. It was designed in a manner that allows the student-teachers to be supervised by their colleagues and mentors (regular teachers) at the teaching practice school level. The idea was to minimize supervision by professors and lecturers who usually supervise the student in a hurry, with little or no feedback for student-teachers to learn from (Tshuma & Bhebhe, 2016). With the benefits the students got from engaging in collegial inquiry, there is the likelihood that they will implement the same when they become full teachers.

Teachers learn more from their own professional practices and experiences (Drago-Severson, 2004) that can help them identify their professional development gaps and work towards bridging them. Collegial supervision allows the teachers to learn from, and share ideas with their colleagues, mentors, and supervisors, in a less-intimidating context, which may not be possible with other instructional supervisory models (Owusu-Mensah, 2014). Collegial

supervision, therefore, creates the platform for teachers with some level of expertise to observe

instructional proceedings of their colleagues (in the case of the student-teachers) and share their

experiences, values, and beliefs that help the other teachers learn from the diverse perspectives

(Drago-Severson, 2004), that promote their professional development.

Developmental Supervision (DS). Teachers have different levels of cognitive,

psychomotor and affective orientations. Again, variability can be observed in teachers regarding

their teaching skills, classroom management skills, interpersonal or collegial relationship skills,

and overall competencies level. All these characteristics describe the developmental level of the

teacher (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007). Due to the variability in the professional

characteristics of the teachers, and the grade levels of learners they teach at a time, supervisors

need to employ the developmental supervisory approach, to cater for the needs of these

variabilities in teachers (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007).

According to Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2007), developmental supervision

could be practiced in three phases: the phase of diagnoses and selection of the most appropriate

supervisory march, the phase of application of the selected approach and the phase when the

supervisor fades off his control, giving room for teacher control and decision-making. With the

first phase, dubbed, selecting the best approach, the supervisor can determine which approach

can possibly work best for the teacher by observing the teacher in action, and by interacting with

the teacher to ascertain the level of need (Dea, 2016; Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007).

In the second phase, the supervisor applies the chosen approach. Here, the supervisor can choose

to be directive, choosing for the teacher what to do; collaborative, working with the teacher as to

how to go about certain practices; and nondirective approach where the supervisor basically

helps the teacher to diagnose his own problem and solution without a predetermined mind (Dea,

2016; Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007). All these phases and approaches help the teacher to progress towards instructional efficiency that facilitates his professional development.

Developmental supervision, therefore, allows teachers with an initial freedom of choice depending on the teachers' competency level, capability and level of readiness for a particular supervisory approach (Dea, 2016; Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007), to support teachers based on their needs until they get to the level of competence when they can assume responsibility for their own instructional needs and improvement. In developmental supervision, the supervisor can sometimes work in collaboration with the teacher and develop an action plan to guide the instructional progress and the general operational strategies of the teacher towards higher-order competency levels (Dea, 2016; Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007).

Teachers' Professional Development

Just like instructional supervision, what teachers' PD entails, should be understood, from the perspective of the literature to situate the discussion of participants' views in the context of the literature. This would help better understand the third premise of SIT.

> "In the history of education, no improvement effort has ever succeeded
> in the absence of thoughtfully planned and well-implemented professional
> development" (Guskey & Yoon, 2009, p. 497)

This profound argument suggests the overarching importance of teachers' professional development. Critical questions can, however, be asked as to the nature of professional development, and what the principles of professional development could be. Equally, teacher training institutions are responsible for training teachers to become professionals (Darling-Hammond, 2017), but how do teachers develop in their teaching profession overtime after completing training colleges? Teachers' professional development is very important because research indicated there is a positive relationship between teachers' professional development

and improved instructional practices for students' achievement (Borko, 2004; Darling-

Hammond, et al., 2009). This section is guided by the aforementioned questions in discussing the

teachers' professional development (PD). Interestingly, as these questions are answered, a much

clearer picture can be interpreted and meaning can be made from the literature about teachers'

PD, as it befits symbolic interaction theory (Blumer, 1969). Next, the nature of teachers'

professional development from the perspective of the literature is discussed.

The Nature of Teachers' PD

According to Darling-Hammond, (2017), teacher PD, teacher support and teacher

wellbeing are conscious and long term planned and practices, fully supported by policies and

programs, to ensure holistic development of the education system. Finland, Singapore, Canada,

and Australia, though have different education and teacher development systems, they made it

this far (in terms of education) through vigorous policies, programmes and systems, supported by

budget, implemented at the national level for Finland and Singapore, and at state or provincial

level for Canada and Australia (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Teachers PD should be a conscious

and national medium to long term educational agenda, implemented at the district, regional and

national level; and should be given enough time for it to fruition (Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Principles of Effective Teachers' PD

Even though there are some issues with the effectiveness of teachers' PD in education,

due to lack of understanding of what motivates teachers to participate in PD and what the

processes are, that elicit teacher change (Guskey, 2002; Guskey & Yoon, 2009), teachers' PD is

an important practice in schools. Darling-Hammond, et al. (2009) advanced certain basic

principles for formulating PD programmes that will ensure teacher change and teacher PD. These

principles go beyond the traditional workshops and one-shot encounters that do very little to help

in teachers PD; such principles that ensure a sustained and substantial hours of programmes and activities, state that (1) a PD should be intensive sustained and linked to the teachers' practices, (2) a PD should be tailored to the needs of students as it addresses the instructional practice of specific content, (3) there should be alignment between PD and the school improvement goals and (4) a PD should focus on building a strong professional and social relationship among teachers. These principles are consistent with Shin, Edmonds and Browder (2011) who argued that teachers' PD must be tailored to the needs of the teacher. However, these principles, as good as they are, may not be implemented in some schools and districts, because some supervisors and educational leaders still carry out supervision in the one-touch, few hours type of workshops that may not help the teachers (Baffour-Awuah, 2011).

With Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon, (2007), the PD programmes that are successful, have some characteristics. Some of these features are (1) level of involvement of teachers in the planning, execution, and evaluation of the PD programme, (2) fine-tuning the PD programmes with school improvement goals, (3) incorporation of research and best practices in the PD programmes, (4) support of the school administration regarding teachers as adult learners, and (5) follow-up for review and support to ensure teachers transfer knowledge from the PD programme to school and classroom. Other good practices are a continuation of the PD programme at the school level, by making it a part of the schoolwide culture. What overlap in these ideas and principles of teachers' PD are the need for the PD programme to aim at affecting the teacher's instructional practices at the classroom level, the fact that the PD programme should reflect the school's goals and the need for the PD, its planning and execution to be done by the teacher and for the teacher (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009; Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007).

Some Approaches to Teachers' Professional Development

Cooperative Professional Development. Professional development can be conceptualised as Cooperative Professional Development. "Cooperative professional development… is a process by which small teams of experienced teachers work collaboratively for their own professional growth" (Glatthorn, 1990, p. 31). The Cooperative PD addresses some of the loopholes of traditional PD approaches – Consultation and special educator approaches. Cooperative PD deals with the gaps that are created by some of the reactionary practices of hiring an outsider to help solve an education problem; a special educator to help classroom teachers (Glatthorn, 1990). Guskey and Yoon (2009), in "*What Works in Professional Development"* argued against the outsider professional development approach as they put it:

> Many writers in education today stress that professional development should be strictly site-based and should build on the combined expertise of in-house staff members. They believe that the most effective way to bring improvement is to have educators in each school meet regularly to explore common problems and seek solutions based on shared experiences and collective wisdom (p. 496).

In such an outsider intervention, the relationship between the classroom teacher and the special educator (the outsider) is the superior versus inferior one that is likely to leave the classroom teacher with a sense of inferiority. This is in direct contrast to the Cooperative PD, where the teachers form a team of interest and garner internal expertise to work on their own PD interdependently. This interdependence can bring professional growth that can eventually ensure improvement in teacher classroom delivery and students' achievement (Glatthorn, 1990). Cooperative PD allows teachers to operate in a collegial environment, rather than the expert versus inexperienced teacher relationship that is usually employed in the other consultation-oriented PD interventions. According to Glatthorn (1990), the Cooperative PD can be considered as an alternative to clinical supervision

Mentoring. Mentoring is one of the major practices in the education system. It helps prepare the novice and inexperienced teachers for better instructional and professional experience (Owusu-Mensah, 2014; Russell & Russell, 2011). Mentoring is "the relationship between an experienced or veteran teacher and a less experienced one, with the former offering support and advice, curriculum help and guidance in classroom management" (Drago-Severson, 2004, p. 124). Mentoring helps teachers learn from and share with each other that helps them grow into leaders, they might, otherwise, not have been able to grow into.

Serving as a mentor has far-reaching effects for both the mentor and the mentee, some of which can be a lifetime (Reh, 2019). The mentor has a trusted friend to work with, and on whom to 'try' his leadership skills (Drago-Severson, 2004). Mentorship also guarantees the two people involved, especially the mentee, a professional shoulder to 'cry' on, when things get messy in the course of his/her professional duties, due to the fact that mentorship offers the opportunity for people who may want leadership in a private setting, and people who prefer guidance in a private and one-on-one basis to interact (Drago-Severson, 2004).

It is practically impossible for the teacher training institutions to provide all the professional needs of the teacher trainee, to function effectively on the job (Asare & Nti, 2014). The novice teacher needs a trusted friend, a senior colleague; a mentor to fill in the professional and the instructional gaps that were not filled by the teachers' training institutions (Avalos, 2011). The training institutions, however, provided the theoretical and conceptual understanding of education, needed as a foundation for better instructional practice, and productive pedagogical and methodological engagements that await the teacher in the education field (Asare & Nti, 2014; Avalos, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2017; Dennen & Burner, 2008; Hoekstra & Korthagen, 2011; Korthagen, 2010; Korthagen & Evelein, 2016; Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006).

The new or inexperienced teacher comes to work with a lot in mind, much of which is theoretical (Asare & Nti, 2014). The mentor is, therefore, there to help bring the learning that is in the form of theory, into practice, through professional and sometimes personal engagements, allowing the novice teacher to continuously learn on the job, acquiring the needed professional development, and become better teacher (Owusu-Mensah, 2014; Russell & Russell, 2011).

For a mentoring programme to be successful, both the mentor and the mentee must agree to work together, the mentee must be reflective and aim at becoming autonomous in the course of time, the mentor must be committed to the mentoring relationship and adopt a leadership and communication strategies that meet the needs of the mentee (Drago-Severson, 2004). With time these two professionals reflect on the relationship, challenge the way they think, confront their fears, assumptions, and values, and grow to become better and more experienced professionals in their areas of expertise.

Training and Development. Professional development takes many approaches, one of which is training and development. Training and development, otherwise called in-service training (Hervie & Winful, 2018), allows the human capital of an organisation to gain skills and competencies that are necessary for achieving its current and future goals (Fitzsimons, 2015; Nafukho, Hairston, & Brooks, 2004). Training and development can be seen as any activity that allows for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies, in preparation for future utilization for the actualisation of organisational goals (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2016; Kwarteng, 2011). For Budhwar and Mellahi (2016), "training and development is considered as the most important indicator of Human resource development as it increases and modifies the knowledge, skills and capabilities employees and managers have to perform their jobs more effectively to contribute to organizational success" (p. 213). Training and development ensure that the human

capital in education, which is the engine of educational growth and development, is not only

maintained but it is nurtured and developed towards efficiency (Hervie & Winful, 2018).

Even though some scholars are not too convinced about the 'place' of training and development,

in this 21st century, training and development ensure teachers' PD. A research conducted in

Ghana to investigate the causes of the relatively poor performance of students in the country, in

recent years, found that lack of training and development was one of the causes (Hervie &

Winful, 2018). Teachers who are trained and developed for a specific task are more likely to

deliver effectively for better results than those who are not.

Training and development are used to prepare the talent from within the organisation, that

is needed urgently or will be needed in the near future, but the organisation may not want to hire

from outside (Budhwar & Mellahi 2016). In the process of such training, PD goals are indirectly

met, and the individuals involved in the training and development programme, get professionally

better eventually.

Training and development are of paramount importance in re-orienting the teachers to

organisational goals and values, in helping them gain new instructional methods and skills and

assist them to adapt to the school and be able to function effectively (Al-Zoubi, Bani & Ismail,

(2011). Essentially, teachers who go through in-serving training stand a better chance of being

focused, flexible and goal-oriented, allowing them to perform much better in their professional

and personal space (Hervie & Winful, 2018). The critics of in-service training may have to

consider these enormous contributions training and development can have on teachers'

professional development. While other approaches to professional development are equally

important, training and development also have a place in teachers' PD and should be presented

along with the other approaches for teachers, school leaders and professional developers to choose the most appropriate ones for the specific purpose and context.

Role of Instructional Supervisors in Teachers' Professional Development

The third premise of SIT indicates that meanings are not absolute (Blumer, 1969). With that premise in mind, there is the need to know the role of supervisors as it is found and interpreted in literature, such that discussion of participants' views can then be situated within such interpretations and findings in the literature, for similarities and contradictions, if any.

Again, per the symbolic interaction theory, things get their meaning out of the interpretations given to them. The roles of supervisors are interpreted as they are discovered from the literature. In this section, such interpretation of the literature is done using some ideas presented in Wiles and Bondi (1996) cited in Zepeda (2012). Put in a different way, Wiles and Bondi's ideas are consistent with the symbolic interaction theory's view of the interpretation of things to make meaning (Blumer, 1969). For example, a specific role of supervisors can be interpreted differently by different people, such that in some contexts, it can be interpreted as a developer of people, yet others may see the same role as a public relations officer. It is in this context that the SIT advocates interpretation, as the way to make meaning. The researcher adopts Wiles and Bondi's ideas to help with the interpretations and meaning of supervisors' role in this section.

Schools are likely to be more effective when leadership roles in general, and instructional supervision, in particular, are performed by committed and competent people (Hoy & Miskel 2012). There are different roles that instructional supervisors perform to facilitate

Teachers' Professional Development (McNiff, 2002; Rhodes & Beneicke, 2003; Kennedy 2005; Stosich et al., 2018). According to Wiles and Bondi (1996), cited in Zepeda (2012), the roles of supervisors include:

1) developers of people,	5) staff developers
2) curriculum developers,	6) administrators,
3) instructional specialists,	7) managers of change,
4) human relations workers	8) evaluator

With this in mind, a review of the literature about the role of supervisors in: (1) Ghana (2) some countries in Africa and (3) some countries outside Africa is worth considering.

Role of Supervisors in Teachers' PD in Ghana

Teachers, just like any other professionals, attain professional development through direct or indirect interventions of their supervisors. Sofo and Abonyi (2018) argued that the role of school leaders is becoming increasingly important, globally, however, in Ghana, school leaders including instructional supervisors in basic schools, are appointed to their job without any formal leadership training. One of the roles supervisors play that ensure teachers' professional development in Ghana, was identified to be in a form of delegation of duty to the teachers to perform (Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). This can be interpreted as *the developers of people*. Wiles and Bondi explained that, in developers of people, supervisors need to recognise the diversity in schools and the diverse ways people in the schools' communities learn. Some of these ways of learning can be through delegation. Some school leaders including teachers, learn and develop their skills when their immediate 'boss' delegates them to perform some roles, especially when

the boss travels or is engaged in another official assignment (Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). When teachers are delegated to perform a role, it is an opportunity for them to learn leadership skills on the job and become experienced professionals over time.

Apart from the delegation, some of the roles supervisors play to ensure teachers PD is organising workshops, in-service training and seminars for teachers (Abonyi, 2017; Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle, 2013; Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). In the views of Wiles and Bondi (1996), cited in Zepeda (2012), these activities put supervisors' roles as *staff developers*. Abonyi (2017) however, indicated that such pieces of training are sometimes inaccessible to some teachers especially those at the rural schools.

In Ghana, teacher training institutions, in collaboration with headteachers of basic schools, supervise and mentor student-teachers, during the out programme of their training (Nti-Adarkwah, Ofori, Nantwi, & Obeng, 2019). Colleges of education that are mandated to train teachers for the basic schools in Ghana structured the training programme for two years of course work at the college, and one year of practical training at basic schools across the country. This structure is termed in-in-out (Nti-Adarkwah, Ofori, Nantwi, & Obeng, 2019). During the 'out' segment of the training programme, some of the student-teachers are supervised and mentored by regular teachers of the respective schools for a number of months. The supervision that is provided by the headteachers or principals of the respective schools mostly focuses on lesson planning, classroom management, and extracurricular activities. The headmasters play the role of a *staff builder* and *instructional specialist* (Wiles & Bondi 1996, cited in Zepeda 2012). They use their vast instructional experience in building the student teacher to become better in the teaching profession. The student-teacher learns these instructional and professional practices, gain knowledge, master the right attitude and develop the requisite skills that can ensure a better

teaching experience. In some instances, the student-teacher is attached to a regular teacher who, in the course of the period, mentors and guides the student-teacher. In such instances, both the student teacher and the regular teacher experience professional development.

Teachers who are due for promotion to a higher rank in Ghana, go through different procedures required by the Ghana Education Service (a body in charge of managing and supervising education) Some of these procedures include evaluation, supervision and interviewing (Anim, 2019; Ofei, 2011). These procedures are in the framework of the supervisor as an *evaluator*, according to Wiles and Bondi (1996), cited in Zepeda (2012). The procedures that teachers go through before promotion depends on the level to which they are seeking to be promoted to (Dunne et al., 2005). Some of the teachers are supervised by the circuit supervisor in a company of other district education leaders for the promotion. The supervision can be carried out at the school where the teacher works. The supervisors check the teachers' lesson plans, lesson notes and general records keeping habits. Teachers who go through these procedures learn more skills and attitudes that affect their instructional practices and enhance their professional development in the process.

Coaching, receiving feedback from colleagues and students, and observing other teachers; were some of the approaches, that were found to promote the professional development of teachers apart from the supervisors' role (Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). Dayelle (2013) and Esia-Donkoh and Ofosu-Dwamena (2014) found that coaching mentoring and continuous feedback from instructional supervisors ensure teachers' professional development. It keeps the teachers focus on what to do and how to do it better. The coaching aspect of supervision can be interpreted as an *instructional specialist* role of supervisors (Wiles & Bondi 1996, cited in Zepeda 2012) since the supervisor coaches out of his instructional experience. Apart from

supervisors' feedback through clinical supervision, the feedback from colleague teachers comes

when a teacher is observed by a colleague who would then share the observation data with the

teacher afterward. Some of the teachers also create room for even their students to give feedback

about their teaching, classroom management, and general instructional practices, all of which can

contribute to teachers' professional development (Sofo & Abonyi, 2018).

Monitoring and observing lessons and guiding teachers are other duties of supervisors

that Baffour-Awuah (2011), found in Ghana. In this situation, the supervisor can be seen as an

instructional specialist. The idea is that the supervisor is able to do all the above because of the

special skills and competencies he possesses regarding teaching and learning and other

professional practices. Next, a review of the literature in some countries in Africa.

Role of Supervisors in Teachers' PD Found in some African Countries

Two countries were selected in Africa that compare to Ghana in different ways. These

countries are Nigeria and Ethiopia. Nigeria is selected because it has a similar educational

structure as in the number of years for basic education, supervision systems and most

importantly because it shared the same colonial masters with Ghana - the British (WEST Staff,

2017). The second country that was selected for this review was Ethiopia. As the only African

country that was not colonised, the researcher wanted to make sense of how their supervision and

teachers' PD entails and how it compares or otherwise, with that of Ghana. The second reason

was that Ethiopia has a decentralised education system, just like Ghana (Trines, 2018). Many

countries such as Sera Leone, Kenya, and others in Africa share some commonalities with

Ghana, but for the purpose of this study, Nigeria and Ethiopia are selected based on these

characteristics. The selection of these countries is not meant to do exhaustive literature review about supervisors' role in them, but to have an idea of what the role entails in the countries.

In Nigeria, the role of instructional supervisors is diverse. It depicts the concept of the supervisor as a *manager of change* (Wiles & Bondi 1996, cited in Zepeda 2012). Kolawole (2012) found that the supervisor supervises the implementation of the national policy on education; a policy introduced to ensure improvement in education by stimulating teachers' greater effectiveness of instructional practices. This was found in a study conducted to investigate the relationship between the role of school supervisors on the one hand, and inspectors of the Ministry of Education in Lagos, on the other. Kolawole (2012) also found that supervisors and inspectors (from the ministry) play complementary roles towards ensuring improvement in teachers' instructional practices. With supervisors as managers of change, Wiles and Bondi (1996) cited in Zepeda (2012) argued that "systemic reform movements require supervisors to manage and implement change" (Zepeda, 2010, p. 55). The national policy on education is a change that requires effective management, and since supervisors are ensuring that it is implemented and managed well for it to succeed, they can be seen as playing the role of change managers, in the views of Wiles and Bondi (1996) cited in Zepeda (2012). The aspect of the supervisors' role that stimulates improvement in teachers' instructional practices, has the potential to ensure their professional development.

In Ethiopia, the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' PD has some similarities with that of Nigeria and Ghana. Supervisors are responsible, according to Kenea (2018), for implementing and managing change, they supervise preparation of lesson plans, they supervise lesson delivery in classroom, they provide necessary resources to ensure effective teaching and learning and they offer general professional guidance to teachers to help them achieve their

instructional objectives, which are fairly the same as that of Ghana and Nigeria. In terms of

supervisors and teachers, their perceptions about supervisors' roles, differ in instructional

supervision and teachers' PD but are similar in classroom observation (Abera, 2017).

These roles of supervisors in the Ethiopian context can be interpreted as *managers of*

change, *instructional specialist* and *administrators* (Wiles & Bondi 1996, cited in Zepeda 2012).

With Supervisors as managers of change, Wiles and Bondi (1996) indicated that "systemic

reform movements require supervisors to manage and implement change" (Zepeda, 2012, p. 55).

Supervisors as instructional specialists, apart from research and communication, teach teachers

how to manoeuvre the instructional process (Wiles & Bondi 1996, cited in Zepeda 2012). It is

possible and more likely that during the inspection of lesson plans, the supervisors would

communicate their ideas and guide or teach the teachers as to what to do in lesson planning. This

interaction between the teachers and supervisors positions the supervisors as an instructional

specialist. One of the roles given by Kenea (2018), in regard to the supervisors in Ethiopia, is

that they provide resources and general guidance to teachers for effective instructional practices.

It is the job of school administrators to provide resources, or at least show, where resources can

be gotten, for the smooth running of the school organisation (Hoy, Miskel, & Tarter, 2012; Lok,

Westwood, & Crawford, 2005). It is in this context that some of the Ethiopian instructional

supervisors' role depicts the notion of supervisors as administrators. With these roles plaid by

supervisors in Ethiopia, it suggests that teachers have the necessary support and environment to

work more efficiently and become better professionals.

It can be seen that in terms of similarities, supervisors' role as an *instructional specialist*

in the Ethiopian context is similar to that of Ghana. Nigeria and Ghana do not share any role in

common if they are interpreted in the views of Wiles and Bondi, but with the same views and

interpretations, Ethiopia and Nigeria are similar in terms of supervisors' role which is that they are both *managers of change*. Beyond these interpretations and conceptualisation of supervisors' role, all these countries can share a lot of similarities with Ghana in some supervisory practices. Next is the review of the literature concerning supervisors' role, in countries outside Africa.

Role of Supervisors in Teachers' PD in some Countries Outside Africa

Two countries are chosen outside Africa – the USA and Lebanon – on purpose. The purpose is that Lebanon and the USA supervision systems are different from that of Ghana (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Mette et al., 2015; El-Murr, 2015). Therefore, it is important to compare Ghana with these countries to see if there are lessons to learn regarding instructional supervision and teachers' PD. In terms of the difference, whereas instructional supervisors in Ghana are responsible for a circuit (Baffour-Awuah, 2011), those in Lebanon (Chmeissani, 2013; El-Murr, 2015), and the USA (Mette et al., 2015; Rous, 2004), are responsible for specific schools. It must be stated that the review of the literature in these countries is not meant to be exhaustive but to give an idea of what instructional supervisors' role entails in these countries.

In Lebanon, issues about *instructional supervision* and teachers' PD are quite interesting to some young researchers (Chmeissani, 2013; El-Murr, 2015). Some of these researchers studied the topic for their master's thesis (Chmeissani, 2013; El-Murr, 2015). Chmeissani (2013) studied the topic with the purpose of exploring the role of instructional supervisors as it is perceived by teachers, supervisors, and principals, whereas El-Murr (2015) designed her thesis to understand how teachers' professional learning is promoted by instructional supervisors. Chmeissani (2013) found, among other things, that the supervisor is a curriculum and *instructional specialist* as well as a community builder. These are positive attributes of a

supervisor and no wonder El-Murr (2015) found that teachers wished they had more direct

support from supervisors. It is most likely the teachers who were sampled in both studies

considered supervision as important for which reason they proposed their (supervisors') role as

community builder and instructions specialist (Chmeissani, 2013), and therefore, will need more

of the supervisors' support (El-Murr, 2015). Even though the education structure in Lebanon is

different than that of Ghana, the results of these studies depict similarities in regard to

supervisory practices. In Ghana, Baffour-Awuah (2011) found some of the roles of supervisors

are guidance and monitoring, which can as well, be interpreted as an *instructional specialist.*

In the USA, instructional supervision and teachers PD are part of the key practices in

education. Literature has shown that teachers' PD, to a very large extent, depends on the role the

instructional supervisor play (Hallinger, 1992; Russell & Russell, 2011). A study was conducted

to assess the role of school principals in teachers' professional learning in the USA (Bredeson &

Olof, 2000). They found four avenues through which principals influence teachers' PD. One

approach was that the principal serves as an instructional leader and a steward; modelling what

the school stands for and demonstrating expertise in teaching. This compares very well with

Ghana and Lebanon. In Ghana, Baffour-Awuah (2011) found that the supervisor guides teachers

– this is an instructional specialist role. In Lebanon, Chmeissani (2013) found the same as the

role of instructional supervisors. In comparison, these two countries have some similarities in

supervisory practices with that of Ghana. There are other roles such as personnel counsellor, and

PD manager found in Lebanon (Chmeissani 2013), and collaboration between teachers and

supervisors, found to be key in teachers' PD in the USA (Mette et al., 2015).

Whiles those few studies may not be representative of what is going on regarding

supervisors' role in these countries, it can be said that they gave a hint of what may be going on.

Having reviewed the literature on the various aspects of supervisors' role in teachers' PD, a look at the challenges supervisors face in the perspective of the literature can help situate, interpret and give meaning to the results of the study. Next is a review of the challenges facing supervisors in their line of duty.

Challenges Faced by Instructional Supervisors in their Supervisory Practices

A successful teacher connotes a successful school (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007; Zepeda, 2012). Due to this, instructional supervisors would do everything within their power to ensure the teacher succeeds (Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). However, there are challenges that militate against this goal of the supervisors. This section reviews the literature on the challenges, instructional supervisors face in their bid to promote teacher's PD and teachers' success.

Literature indicated that there are challenges facing instructional supervisors. Some of these challenges are lack of effective time management practices (Grissom, Loeb, & Master, 2013; Hallinger & Murphy, 2013; Khan, Khan, Ahmad, & Naseer-ud-Din, 2015; Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015; May, Huff, & Goldring, 2012; Botha, 2013), resource constraints (Dickson, 201; Ekundayo, Oyerinde, & Kolawole 20131), inadequate leadership skills and expertise due to lack of training (Dickson, 2011; Ekundayo, Oyerinde, & Kolawole 20131), difficulty in balancing work and family responsibilities (Moorosi, 2007), creating effective school climate for teachers and students (Hoy, Miskel, & Tarter, 2012), managing teacher burn-out and teacher ineffectiveness (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Pawlas & Oliva, 2008) and teachers attitude towards supervisors and supervision (Baffour-Awuah, 2011). Another challenge for supervisors has to do with the fact that their reports are not always worked on (Dickson, 2011).

Not everybody is able to practice effective time management (Botha, 2013). Literature indicated that some headteachers (who serve as instructional supervisors at times) spend a large chunk of their time dealing with issues relating to students' discipline and students' welfare (Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2009; May, Huff, & Goldring, 2012). Each of these problem-solving practices of supervisors cannot be unpredictable in terms of time needed to handle them, such that if they do not plan their time effectively, a greater amount of it can be spent on those issues leaving other equally important ones in the school undone. Grissom, Loeb, and Master (2013) found that supervisors spend much of their time doing classroom walk-throughs and teacher appraisals. Supervisors can also make a to-do list and develop a daily log of time management to ensure tasks are accomplished according to plan (Khan, Khan, Ahmad, & Naseer-ud-Din, 2015).

While resource constraints may not be an issue for some schools and districts, they are really a big deal for others including some districts in Ghana. Dickson (2011) conducted a study in Ghana that looked, among other things, into the state of supervision of teaching and learning in public basic schools. It was found that supervision was characterised by resource constraints, such as untimely and sometimes, delayed payment of supervisors' motorbikes' allowance, lack of resources for organising training and workshops for supervisors and teachers and inadequate fuel for supervisors to visit schools for supervisory work. This finding was consistent with Ekundayo, Oyerinde, and Kolawole (2013), in their literature review to ascertain common challenges faced by rural supervisors in Nigeria, and Preston, Jakubiec, and Kooymans (2013), also a literature review in Canada, the USA, and Australia. The difference in these scholars' work, however, is that while the challenges in the Nigerian and Ghanaian context, on the one hand, relate to lack of training before a supervisor is employed, the f challenge, according to Preston, Jakubiec, and Kooymans (2013), on the other hand, has to do with lack of professional development

opportunities for rural schools supervisors in Canada, the USA and Australia after they are employed. Inadequate resources serve as a challenge for supervisors because it prevents them from performing their roles effectively. Some teachers do not get the needed support on time due to the issue of resource constraints.

Some supervisors do not have professional training and skills development before they are employed (Dickson, 2011; Ekundayo, Oyerinde, & Kolawole, 20131). With this, they lack the skills and capacity to be able to perform their roles efficiently. While Ekundayo, Oyerinde, and Kolawole (20131) asserted that lack of training for supervisors is caused by undue political influence, Dickson (2011) believed it is caused by the criteria for selecting and employing supervisors; which is based on long service and hard work. Whatever the cause may be, the issue remains that supervisors need to be trained before they are employed to do the job.

Difficulty in balancing work and family responsibilities (Moorosi, 2007), were found to be some of the challenges faced by especially female supervisors. This was found to be an issue in schools in South Africa. This assertion of Moorosi (2007) is corroborated by Preston, Jakubiec, and Kooymans, (2013), when they did a literature review to get a sense of the challenges facing rural supervisors in Canada, the USA, and Australian settings. They found that potential female supervisors faced the challenge of gender discrimination in rural areas when they apply for supervisory jobs. This discrimination and difficulty of work and family balance for female supervisors influence their work output negatively. In the event that potential and qualified female superiors are discriminated against, chances are that the potential male alternatives may not be as qualified and as competent for the job, as the female ones, but they are put there as de-facto supervisors. This can introduce ineffectiveness and lack of capacity for

supervision. The likely spill-over and trickledown effect, on teachers and students learning, can

be a latent but a perennial issue to deal with (May, Huff, & Goldring, 2012).

Pawlas and Oliva (2008) outline some of the supervisory challenges, one of which is the

issue of teacher burn-out and lack of teacher effectiveness. Ineffective teachers are considered a

challenge for supervisors because they are teaching the wrong things and in the wrong way and

would not easily accept correction and support. In connection with the teacher ineffectiveness, is

a challenge of teacher burn-out. Haberman (2005) indicated teacher burn-out is caused by

exhaustion and weakened self-accomplishment, Addison and Yankyera (2015) found that

female teacher burn-out and stress in one district in Ghana are caused by work-overload and

interpersonal relationships. These scholars have similar findings in that, work-overload (Addison

& Yankyera, 2015), can cause exhaustion (Haberman, 2005) and a diminished self-achievement

for a teacher, leading to teacher burnout and ineffectiveness. In all these, teachers are more likely

to find support through guidance and counselling (Addison & Yankyera, 2015).

Following teacher burn-out, is teacher attitude towards classroom observation and

supervision in general (Baffour-Awuah, 2011). Some teachers, according to Baffour-Awuah,

(2011) have a negative attitude towards supervisors when they are being observed in the

classroom, while others do not exhibit a similar attitude towards supervision in general. Some

teachers also would not accept suggestions from supervisors to improve. These attitudinal issues

serve as challenges for supervisors to work effectively in schools.

Another challenge to supervisors is the lack of regard for supervisors' reports. Dickson

(2011) found that the district education authorities do not take timely action on supervisors'

reports, and in some instances, the reports are not worked on at all. This, according to Dickson

(2011) weakens the spirit of supervision as it makes supervisors feel reluctant to work and or write reports since such reports may not be worked on. While Dickson (2011) did not indicate the reason for authorities not working on the reports, not working on the reports could mean not attending to issues affecting supervisors and that, in itself could be discouraging to supervisors.

There were issues with organising teachers' PD, according to Baffour-Awuah (2011). This issue was attributed to a lack of enough funds to organise in-service training (INSET) and capacity building workshops for supervisors and other educational workers of the study area in Ghana. The likelihood is that these supervisors who need the training to sharpen their skills and learn new ideas would not only be denied the opportunity, but their work output would be affected.

Next is a summary of the literature concerning supervision in Ghana, Africa and outside Africa, and the challenges.

Summary

In Ghana, according to the literature, the general perceptions of teachers and supervisors about supervision and teachers' PD is positive – as they both perceived that supervisors' role has a positive impact on teachers' PD (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014). However, instructional supervisors are disadvantaged by challenges such as inadequate resources, transportation, lack of training for supervisors' and teachers' attitudes as well as lack of attention to supervisors' reports (Dickson, 2011). The likely implication of this situation is that teachers, especially in rural schools, would not have enough support from supervisors, and it would affect their PD. It can, therefore, be concluded that in Ghana teachers and supervisors believe supervision is good in spite of the challenges supervisors face.

In the African perspective, specifically in Ethiopia, perceptions of teachers and supervisors differ on a variety of supervisory practices (Abera, 2017). Meanwhile perceptions of teachers, according to a study in that country, determines their PD (Tesfaw & Hofman, 2014). The likely consequence of this situation is that the supervisory approach that may be considered appropriate by supervisors, may not be considered as such by teachers. It implies, also, that the different perceptions that the two groups have can stage a debate and further research into the reasons for such disparities. Even though it is not clear as to the reasons for the differences in Ethiopia, such differences can either create unity of purpose in diversity in their education system, but it can also be a recipe for unnecessary friction that has the potential to stampede smooth instructional practices and teachers' professional development.

Regarding literature in Lebanon and the USA, studies have been done on the phenomenon, but the results do not differ significantly from that of perceptions of those in Africa and Ghana for that matter about supervisors role. Supervisors are considered to be supportive of teachers' instructional practices (El-Murr, 2015; Ghanem, 2017; Mette et al., 2015; Rous, 2004). The positive perceptions of teachers and supervisors in these two countries would contribute to improving teachers' capacity and instructional practices and learning outcomes, because according to Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007), there is overarching importance of supervision as key to educational improvement.

Conceptual Framework/Model of the Literature

This section presents the researchers' conceptual understanding and interpretation of the literature in Ghana, in the form of a conceptual model. The model helps to give a symbolic representation of supervision and teachers' PD. Relying on the ideas of the SIT, the focus is on how supervision ensures teachers' PD in Ghana, even in the face of some challenges that

interfere with PD interventions in the country. Figure 2.1 represents the conceptual model of professional development as a function of instructional supervision, according to the literature.

The basis for narrowing the conceptual model to Ghana is because the current research is done in a district in Ghana. The model would help the readers to understand much better how supervision and teachers' PD entails from the perspective of the literature. In that regard, the model is explained to help understand it. Comparisons can then be made between the literature and the findings of the study about how teachers' PD is experienced.

From the upper part of the model downwards, it depicts supervisory practices. Supervisors in Ghana, according to the literature, can delegate teachers and headteachers (principals) to perform some duties at the schools on their behalf, they monitor and guide teachers when necessary. They can as well, organise Inservice Training (INSET) activities and or workshops for teachers, they encourage, prepare and supervise teachers who are due for promotion to a higher rank in the Ghana Education Service (GES). However, these findings from the previous studies raise questions as to how the teachers experience PD in the KNWD. Put in another way, do the findings in the previous studies in other parts of Ghana signal how teachers experience PD in the KNWD? This question would be addressed in this study.

Figure 2.1. A conceptual Model of Supervision and teachers' Professional Development

Some supervisors face challenges of inadequate resources, transportation challenges in the course of performing the aforementioned duties. These challenges make it difficult for teachers to experience effective PD (shown by the broken arrows). In the face of these challenges, teachers and supervisors have positive perceptions about instructional supervision and its impact on their PD. The positive perceptions allow the teachers to experience PD (shown by the full arrows) albeit partially, in spite of the challenges (depicted by the broken arrows). Even though the positive perceptions of teachers make it possible for supervisors to work with teachers in promoting their PD, supervisors are not able to monitor, encourage, guide and organise INSETs or conduct promotional supervisory practices for teachers, according to plan (indicated by the broken arrows), due to the challenges. These are, issues militating against

supervisors according to the literature (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle, 2013; Dickson 2011; Ekundayo, Oyerinde, & Kolawole,2013; Hervie & Winful, 2018), will there be issues in the KNWD and will they be similar to those in the literature? It is up to this study to help find out whether or not these issues can be corroborated in the KNWD.

The effect of the challenges is a diminished impact (the broken arrows) of supervision on teachers. The full black arrows that extend from *delegate, monitor, encourage, guide*, *organise INSET for teachers*, and *conduct promotional supervision;* to *logistics, transportation, irregular PD programmes, and leadership issues*, as well as *teachers' and supervisors' perceptions;* indicate that teachers benefit from some level of supervisory practices, in spite of the challenges. With such benefits, teachers are able to mentor and coach other teachers as well as engage in better and improved teaching and learning and other professional practices, due to the experience teachers get from the delegation, monitoring, encouragement, guidance, and workshops, provided by supervisors. By so doing, it shows that teachers are achieving professional development, even though in a diminished fashion, indicated by the full and dotted arrows, respectively. The question of whether the situation presented by the literature can be corroborated in the current study – KNWD – still holds.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The quality of every scholarly work can be assessed partly via the procedures and methods with which it is conducted; the methodology (Kothari, 2004). It can help understand the results and their applicability to other similar contexts (Creswell, 2007). This section discusses the methodology that was used in carrying out the research. It covers the research design, study site, target cases, case selection technique, data collection procedures, data collection tools and methods of data analysis. Each of these subsections is discussed in detail.

Research Design

There are different designs and methodologies that can be employed for a research study (Astalin 2013; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Holliday 2007; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). From the constructionist epistemology, this research adopts a descriptive case study design (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2003), using thematic analysis method, to study the phenomenon of teachers' professional development (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The rationale behind the adoption of this design and epistemological perspective is that the social world can best be constructed, interpreted and understood by those who live it, and that is the constructionist epistemological view (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Creswell, & Poth, 2007), which is also in line with the theoretical framework – SIT.

Thematic analysis as a qualitative analytic method has certain underlying principles. The first interesting principle is that, just like other qualitative research designs, rigid rules do not apply in the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To this end, there is flexibility as to

identifying themes, for instance, which depends on the importance of such themes to the research topic and not just the number of extracts and quotations from data that support the theme.

Secondly, what accounts as a theme, must be indicated beforehand, and in this research, "the 'keyness' of a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures but rather on whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). In this regard, the themes that are used, are based on their importance to the topic and not just the pattern and occurrence in the data; similar to the first principle.

The third principle is that thematic analysis allows for either rich description of the entire data set or a detail description of aspects of them. This study adopted the latter; describing some aspects of the data that are found relevant and important to the topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

With thematic analysis, there are also the inductive and deductive approaches to generating themes and data analysis; as in looking at the data to determine a structure – inductive approach – and looking at the data with a predetermined structure – deductive approach – respectively. In this study, the data were analysed with both an already determined structure, in a deductive form, within which themes from the data were framed inductively (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the level of analysis, the study adopts the interpretivist level of analysis, with the constructivist epistemology. The assumption of a constructivist is that meaning is constructed by the participants involved (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Creswell, & Poth, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2007), supporting SIT.

These basic principles which are consistent with SIT form the basis for the data analysis and final report writing of the study. The following sections look at the meaning construction, which is an epistemological view that fits thematic analysis, as a qualitative methodology.

In the context of this constructionist ontology, the researcher used a qualitative methodology. Qualitative research allows for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, with the qualitative design, the perceptions of the teachers and instructional supervisors can be studied in an in-depth fashion, to gain the needed understanding.

Qualitative methods also allow for not just the study of a few participants' perspectives, but it helps to unravel the reasons behind such perspectives and meanings the participants make of the phenomena (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2014).

Another reason for the choice of the qualitative methodology is that, even though there are studies that have been conducted in Ghana regarding supervision and teachers' professional development, only a few of these studies adopted qualitative methodology (Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018; Dayelle, 2013; Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dickson, 2011). For a study like the current one, a qualitative and deeper understanding of the phenomena before a large-scale quantitative design is employed, can be more appropriate. The current study is, therefore, conducted using qualitative methodology, with the view to eliciting an in-depth understanding (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Creswell, & Poth, 2007) of the role supervisors play in teachers' professional development, from the perspective of the teachers and the supervisors.

The choice of the methodology is also in the context of the purpose of the study, which is to raise awareness about the perceptions of teachers and supervisors about the role supervisors play in teachers' PD. This purpose can most likely be achieved using qualitative design, where the specifics of the phenomena are studied using a few participants, for much deeper understanding. With the qualitative design, the results that represent a deeper meaning of the phenomena can set the stage for future research that can adopt quantitative methodology with the potential to generalise the findings to a larger population.

Study Site

The study site refers to the administrative location and the schools where the research is conducted. This research is carried out in the public basic schools of the Kasena Nankana West District (KNWD) of the Upper East Region of Ghana. By estimation, the district is located between latitude 10.97° North and longitude 01.10° West, with a total land area of 1,004 sq. km. This is a heterogeneous district; with different cultural heritages and two different languages. It can best be described, as one of the districts with a diverse culture (MacBeath, Swaffield, Oduro, & Bosu, 2010); having, apart from the two different languages, different cultural festivals, and religions.

The KNWD also has three major cultural and traditional sections. In each of these sections, there are a number of circuits and schools, managed by the supervisors. For confidentiality purposes, the sections are named locations (A, B and C) but not in any order – 'A' could mean any section in the district. The district is also made up of predominantly smallholder farming communities constituting the sections, with few other government workers. Teachers, especially of basic schools, are the majority of the government workers in this context.

Basic school education in Ghana includes two years of kindergarten, six years of primary education, and three years of junior high school – making a total of nine years of basic education. The lowest qualification a teacher could possess in Ghana to teach in the public basic schools is a diploma in basic education. There are few teachers whose highest qualifications, however, are senior high school certificate – they are termed, pupil teachers. Such teachers are being encouraged by the government to further their education and attain the minimum qualification (the teaching diploma). Most of the teachers in Ghana hold, at least, the diploma in basic education – the minimum requirements. The teachers and circuit supervisors, in the KNWD

public basic schools, as the respondents for this research, are of these characteristics. Other details of the participants are provided in the next chapter.

Target Population

Every school and for that matter every teacher and supervisor in Ghana can provide information about the phenomenon under investigation, but it is not every teacher and supervisor that meets the contextual criterion for a target population in this study. According to Asiamah, Mensah, and Oteng-Abayie (2017), a target population is the group of people with specific requisite attributes that are of interest and relevance to the research purpose. The target population for this research was current teachers who have been at post in the KNWD public basic schools for up to five years and could be accessed for the study. The reason being that such teachers would have been exposed to a lot of supervisory practices in the district over the years and would be in a better position to provide rich information about the role of supervisors in teachers' professional development (Creswell and Poth, 2007; Astalin, 2013).

In Ghana, teachers can be posted or transferred from one region to another, from district to district and from one circuit to another. The criteria for the target respondents, that allow for selection of current teachers who taught in the districts' public basic schools for up to five years at the time the research was being carried out, was to make room for teachers with knowledge of the context of the research setting (the district) and the phenomenon, to participate

The current target population includes 186 public basic schools with 1,042 teachers and 11 Circuit Supervisors (CSs), taking care of 11 circuits that are spread across the district. These were teachers and supervisors some of which were selected and recruited in the study.

Sample Size

It would have been good if all schools participate in the research, however, due to "time, cost and data quality implications" (Asiamah, Mensah, & Oteng-Abayie, 2017, p. 1609), a number of schools were selected and participated in the study. A sample, in this context, is a number of participants in these schools that are not too large to overwhelm the researcher, and that are many and relevant enough to provide a high-quality response, information redundancy and data saturation for the research (Guetterman, 2015; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). The sample size, therefore, implies the size of the participants in the schools and their appropriateness (Guetterman, 2015). Guetterman (2015) conducted a review of 51 studies that employed qualitative methodologies, where he focused on the sample size of the studies and found that the average sample size was 21. He, therefore, recommended the same for qualitative studies. Against this background, the sample size for the current study is 36 participants made up of 30 public basic schoolteachers, drawn from 6 schools, and 6 instructional supervisors drawn from across the district.

Asiamah, Mensah, and Oteng-Abayie, (2017) argued that using few but most qualified participants in qualitative research can yield credible results. The 36 participants were qualified teachers and supervisors in the schools and in the district, respectively qualified in relation to the criterion of 5 years of service in the district.

 Circuit Supervisors Handbook that contained information about instructional supervisors' role, and teachers' PD in Ghana, was reviewed for relevant information (Ghana Education Service [GES], 2002). This data source has been revisited in the data collection procedure section of this chapter.

Participants Selection Procedure

As indicated earlier, the Kasena Nankana West District has 11 circuits and 11 substantive instructional supervisors. Again, there were 186 public basic schools and 1,042 teachers. Five CSs and 1 deputy district director of education, in charge of the circuit supervisors were purposely selected and asked to participate in the study. Thirty out of the 1,042 teachers in the district were also selected out of 6 schools for the study. The criterion used in selecting the 30 teachers and the 5 supervisors was based on the number of years of service in the district which must not be less than 5 years. The 30 teachers were selected from 6 public basic schools, but the supervisors were recruited from different locations, respectively across the district.

For the selection procedure, the researcher approached five supervisors and the Deputy Director of education and asked for them to participate in the study. Unfortunately, two of the supervisors did not meet the criteria. Further contacts, however, led to two other supervisors who met the criteria and were accordingly recruited and participated in the study.

Five of the 30 selected teachers were recruited for individual interviews while the others took part in focus group discussions. Table 4.2. captured locations and number of teachers for the interviews and the focus group discussions. The researcher visited the 6 schools across the district personally and with the help of the headteachers, all interested teachers met the criteria and were selected and participated in the study.

One of the reasons for selecting the participants across the district was that the cultural, religious and social dichotomy in the district can make people attach different meanings and interpretations to daily events (supervisors' role); hence the need for the selection across the district (locations). Again, language is a cultural element and people's way of life including their interpretations and perceptions of issues could be informed by the culture since "the culture of

the community influences behaviours in schools" (MacBeath, Swaffield, Oduro, & Bosu, 2010, p. 5). The selection criterion, therefore, is to make room for wider participation to help build rapport and shared ownership of the research process, and its final outcome.

Data Collection Procedures

There are many and different procedures through which data can be collected for empirical studies. Creswell and Poth (2007) outlined four procedures that can be used to collect data: observation, interviews, document analysis, and audiovisual recordings. This research used interviews, document analysis, and audio recordings procedures for the data collection. However, the first procedure that was followed before any of these, was that permission was obtained from the district.

Obtaining Permission

The researcher obtained permission from the district directorate for the research to be conducted in the district. This was done by applying to the district director, stating the purpose and significance of the study which helped the directorate with background information about the study. Permission was granted after three weeks of submitting the application. After permission was granted, the researcher selected the 36 participants in the following manner.

First, the researcher contacted the 5 instructional supervisors and 1 deputy director and sought their consent to participate in the research. Each of them was selected based on the criteria aforementioned. Interestingly all those who were contacted consented and took part in the study, even though two supervisors did not meet the criterion and were replaced. The second move was that the researcher visited each of the 6 schools and left the consent forms – these were forms in which the participants tick to indicate they consented to participate in the research

– with the headteachers, who later showed them to the teachers and those who were interested were then recruited and interviewed.

Upon recruiting the selected participants, the researcher carried out individual interviews with teachers first. This was helpful as it guided the questioning and seeking more clarifications and perspectives during the focus group interviews.

One-on-one Interviews.

The researcher scheduled and interviewed each of the 5 selected teachers. Those teachers had relevant information due to their experience in the district's public basic schools. During each of the one-on-one lengthy interviews, the researcher used an audio recorder to capture the information. This allowed a smooth running of the interview as in providing follow-up questions without missing any bit of it since there was no need for taking down detailed notes, that could cause divided attention (on the part of the interviewer). Dammak (2015) recommends that the researcher interrogates the participants (during interviews) with some amount of curiosity to understand how the participants interpret the phenomenon and that was done better as the researcher gave full attention. A lot of follow-up questions were provided that ensured interviewees provided in-depth information about their perspective of the phenomenon – *Appendix A* contains the guided questions that were used.

The five selected supervisors and the one deputy director of education, in charge of supervision, were also contacted and interviewed personally. The researcher scheduled with each of them for the one-on-one interview based on their availability, which went on successfully. Five years of continuous supervision in the district – as a criterion of selection – have given each of them enough exposure and made them information-rich participants for the individual

interview – Appendix B and **Appendix C** contains the guided questions for the instructional

supervisors and the director's interviews, respectively.

Focus Group Interview

The researcher contacted the headteachers of the 6 schools and gave consent forms out

which they later showed to the teachers and those who found it interesting to participate in the

interview took the researchers' contact information and contacted him personally. After enough

teachers consented to participate in the interview, they booked venues and the focus group

discussions were carried out. The dispersed nature of the locations allowed for only one focus

group interview in a day; three days were, therefore, used for the focused group interviews. The

focus group interviews allowed the teachers to discuss certain questions regarding the topic

while audio recording was made which ensured the accuracy of information provided. During the

focus group interviews, the researcher asked the questions using the interview guide – reference

can be made to Appendix D, for details of guided questions – that allowed the participants to talk

freely and contributed to providing thick and relevant data for the study (Holliday, 2007). Figure

3.1 gives a breakdown of the data collection procedure and the number of participants in each

location.
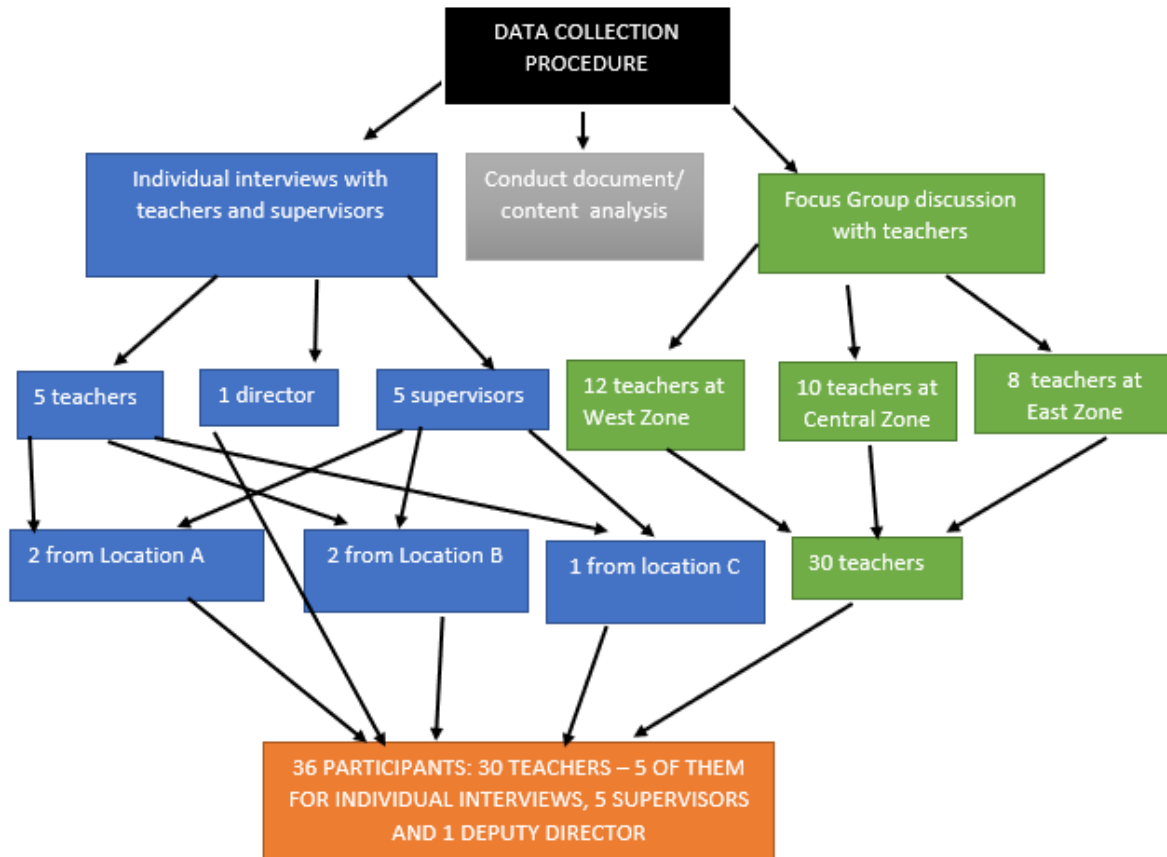
Figure 3.1. Data collection procedure and the number of participants in the KNWD, Ghana

Circuit Supervisors Handbook Analysis

As part of the data collection procedure, the researcher collected from the district directorate, Circuit Supervisors Handbook (GES, 2002)– a book that contains much of the guiding principles of supervision and its activities, in Ghana – and reviewed its content regarding the role of supervisors in teachers' PD. Details on this subject are treated under **Methods of Data Analysis** section.

Data Collection Tools

Data collection entails some skills and techniques that a researcher employs in finding answers to the research questions. A researcher can elicit the needed answers to the research questions if appropriate data collection tools are used. The tools for data collection in this

research were document analysis and interviews, where interview guides with open-ended

questions were used for the focused group discussion and one-on-one interviews (Gall, Gall &

Borg, 2014; Guetterman, 2015). All tools for data collection can be found in **Appendix**

AAppendix E.

Methods of Data Analysis

Data analysis help make sense of data. This is because the analysis allows the reacher to

interpret the data to help make sense of them (Dammak, 2015; Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017;

Williams, 2007; Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). In the words of Srivastava and Hopwood (2009),

"qualitative data analyst is constantly on the hunt for concepts and themes that, when taken

together, will provide the best explanation of *what's going on* in an inquiry" (p. 77). Data

analysis, in this context, refers to the presentation of the results and discussion in chapters 4 and

5 of the study, respectively. The data analysis provided the necessary explanations that could

help readers and even the researcher to make sense of the phenomenon under investigation, from

the perspective of the participants (Astalin, 2013; Mason, 2002). The unit of analysis was the

teachers (coming from the 6 schools) and instructional supervisors.

Analysing Interview and Focus Group Data

The researcher transcribed the audio recordings of the interview data – both the

individual and the focus group data – that provided a textual perspective to the data (Erlingsson

& Brysiewicz, 2017). As the data was transcribed, they were read over and over again for

familiarization. They were then coded and categorised. In the coding process, the researcher

looked for patterns within the data which were later categorised, and themes formed out of it. To

this end, the coding was done to form themes (inductive analysis), which were later

recategorized under a framework that was predetermined (deductive analysis) to fit the structure

of the **Purpose of the Study**. Interestingly, it is not just the interview data, but the document

analysis was, as well done within the same framework of inductive and deductive analysis

(Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes were identified out of the data after three rounds of coding

and recoding process (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017; Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). The

themes were then interpreted under the aforementioned framework of the predetermined

structure, and meanings were made out of the interpretation, from the participants' point of view,

presented in chapters four and five. It should be indicated that symbolic interaction theory was

relied upon in the data analysis as well; the premises and the basic assumptions of the theory

were relied upon in understanding and framing the participants' perspectives and interpretations

(Blumer, 1969). Detail descriptions, elaborations and applicability of the theory are presented in

Chapter two under the subheading, **Theoretical Framework**

Document Analysis

For the purpose of triangulation (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Dammak, 2015), the

researcher collected the Circuit Supervisors Handbook (GES, 2002) from the district directorate

and reviewed it as document analysis. This was done by the researcher going to the directorate

and requesting for it which was given. Bowen (2009) indicated that document analysis is a

systematic approach for reviewing and synthesising the content of printed and electronic

documents and materials that can be examined and analyzed subsequently for meaning. Some of

these documents include manuals (Bowen, 2009), which in the case of this research, were the

Circuit Supervisors' Handbook (GES, 2002).

The importance of document analysis to research are numerous (Creswell and Poth,

2007). Bowen (2003) argued that document analysis is not only used for triangulation, it also

contributes to credibility in the study. This is because it is used with other sources of data, which

eventually reduces the incidence of researcher biases. Another advantage of document analysis is that it provides the background within which research participants operate and helps to verify and corroborate the findings from the interview data (Bowen, 2003). Based on these compelling importance of document analysis, the researcher incorporated it as an additional source of data for the study – to provide a documented perspective of supervisors' role in teachers' PD *as a directive*, supplementing the views of the participants regarding the role of supervisors in teachers' PD, *as a practice.*

Issues of importance from the handbook (GES, 2002) that were noted down were:

1. guidelines for instructional supervisors to follow in carrying out supervision,

2. role of instructional supervisors in helping teachers grow in their profession and

3. guidelines for teachers' professional development.

The document analysis yielded data that was taken as excerpts and quotations, which were used to supplement the views of the participants regarding the role of supervisors.

Criteria for Data Quality, Credibility, and Objectivity

To ensure credibility, objectivity, and quality, this research resorted to triangulation using the document analysis and interview data. Various scholars indicated that triangulation does not only help gain different views of the same subject under study, but it is also a validity procedure that helps avoid researcher's biases (Bowen, 2003; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Dammak, 2015).

It should be indicated that participants' background and study area, which are credibility procedures (Dammak, 2015), have all been described, such that they can contribute to credibility. However, this research relies on the triangulation of the interview data with the document analysis to ensure credibility, objectivity, and quality.

Summary

This study is a descriptive case study that used thematic analysis from the constructivist world view. Six schools were selected out of which 30 teachers were interviewed. Five instructional supervisors and a deputy director were also recruited for the study. This study used focus groups and individual interviews as tools to collect data, supplementing the same with document analysis. The data collection was done in three locations across the district.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter presents the research findings obtained through the interviews with the teachers and the instructional supervisors in the study location – the Kasena Nankana West District of the Upper East Region of Ghana. The order of the presentation of the results corresponds with the structure and organisation of the research questions. In this structure, there is a section for a definition of Instructional Supervisor (IS), a definition of teachers PD, both of in line with the first premise of the Symbolic Interaction Theory (SIT), are interpretations and meanings the participants have of teachers' PD and instructional supervision. According to the first premise of the theory, "human beings act towards things on the basis of meanings which these things have for them" (Blumer, 1969, p. 2). Definitions by participants (though, do not form part of the research questions) will suggest the meanings they have of teachers' PD and instructional supervision. This will contribute to understanding their perceptions. Accordingly, data on the role of supervisors in teachers' PD are also presented, through to the challenges faced by supervisors and the solutions perceived by teachers and supervisors to address the challenges. Regarding the role of supervisors in teachers' PD, content analysis on supervisors' handbook (GES, 2002) collected from the study district in Ghana, was employed to understand supervisors' role as a directive, whiles the views of teachers and supervisors were used to help understand the role as a practice. In each of these sections, extracts from the data are used to clarify themes. The chapter is concluded with a summary, providing a quick overview of the research findings.

It should be explained that the sub-themes are frame from the data. The purpose is to reflect the views of participants and to understand the role of supervisors in teachers PD.

In this chapter, and elsewhere in the study, Instructional Supervisor(s) can be referred to as Circuit Supervisor(s); IS(s) or CS(s) and this is consistent with the second assumption of symbolic interaction theory, that interactions and meaning making are social and cultural constructs. By implication, the teachers have their own construction of the name for instructional supervisor - they constructed it as a CS or supervisor. CS is the common term that teachers and other educational workers use to refer to an instructional supervisor. In some instances, neither CS nor IS is used but the term *supervisor*. The researcher is also flexible with the terms and uses them interchangeably to commensurate with the constructions of the participants. Therefore, whichever of the three terms is used, it stands for the instructional supervisor, to ensure participants' voices and words are presented and used. In other words, participants' choice of words takes precedence in the study, to convey the meanings they make of teachers PD.

Thematic analysis is employed to analyse the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006) details about this method can be found in chapter three of the study. Themes in the chapter are crafted not only because they are mentioned consistently by the participants, but due to their relevance in addressing the research topic, consistent with Braun and Clarke, (2006) about thematic analysis: "…the 'keyness' of a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures but rather on whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question" (p. 82). Next, a look at a background of participants.

Background of Participants

Teachers, supervisors, and Deputy or Assistant Director (DD/AD) in charge of supervision who were the targets for the data collection were successfully interviewed and data were collected. The background of these participants is presented with respect to the first assumption of symbolic interaction theory which states that "human beings act towards things on

the basis of meanings which these things have for them" (Blumer, 1969, p. 2). In that respect,

reciprocal interactions and meaning-making in a given context can depend on the individuals

involved and the symbolic positions they are recognised with – what those positions mean to the

respective individuals. Teachers and supervisors' positions are recognised and interpreted in

connection with the work they do. In this context, a brief background about them and the

structure of their work can be helpful, starting with supervisors who have professional and

symbolic authority over teachers in this situation.

It should be mentioned that the teachers in this study are of age between 25 and 45 years,

while the supervisors ranged between 35 and 55 years of age. Among the teachers, 5 were

females, spread across the schools. Most of the teachers have at least a diploma in education as a

qualification, while the supervisors have a minimum of bachelor's degree.

Five circuit supervisors and a Deputy District Director of education who supervises the

CSs in the district were selected, recruited and interviewed about their role in teachers' PD. All

the interviews were conducted in the form of individual interviews. More information about

selection and recruitment criteria are described in the methodology chapter. Questions that were

posted to these supervisors can be seen on **Appendix B** and **Appendix C**

To become a CS, you must already have been a teacher who taught in public basic

schools in the country for some time and would have gained some leadership and school

management skills and work experience. Apart from the aforementioned, a potential supervisor

must attend and past interview about the work of a supervisor in general and how to help

teachers handle certain instructional challenges including ensuring their professional

development, in particular. Against this background, the phenomenon of teachers' PD is one of

the core duties of the CS. All supervisors in this study have at least five years of working

experience. One female supervisor was among the supervisors and the Deputy Director,

however, a reference to any of them do not identify their gender, to ensure confidentiality.

Locations are assigned letters to conceal the identity of the supervisors that were interviewed.

Table 4.1 indicates the locations they were selected from.

Table 4.1.

Number of supervisors and the various locations.

Location	No. of supervisors
Location A	2
Location B	2
Location C	1
Location D	1
Total	**6**

Thirty (30) teachers were recruited for the study. The selection and recruitment were

based on the willingness, availability, and accessibility of the teachers as well as the number of

years of service in the district which must not be less than five years. In this regard, all teachers

in the study have at least five years of working experience in the district. More details of the

criteria of selection and recruitment can be found in the **Participants Selection Procedure** of the

methodology chapter (chapter 3) of this study.

Teachers in public basic schools in Ghana comprises of professionals and non-

professional graduates and pupil's teachers. The non-professional graduate and pupil's teachers

are those who have qualifications as university degrees and senior high certificates respectively,

who are qualified to teach but do not have a teaching certificate from a recognised institution of

learning. All these categories of teachers use instructional schedules and materials designed and provided by GES for teaching and learning.

The schedules are the duration of terms of the academic calendar within which a certain number of materials are supposed to be organised and presented to the learners based on a prescribed school timetable. The materials are resources such as approved textbooks and teaching-learning materials provided by the government of Ghana through GES. It is in this context that the CS visits the schools to supervise the teachers as they perform their duties. Among other things, the CS ensures that teachers work according to the prescribed schedules, using the prescribed materials and resources. As the teachers work with the CS, there is a tendency they will learn and perform certain activities that can contribute to their PD. In that regard, data from teachers are presented to understand their perceptions of the role of CSs.

Another issue of importance is that teachers need PD to be able to implement new curriculums and other educational programmes, evident in the words of one supervisor: "…for instance this year they have introduced a standard-based curriculum, so all teachers including circuit supervisors have been trained…" and it is believed the training is to help them implement the new curriculum that is introduced this year (2019).

The data were collected through focus group discussions and individual interviews. All interviews were conducted at three different locations for different participants or groups of participants as the case may be.

Table 4.2.

Number of teachers and the type of interviews conducted at various locations.

Location	Type of interview	No. of participants	Total

Location A	Focus group discussion	9	
	Individual interviews	2	**10**
Location B	Focus group discussion	12	
	Individual interviews	2	**12**
Location C	Focus group discussion	8	
	Individual interviews	1	**8**
Total			**30**

Table 4.2 shows the location, type of interview and the number of participants involved in the various types and schedules of interviews. A look at the table (4.2) shows that the number of participants for the locations does not commensurate with the respective totals of the corresponding locations. This is the case because some of the participants who took part in the focus group discussions were also interviewed during the individual interviews

Perceived Definitions of Instructional Supervision

This section presents the perceived definitions given by the participants as regards Instructional Supervision (IS). The purpose is to make sense of what participants perceived IS to be, consistent with the meaning-making as a social and cultural construct assumption of symbolic interaction theory (Blumer, 1969), allowing participants to define IS allow us to see what it means in their own words. This can help provide a context of how they experience PD.

It must be indicated that these definitions are data-driven and for that matter are participants' views. How the data were treated to come out with these definitions and other themes in this chapter, have all being elaborated under the **Methods of Data Analysis** section of CHAPTER III of this study. To this end, reference can be made to the section for more

information. This was how they defined instructional supervision both during individual interviews and at a focus group discussion sessions.

Instructional Supervision as Support

IS has been defined in different ways. A CS defined it as "a procedure where one supports the teachers to do their work at the school level". A teacher, during an individual interview, believe IS is as an exercise carried out by "a supervisor or a leader to help the teacher to improve upon his instructional delivery".

Instructional Supervision as Monitoring

Another teacher at focus group discussion perceived that "supervision is all about monitoring the activities that are carried out in any educational institution towards the development of education and improvement of teaching and learning". Also, at another focus group discussion, a teacher considered IS to be an exercise of "checking the performance of teachers in the teaching field". To this end IS can basically be seen as a support for teachers by monitoring and checking their instructional performance to help them deliver their instructional mandate. Following instructional supervision is PD, defined in the next section.

Teachers' Professional Development

In this section, the researcher outlines the definitions of teachers' PD as was given by the participants in general, allowing them to construct the meaning of teachers' PD, consistent with the symbolic interaction theory. The views of the participants are not presented separately because apart from **Research Questions** 3, no other Research Questions requires separating the views of CS from teachers – They are, therefore treated as participants. The people perceived by the participants to be responsible for ensuring teachers' PD are presented next.

Definition of Teachers' PD

What meaning do participants make of teachers' PD in the framework of the symbolic interaction theory? This subsection presents the definition of teachers' PD which is gotten from the interview. The participants have different definitions for teachers' PD.

Acquiring current relevant skills and competencies. For a teacher during focus group discussion, teachers PD is "…about teachers being up to date regarding teaching trends...". Another teacher in a focus group discussion defined it as "acquiring skills and competencies to help maximize output". Teachers' PD is seen in these scenarios as the act of acquiring skills to stay up to date to help contribute meaningfully to teaching and learning in the country.

Updating ones knowledge through SBI and CBI. Acquisition of competencies, according to the participants, are for newly recruited teachers, as well are regular teachers. These teachers are "…supported through Circular Based Inservice training (CBI) and School-Based Inservice training (SBI)" so that if there are new methods of executing teaching and learning, they will update themselves", a supervisor narrated. According to some of the participants, the SBI and the CBI sometimes enlighten the teachers about the relationship among teaching staff, and how teachers can handle student-staff relationships. In that regard, teachers' PD, according to the data is the professional growth and improvement of the teachers by way of their skills, competencies and knowledge, to be able to function more effectively in the school community. Having looked at the meaning of teachers' PD as it is perceived by the teachers and IS, it is important to look at those responsible for organising PD programmes in the district. This is to help make sense of whose responsibility it is to organise, conduct and ensure teachers PD in the district. With this, the involvement or otherwise of CS in the conduct of teachers PD programmes can be ascertained, to help understand their role in teachers' PD.

The Organisation of Teachers' Professional Development Programmes

From the symbolic interaction theory point of view, the school community as an acting

unit in human society can associate some duties with certain personalities as social status and

recognition in connection with the interpretations and meanings the individuals make of the

personalities (Blumer, 1969). This subsection takes a look at the people who are responsible for

the organisation, conduct, and facilitation of teachers' PD in the district, from the viewpoint of

the participants. Some of the teachers and supervisors indicated that the responsibility of

organising teachers' PD programmes lies with teachers, headteachers, circuit supervisors and the

directorate.

Teachers and supervisors-initiated approach. Teachers and supervisors can initiate the

organisation of the PD programmes to the effect that the decision for PD programmes start with

the teachers at the schools level through the headteachers, the CS and to the appropriate agency.

Here, the teachers can see the need for a PD programme, but they have to inform their

headteacher who would then relay the same to the CS for a way forward, the CSs can also start it

when they see the need. One teacher at said:

> The persons who link the sponsors to the problems of the schools [such as the need for
> PD] are the headteacher, the teachers and the CS [Circuit Supervisor]. The teachers report
> to the CS and the CS report to the office and the office will now send it to the higher
> authorities for such programmes [the PD] to be organised.

In certain instances, the CSs see the need for PD programmes when they visit the schools

to supervise. In such situations, as one supervisor narrated, the CSs at the circuit level would

write their reports to the district office then the issues are discussed at the district level. If it is

agreed that those challenges need attention, "then the district will organise a PD programme for

the teachers". Some of the teachers indicated that they can also contribute resources to organise

some PD programmes. Another teacher, during an individual interview also narrated that: "for

the workshops and seminars that we attend, usually it is an NGO or GES, but at the school level,

it is the teachers who organise these PD programmes.

Directorate, teacher unions and NGOs-initiated approach. With this, it is either the

district directorate of education, teacher unions or an NGO that would organise the PD

programmes for teachers for a fee or for free. Some education-focused NGOs can sometimes

bear the cost of organising PD programmes. In some instances, some NGOs can initiate PD

programmes and invite teachers to pay a fee and attend. A CS indicated that:

> There are some NGOs that organise PD programmes for teachers. Even though you are
> supposed to pay to attend such PD programmes, I encourage my teachers to attend
> because, when they apply for promotions some of the things they need, is to show the
> number of workshops and PD programmes they attended, so I always encourage my
> teachers to pay and attend such training. GNAT [Ghana National Association of Teachers
> and NAGRAT [National Association of Graduate Teachers] also organise such training
> for their members [teachers]

The NGOs extend these invitations to teachers through the districts and for that matter

the instructional supervisors. Teacher unions such as Ghana National Association of Teachers

(GNAT) and National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) can sometimes invite

teachers for workshops at a fee, and they can, as well, bear the cost of organising a workshop and

training programmes for teachers, depending on the programme cost and availability of funds for

such PD programmes. Therefore, the teachers and CSs, are responsible for organising PD

programmes and activities at the schools and at the circuits levels, while the district directorate,

the teacher unions and NGOs are responsible for initiating it at the district level.

With the definition of PD and its organisation, it is important to look at the role of ISs as

it is in supervisors' handbook (GES, 2002) and as the participants perceived it.

Role of Instructional Supervisor in Teachers Professional Development

In this section, the researcher presents the findings synthesised from the data regarding the role of supervisors in teachers' PD, using some premises from the symbolic interaction theory. According to the first and the second premises, respectively of the theory, people interact based on the meanings they interpret from each other, and meanings people have about the world and other people around them are products of these interactions, are social/cultural constructs (Blumer, 1969). In line with these assumptions, the researcher presents the findings in this section. The idea is to see how teachers and supervisors make meaning and construct the role of supervisors in teachers PD. According to the Ghana Education Service (GES) chain of command, teachers are directly answerable to IS. Therefore, the official duties of the supervisors have the potential to ensure teachers' PD or otherwise.

The section is organised as follows; first, the role of supervisors as it is constructed in the official document for supervisors – the Circuit Supervisors Handbook (GES, 2002), second, the role of supervisors perceived by supervisors, and third, the role of supervisors perceived by teachers. Next, the role of IS according to the Circuit Supervisors' Handbook.

Role of Instructional Supervisors as Captured in their Handbook

This subsection gives the results of the study as they are captured in the Circuit Supervisors' Handbook (GES, 2002). The section is meant to answer **Research Questions** 1. The research question was framed to help understand the role of supervisors as a directive, captured in the handbook of supervisors (GES, 2002). The other research questions are meant, among other things, to help understand supervisors' role in teachers' PD as a practice, in the participants' viewpoint. The handbook captures many roles played by supervisors in the public

basic schools in Ghana but those that can contribute to teachers' PD such as school visits, headteachers performance appraisal, and organisation of Inservice Training (INSET) for teachers, are synthesised.

School visits. Certain behaviours can affect teachers' PD depending on how the behaviours are interpreted in connection with the symbolic interaction theory's meaning-making assumption (Blumer, 1969). Regarding the school visits, what the instructional supervisor does at the schools, as a directive, can determine how teachers work with him. Put in another way, the specific behaviours exhibited by supervisors in their duties during school visits, have the potential to trigger interpretations that guide how teachers receive and work with them at the school. In other words, how supervisors carry themselves can determine how they are received and worked with, by teachers at the schools. How teachers and supervisors work together, determine how teachers can experience PD. As a directive in the handbook, the CS works as a *curriculum advisor* and as an *evaluator of teaching and learning* during school visits. With the CSs as curriculum advisor, according to the Handbook, he:

> is basically a critical friend of the teachers and headteachers, which means you are [he/she is] supposed to work as a friend and colleague to headteachers and teachers to improve school management and classroom instructions, with a view to enhancing learning (GES, 2002, p. 37).

There is a greater chance that as a critical friend, the supervisors will work with teachers to help them gain experience and develop professionally.

Apart from the curriculum advisor, the supervisor monitors and evaluates teaching and learning as part of the role in school visits. With this, the supervisor's role as spelled out in the CSs Handbook, "involves monitoring classroom teaching and learning, evaluating headteachers management skills and teachers' professional competency and providing the needed support" (p.

37). In performing the evaluation role, the handbook indicates that the CSs test the learners that the teachers teach, in English and Mathematics to ascertain their learning achievement, they check the records of teachers and observe teachers teach.

Next is performance appraisal of headteachers of basic schools, treated as teachers for the purpose of this study. Headteachers are treated as teachers in this study because the study is dealing with two groups of people, those in the schools and those outside the schools, that is teachers and supervisors, respectively. Those in the schools were teachers and headteachers, referred to as teachers because, these groups of staff deal directly with students at the school – they all teach. Even though the term 'headteachers' can be used, their PD (which is the focus of the study) is considered teachers PD, and not headteachers PD. The participants outside the school are instructional supervisors and a deputy director of education in charge of supervision collectively called supervisors. This is considered appropriate to answer the research questions in this study. Subsequent studies on this topic can consider separating them.

Performance appraisal of headteachers. Apart from the supervisors playing the role of curriculum advisors and evaluators of teaching and learning, they appraise headteachers of basic schools, as indicated in the supervisors' handbook (GES, 2002). Consistent with the symbolic interaction theory, depending on how the results of the performance appraisal are interpreted, teachers can be inspired or otherwise, to work. The results of the appraisal can, as well, cause supervisors to raise or lower their expectations on teachers, also, based on interpretations of the results. These likely outcomes of the performance appraisal have implications on teachers' PD.

In this role, the supervisors develop an appraisal schedule by which they review the performance of their teachers. The main purpose of the headteachers' appraisal system is to improve the headteachers' professional skills as well as managerial capabilities to ensure they

perform their duties better and contribute to the furtherance of quality education in Ghana. It is

also to inform the headteachers whether or not they are performing well, and whether they need

to be given further training in specific aspects of their duties. According to the supervisors'

handbook, the headteachers' performance appraisal, among other things, also helps inspire

headteachers to reflect on their professional growth and motivate them to work effectively. The

appraisal thus serves as a source of accurate data for GES to have an idea about the status of its

personnel in the field. Next, one of the major roles of the supervisors that ensure teachers'

professional development is the organisation of Inservice Training (INSET) for teachers.

Organisation of Inservice training for teachers. The role of the supervisor also

includes the organisation of INSETS for teachers, with the purpose of providing teachers the

"experiences which will enable them to work together and grow professionally in areas of

common concern" (GES, 2002, p. 87). In the principles of symbolic interaction theory, teachers

would expect supervisors to organised INSETs to ensure their PD and instructional delivery.

Turning to the handbook, there is the School-Based INSET (SBI) and Cluster-Based

INSET (CBI). For the SBI, teachers of a particular school would "identify their teaching and

learning needs discuss and generally agree that they are worth a place in the INSET programme

of their school" (GES, 2002, p. 87). With such an agreement, the INSET is organised which must

not be during instructional hours. The SBI is organised not less than four times in a term. The

programme and activities of the SBI are "communicated to the District Director of education

through the CS" (GES, 2002, p. 90). Where there is the need for materials and resources to be

provided for the INSET, the education directorate provides, and the programme is organised.

Just like the SBI, the Cluster-Based Inservice training is also a need-based INSET,

organised two times a term. A cluster is a group of schools – not less than three and not more

than five schools – that are a walking distance to the cluster centre. The headteachers of the schools, forming the cluster are responsible for organising it. Planning towards the organisation of a CBI is done at the beginning of the term. In this planning, the venue topics of common concern and all other necessary logistics are decided by the headteachers of the cluster and communicated to the Director through the CS. Again, the directorate supports the CBI with the needed resources for it to be organised. After every INSET, the headteachers and the supervisor make a follow-up with the teachers to see the impact or otherwise of the programme and to make an informed decision about the next line of action, all of which must be to sustain teachers' PD leading to effective teaching and learning.

The duties of supervisors as captured in their handbook are, therefore, school visits that allow the supervisor to serve as a curriculum advisor and as an evaluator of teaching and learning; headteachers performance appraisal; and organisation of INSETs. As indicated earlier, there are many roles played by circuit supervisors, but these three roles are directly linked to teachers' PD. Next, the perception of instructional supervisors of their role in teachers' PD.

Instructional Supervisors' Perception of their Role

This section is devoted to presenting the data gathered from the instructional supervisors and the Deputy Director. In reference to the symbolic interaction theory, people reciprocate behaviours based on their interpretation of the context, the meaning and the people they are interacting with (Blumer, 1969). The school community believes supervisors have the authority to initiate certain programmes and activities that can, among other things, ensure teachers' PD. Supervisors can internalize those perceptions on themselves. It is important to see how they internalise and describe their role in this context as supervisors. To this end, themes that emanate from the data (data-driven), are presented under an already-determined structure (which is

analyst driven) and the organisation of the **Research Questions** and the **Purpose of the Study**

(Braun & Clarke, 2006). Put differently, the themes are of inductive analysis, within a

framework of deductive approach – a blend of the two, for that matter. Therefore, it is the

sections of the data that answers the research questions that are coded, thematized and presented

here. Details of these are found under the **Methods of Data Analysis** section of CHAPTER III of

this study. Next, the perceptions of teachers and supervisors are presented in Table 4.3, for a

quick overview.

Table 4.3.

Perceptions of supervisors and teachers about the role of supervisors in teachers' PD

Perceptions of supervisors on their role in teachers' PD	Perceptions of teachers on the role of supervisors in teachers' PD
Monitoring role	Monitoring role
Liaison officer role	Liaison officer role
Training and facilitation officer role	Training and facilitation officer role
Instructional specialist/guidance role	Instructional specialist/Guidance role
	Encouragement role

Table 4.3 presents the views of the two groups of participants. The purpose of presenting the

table this way is to help answer the items 2 and 3 of the **Research Questions**. In spite of that, in

this section, only the perceptions of the supervisors are analysed. That of the teachers are equally

analysed in the section that followed this section.

      Monitoring role. Supervisors shared their views about the role they play, as they

construct it, in teachers' PD. One of them indicated that "as a CS, you monitor teaching and

learning activities in the circuit and then report any challenges in the field to the education office for redress". The idea behind framing this theme is not only due to the overwhelming mention of it by the supervisors, but how it relates to other roles such as liaison officer, training and facilitation, among others. One supervisor said, they "divided the district into a number of circuits with a number of schools under each circuit and put a supervisor there, to monitor the day-to-day running of the schools…" Put in a different way, another supervisor said, "the mandate of the supervisor is to monitor the teachers closely, to ensure that they deliver or do their work". In a different framing, a supervisor also said, he sees himself as a watchman of the teachers in the circuit where he ensures that the teachers deliver their work to help the learners.

It can be seen that the supervisors perceived one of their roles in teachers' PD to be monitoring. They monitor teachers' lesson planning, attendance, teaching, and learning and support them with training where necessary. Another role that the supervisors alluded to, was to link the schools and for that matter the teachers to the district directorate. This role is framed *liaison officer role.*

Liaison officer role. In the process of monitoring the teachers, the supervisor is given certain information by the teachers, for example, issues concerning the shortage of teaching and learning materials such as lesson notebooks, for teachers to use in carrying out their instructional duties. In such situations, the supervisors explained, is it is their duty to send these pieces of information to the education directorate on behalf of the teachers. One of them explained:

> For our role as supervisors, you are to serve as a link between the schools in the circuit and the district. In that case, you are to collect data from the circuit to the district education office and then vice versa.

Other challenges of teachers that are identified by the supervisors can be sent to the directorate, in the form of reports, evident in this supervisor's words:

> Normally when we identify challenges in the teachers' delivery, we write our report to the district office then we discuss them. Where the teachers are found wanting then the district will organise a PD programme for the teachers. This is what we do mostly.

As the supervisor links the directorate to the schools, he is playing the role of liaison officer for the school and the directorate. This is the basis for framing it as a *liaison officer role*. By playing this role, the supervisors can identify some issues that can effectively be resolved by training the teachers on how to handle them. Next is the theme of training as the role of supervisors.

Training and facilitation role. As the supervisors serve as liaison officers, they identify challenges the teachers face. Some of these challenges can effectively be resolved by training the teachers. The supervisor could organise the needed training for the teachers. He can, as well, facilitate the training of the teachers by recommending organisation of SBI or CBI as the case may be if resources are available. In such instances, they are playing the role of *training and facilitation officers*. One of the supervisors indicated: "my role is to make sure that the CBI and the SBI are organised in the circuit, I facilitate their organisation, but the challenge is always about resources". Another supervisor put it this way:

> he [the CS) also organises his own training at the circuit level for his teachers and give advice as to what to do in terms of probably the teacher himself professional development. So, these are the areas that the CS works to ensure teachers' professional development.

As presented earlier, the SBI and CBI are decided by teachers and supervisors respectively. But to organise any of these PD programmes, the supervisor must be in the known as he would facilitate the provision of the necessary resources needed for the programme. The supervisor can sometimes even be invited by the teachers to be a resource person; to train the teachers, evidence in the words of this supervisor:

> At times some of the schools invite you to come and observe, they can invite you to be part and at times some of the schools can invite you to come and be a resource person, to be a facilitator in the programme.

One of them also argued that "the CS in conjunction with the headteacher, can guide or even train some of the teachers how to write lesson notes". Lesson notes in Ghana are the written plan of how a lesson would be delivered in class (GES-JICA, 2010). A lesson note is used in some context to mean a prepared summary of the lesson, written for learners. The idea is that there are some teachers who do not know how to write this plan or note. The supervisors and headteachers can take it upon themselves to train these teachers on how to write the plan or the note for the lesson to be taught in class. Essentially, there are other training programmes, apart from INSETs, as this CS put it, "When newly trained teachers are appointed, we trained them on how to write lesson notes, school organization, management, and others".

It must be mentioned that in some instances, the teachers do not need training, all they need is guidance. In such instances, the supervisor comes in to guide them as an instructional specialist. Next, is the instructional specialist role crafted out of the concept *guidance*.

Instructional specialist role. Even though INSET can go on for a number of times in a term, teachers can be guided to do some instructional activities without necessarily undertaking training. In his role as an instructional specialist, the supervisor guides the teachers in instructional matters such as teaching some topics, lesson plans, among others. The need for guidance comes when the teachers do not necessarily need full-fledge INSET. In these instances, the supervisor provides guidance, because the teachers have the ideas already, they are only inexperienced. One supervisor had this to say:

> "…what we do as CSs is that when you go round and then you see that a teacher is finding it difficult to teach a particular topic, you can guide that teacher, if a teacher is finding it difficult to write a scheme of work or lesson notes, you can guide that teacher

and can also seize that opportunity to organise a small PD programme for teachers on how to do these things.

The supervisor can sometimes demonstrate to the teachers how to go about an instructional activity. One supervisor had this to say regarding demonstration:

> we sometimes demonstrate to the teachers how to teach, if we found out that some teachers do not teach well, we call them and discuss with them some of their weaknesses and help them where necessary, so we guide, and we teach.

Here, the CS as a specialist in instructional issues, guides the teacher in methods of teaching certain subjects and topics in such subjects, as in the words of this supervisor, when he was interviewed: "Some of the teachers cannot write lesson notes. So, the CS in conjunction with the headteacher can guide or even train some of the teachers how to write lesson notes". The teachers can, as well, be guided in different aspects of teaching and learning such as lesson notes writing, problem-solving, classroom management and other activities in which the teachers may need guidance. As long as the supervisors see that need, they come in to guide.

Having presented the findings regarding perceptions of supervisors about their role in teachers' PD, next is to look at the data on teachers' perceptions of supervisors' role.

Teachers' Perception of Supervisors Role

In this section, teachers' perception of the role of supervisors is presented. Also, with reference to the first premise of the symbolic interaction theory which states that "human beings act towards things on the basis of meanings which these things have for them" (Blumer, 1969, p. 2), the data is analysed on how teachers interpret and make meaning of the role of their superiors – the supervisors – in an education context, as they often interact with them. In reference to **Table 4.3**, perceptions of teachers are presented alongside those of supervisors. Next is, therefore, some analysis of the specific findings on teachers' perceptions and interpretations of the supervisors' roles which originated from the data, (data-driven themes).

Monitoring role. A teacher indicated in one of the focus group discussions that "supervisors' role is, monitoring and assessing teachers and students in a school setting". This follows a similar pattern as some of the supervisors who indicated they monitor teaching and learning in the schools. The teachers also indicated they perceived supervisors monitor them closely to ascertain how instructional activities in general, are performed and how teaching and learning in particular, is carried out in the classroom, evident in this teachers' words during an individual interview.

> He [the supervisor] monitors what is going on in the classroom with regard to teaching and learning; how teachers teach and how students also take that teaching being given by the teacher. The monitoring is to ensure the right thing is done, if it is teaching, it should be done properly.

The same theme was mentioned by a supervisor as monitoring the daily running of the school, which suggest a pattern in this theme.

Not only do the circuit supervisors monitor teaching and learning in the classroom, but they also "monitor teachers lesson notes, teachers' activities in the class, children's behavior, teachers' behavior, punctuality, regularity and discipline in the schools", another teacher said, during an individual interview. This is similar to what one supervisor indicated that they monitor teaching and learning in the classroom.

The CSs facilitates the organisation of PD programmes such as SBIs and CBIs. It was reported at one of the focus group discussions with the teachers that "…in the day of the programme [PD program], the CSs are there to monitor and make sure that the programme runs smoothly". Another teacher in a focus group discussion put it this way: "when it comes to supervision you are being monitored so you are forced to do what is expected of you". The idea is "being force" was not expressed by any supervisor and was also expressed by only this

teacher. Therefore, monitoring is seen as facilitating teachers PD by some participants but one of the teachers see it as an act of forcing them to do what is expected of them. It can, therefore, be seen that the theme of monitoring is expressed differently by the participants, even though much of their conception of it relates to teaching and learning.

The monitoring role of supervisors, perceived by the teachers relates to another role, also from the perspective of the teachers, the liaison officer role, presented next.

Liaison officer role. The teachers also perceived that issues of the schools are presented to the education directorate through the supervisor. Some challenges that hinder teaching and learning, for example, when teaching and learning materials are not available, the supervisor reports to the office, hence the liaison officer role. This teacher in an individual interview has this to say:

> I just went to class last week and I was talking about pen drives, given examples…the students have been going to parties and they see public address systems. Some of them say they know pen drives others said they don't know. So today like this, I had to bring two pen drives...The supervisors should see all these things and go back to report to authorities about what is hindering teaching and learning.

Another teacher corroborated this during a focus group discussion:

> …there are challenges you can't handle them in the school, like textbooks, when you are short of textbooks, at least you are not supposed to go directly, you will have to communicate to the supervisor, and the supervisor will take the information to the office so that the problem will be solved.

The liaison officer role of the instructional supervisor does not end with solving the schools' material problems, it includes linking the schools to the right people with the right expertise to solve technical problems. This was brought to light when a teacher, during the individual interview said that "we sometimes organise SBIs to work on challenging topics, for example, basic electronics. The supervisor contacted someone in charge of science and

mathematics, then he came and helped us solved it". The supervisor basically is perceived to be

playing this role by helping provide the needed resources for teaching and learning, or by linking

the school to the needed expertise for problem-solving purposes.

The data suggest that both supervisors and teachers express the liaison officer role as an

act where supervisors serve as a link to the education office. The teachers, however, see it

beyond that as they considered it to be the supervisors contacting the right people for teachers to

conduct PD programmes. This role is related to training and facilitation which is illustrated next.

Training and facilitation role. Like the rest of the roles, the training and facilitation role

of supervisors, as a sub-theme, was crafted out of the words of the teachers when they describe

the CSs' role. One of them said this at an individual interview: "Really, the supervisor is a

facilitator, to ensure teachers do their work…". facilitation, as a concept may have different

meanings but with this teacher, it is a role supervisors play "to ensure teachers do their work". In

a similar fashion, another teacher, at an individual interview, said:

> I think the supervisors play the role of facilitation, they are facilitators to ensure that the
> right thing is done, after PD programmes, they come back to ensure that the right thing is
> done, they come back to ensure that the right thing is being implemented.

In connection with ensuring the right thing is done, the instructional supervisors help in

teacher transfer issues. This was mentioned in an interview with one teacher:

> Another thing is transfer issues; the supervisor will come to help you sort it out. You
> transfer some people they don't want to go; you transfer some people into the school,
> they don't want to come. So, the supervisor comes in to help sort it out.

Apart from the facilitation aspect of the supervisors' role under discussion, a teacher

perceived that the supervisor also trains headteachers:

> You know, in the district we have many schools, such that the supervisor will not be able
> to train every teacher, so in some instances, the district trainer trains the circuit

supervisors and the circuit supervisors will train headteachers and the headteachers will then train the teachers. For example, staff appraisal was introduced in the circuit as well as the duties of a headteacher such as records keeping, our supervisor trained us.

The training and facilitation role of the supervisors, some of the teachers explained, has to do with the teachers inviting the supervisor to an SBI center to serve as a trainer. In such situations, the supervisor is like a guest speaker invited to deliver a speech to a specific audience, in this case, teachers.

Even though the theme of training and facilitation has been widely expressed by the participants, there are variations in the pattern of how it is conceptualised. While the views of supervisors suggest that training and facilitation relate to PD programmes, that of teachers relate more to solutions to their teaching and learning activities and ensuring they do the right thing. Perceptions of both groups of participants, however, suggest they see facilitation as an act of training teachers – both new and regular teachers.

As the circuit supervisor trains and facilitate instructional activities to ensure teachers PD, certain situations arise that do not require training but guidance.

Instructional specialist role. Framing of this sub-theme as a role of supervisors, just like any other sub-theme, emanates from the interpretation of the responses given by the teachers. One of them indicated during the individual interview that: " The role [of supervisors] is about guiding the teachers to do the right thing and helping teachers solve problems". This statement can be interpreted to mean the supervisor knows how to solve instructional problems, hence his ability to help teachers do the right thing and solve problems as well. Another teacher, in a focus group discussion, put it this way: "For me, supervision is when you are being guided to do something and you are expected to do it well because you are being monitored and you wouldn't want a situation where your mistakes will be too much". In the words of these teachers, the

guidance makes teachers put off their best to avoid making many mistakes. The guidance also helps teachers to solve instructional problems. This is the reason for framing this role as an instructional specialist; the supervisor is a specialist in this situation.

In a focus group discussion one of the teachers contributed to the issue of the role of instructional supervisors, saying:

> To me, it is assistance they provide for we the teachers and they assist us to solve problems, in case there are problems and the teachers cannot solve the supervisor help solve such problems by guiding the teacher through the process.

The instructional specialist role of instructional supervisors, according to the teachers, is played when teachers do not necessarily need training, but guidance to handle certain instructional issues. It is also applied, they explained, when an issue needs urgent attention. For instance, when a supervisor goes to supervise a teacher and find the teacher struggling with how to introduce a lesson, the supervisor can step in and guide the teacher.

By way of comparing the views of teachers and supervisors, the instructional specialist role is seen by teachers generally as guidance and assistance for them to help them do the right things, which is similar to that of supervisors views that suggest they are of support to teachers to help them teach some challenging topics, plan lessons and discuss areas of teachers professional practices that need improvement. All of these conceptions suggest that training and facilitation can promote teachers' PD

Apart from the instructional specialist role, teachers mentioned the role of encouragement which the perceived supervisors play. This role of supervisors in teachers' PD is presented next.

Encouragement role. There are times when, as an instructional specialist, training and facilitation as well as provision of guidance for teachers, do not yield the expected results. In

such situations, teachers need encouragement. Encouragement, according to the teachers, comes in handy, when frustrations and challenges in the profession seem to be weighing them down. One teacher has this to say, during an individual interview:

> It got to one time when my students were disrespecting me, making noise…and I was blamed for every disturbance in the class. It was the CS who encouraged me, other than that, I was going to stop teaching and leave the school. Sometimes, they encourage us to teach.

Apart from the urge for some of the teachers to quit from the teaching profession, there are some PD programmes organised for teachers which takes encouragement from supervisors to ensure high attendance, apparent in the statement made by one teacher during a focus group discussion: "In organising any PD programme in the circuit for teachers, supervisors do encourage teachers to participate in these PD programmes massively". The supervisors can inform the teachers about a workshop and encourage them to attend, especially when the venue for the workshop is far, as in the words of this teacher in another focus group discussion: "…if there is a workshop in the office [the district education directorate], supervisors will inform teachers about it and encourage the teachers to attend…". The encouragement role of the supervisor can prevent teachers from quitting the job, and it also ensures teachers' attendance in PD programmes is high, as they explained.

It should be indicated that only teachers expressed *encouragement* as a role of supervisors but none of the supervisors mentioned it. That constitutes a marked difference between the perceptions of both supervisors and of teachers about the role of supervisors in teachers' PD. Another difference between supervisors and teachers is that, while supervisors perceived monitoring as a way of ensuring teachers do their work, one teacher considered monitoring as an act of forcing them to do what is expected of them.

Having presented themes regarding the role of supervisors in teachers' PD, it is important to look at challenges faced by supervisors in the performance of these roles, in the perspective of the participants in the next section. The section answers **Research Questions** 4 that sought to unravel the challenges faced by supervisors in their line of duty. Apart from the research question, the **Purpose of the Study** is three-fold, one of which was to assess the challenges supervisors face. It is in these contexts, that challenges are treated in this section. To this end, participants were asked to describe challenges supervisors face. The findings to that effect, which are the views of participants, and not pre-determined, are presented next.

Challenges Faced by Instructional Supervisors

In this section, perceptions of both teachers and supervisors, about challenges faced by instructional supervisors are synthesised and presented together instead of treating them separately. With respect to **Research Questions** 4, which this section sought to answer, both groups of participants were required to provide their views to the question. The question, therefore, did not intend to compare the views of the two groups, neither was it intended to treat them separately, it sought the views of the participants as a whole, about the challenges that face supervisors. This formed the basis for treating them together in this section.

 Drawing from the meaning-making ideas of the symbolic interaction theory, certain behaviours put up by the CS can negatively affect teachers' PD, in the same vein, some behaviours of teachers can have a negative impact on supervisors, especially when the behaviours are interpreted as challenges (Blasé & Blasé, 2003; Pawlas & Oliva, 2008). Again, the theory indicates that people make meanings about their world based on the interpretations they make of the events around them (Blumer, 1969). The school community and the happenings thereof, form part of the events in the world which help make meaning for teachers and

supervisors. These events can be challenges, affecting the way supervisors and teachers function in their environment. Such functions of supervisor have an implication on how teachers experience PD (Blumer; 1969, Mead, 1934).

Apart from the ideas in the theory, one of the basis for looking into 'challenges', relates to an argument made by Wolking (2017) that "as a leader, whether in the classroom or central office, if you're able to diagnose the challenges your group faces, you'll have a better chance of successfully orchestrating the work of adaptive change that often needs to follow" (p. 2). Challenges are, thus, presented followed by solutions to address them.

The section looks at work-related challenges supervisors encounter as they carry out their role to ensure teachers' PD. First, a look at transportation and communication as a challenge facing supervisors, constructed and interpreted by teachers and supervisors.

Transportation and Communication Problems

As the supervisor would like to monitor, train facilitate and guide teachers' PD, there are challenges regarding how to get to the schools. There are no official vehicles for some of the supervisors, some of them have to travel long distances to the schools coupled with irregular fuel supply for the vehicles they use, as some participants indicated. In this situation, it makes work difficult, given rise to framing this theme *transportation and communication*. Again, the theme is framed as such because it does not only embody issues of motorbikes but their usability and maintenance as well as movement to and from the circuits. *Transportation* is more appropriate because it takes care of distance and fuel issues as well as worn-out motorbikes. *Communication*, in this context, refers to the information delivery gap between supervisors on the one hand and their circuits and schools on the other, due to inaccessible schools, and bad and unmotorable roads to some schools.

The issue of transportation and communication assumed prominence among the

challenges narrated by the participants. One instructional supervisor narrated that a means of

transport for the supervisors is a challenge because, for him, some of the supervisors use their

motorbikes for supervision "and when the motors break down, how to visit the circuits is a

challenge". Coupled with a possible breakdown of the motorbike, is a challenge of fuel to power

the engines of the bikes. One supervisor shared his frustrations:

> Fuel to put in our motorbike to travel to circuit or schools are sometimes not forthcoming, you need to use your own money to buy fuel at times. We do not have a responsibility allowance so that is a challenge. They gave us motorbikes, but those bikes are old now, sometimes the bikes leave us or breakdown in the field. The road network is also another challenge. Some of the schools are difficult to access due to the bad roads.

A teacher shared a similar view during the individual interview:

> … irregular supply of fuel for the supervisors to visit their circuits. Sometimes they use their own resources to fund their activities in their circuits/schools. You don't expect a CS to visit one school to another to another, he is not going to only one school, he is visiting all the schools and the distances vary. Maybe from one school to the next school could be in a different community, so they are supposed to be given transportation and fuel. A CS is supposed to be giving a means of transport; a motorbike and then be fueled to do his work...

> A teacher who indicated he has not been a supervisor before reflected on what he

perceived as one of the challenges facing supervisors, during an individual interview:

> I have not been a supervisor before but mostly what they say is transportation, fuel and you know, they don't have resources for going around, so they come maybe once in a month or two months. And, our roads are very bad which makes supervisors who are supposed to visit schools, let's say, three times in a term, will now visit them once

What makes the issue of fueling the motorbike a serious issue, as can be seen in the quote above,

is that the distance from one school to another is very long; it could be two different

communities apart and for a CS to fund such long-distance travel can be a challenge.

Closely related to the issue of fuel is the challenge of bad roads, as can be seen in the quotes presented above. Road network in Ghana rural communities is generally bad (Atuoye et al., 2015; Taiwo & Kumi, 2013). The KNWD has most of the schools located in rural communities, making movement especially during rainy seasons, challenging. One teacher, at a group discussion, said: "last week, my supervisor was coming but due to the rainfall, he fell on the way when he was coming around to supervise and see what we are doing, this is due to the bad road". The issue of the bad road crossed the mind of another teacher during another focus group discussion, and this is how he put it: "Another challenge is the unmotorable nature of the road. Some roads are not accessible at all, so if it is a rainy season, they find it difficult to visit the schools". Also, in an individual interview, one teacher pointed out that:

> There are a lot of challenges supervisors in GES face, first of all, is the transportation problem and the road network. The road network linking the various schools and the office is very poor, especially during the rainy season. This makes supervision very poor as supervisors will not be able to visit schools regularly

The problem gets worse during the rainy season, as some of the participants narrated, owing to rivers and valleys, the supervisors travel across, which gets flooded during the rainy season.

As stated earlier, the challenge of transportation and communication include distance to and from the circuit and the schools, evident in the voice of this participant:

> Distance, if the place is far, the CS will find it difficult to be in the schools regularly. Another one is the nature of the road. If the road is bad supervisors do not visit schools regularly. Most at times, supervisors complain of transportation due to lack of fuel for them to travel to the school.

> Closely related to the challenge of transportation and communication is the issue of

inadequate resources to be used by the supervisors. This theme is treated next.

Logistical Constraints

This is in respect to the resources needed for supervisors to function effectively. Apart from the fact that it is difficult for CS to move to the schools to help teachers, the challenge regarding inadequate resources for Cluster-Based Inservice (CBI) training and School-Based Inservice (SBI) training programmes, can make matters even worse, according to the participants. There are some grants dubbed capitation grants, the participants indicated, that are sometimes given to the basic schools for their general upkeep including PD activities, but these funds are not forthcoming lately. This makes it difficult for the schools to acquire certain resources for instructional and general activities, they narrated, posing logistical constraints. *Logistics*, because they are money and materials the circuits would need for training, and funds they need to hire qualified resource persons for training in PD activities and to acquire teaching and learning materials in general.

In respect of this, some of the participants have this to say: "As a teacher, you need to upgrade yourself every year. So, organizing INSETs and workshops, they need to be frequent but how frequent are these programmes? Everything boils down to lack of money". Another teacher, during the focus group discussion, explained that "sometimes if the PD programme is three days they [the supervisors] will make it two days due to resources. They may not have money to pay a facilitator for such a number of days". Facilitators here, refer to an expert in a particular field who would be hired on a daily basis, to train the teachers on the specific instructional subjects, some of which durations are shortened due to logistical challenges. In the same vein, a supervisor has this to say:

> we have a lot of challenges with resources for fuel and to organise SBIs and CBIs. I am already struggling with my meager salary to take care of my family but sometimes I have to use my own resources to go round and supervise

This quote, even as it is self-explanatory, has certain aspects that need interpretation to help

understand the phenomenon. The "meagre salary" mentioned here, as a circuit supervisor, was in

relation to the idea that the supervisors do not have responsibility allowance, unlike headteachers

of basic schools. That made him describe the salary as meagre, which he still has to use part, for

supervision work. Another supervisor narrated the problem in a similar line of thinking:

> The major challenge we face is a lack of logistics. Sometimes you want to travel to the circuit but the access road to the circuit is very bad. So, the logistics include fuel, money, and materials which you will use to conduct the training

The logistical challenges, as narrated by the supervisor in this quote does not allow the

supervisors to travel to the schools as they would have wanted. It also prevents the schools and

the circuits from organising SBIs and CBIs. Closely related to the issue of logistical constraints

is the challenge of inexperienced teachers in the district as presented next.

Inexperienced Teachers

Some of the supervisors indicated that even if they have all the logistics and

transportation issues resolved, there is also a challenge of inexperienced teachers. They indicated

some teachers are pupil teachers (those whose highest qualification is senior high school

certificate) posted to teach certain subjects they are not familiar with or are not qualified to teach,

making the CS work difficult. They are those who need training and retraining, according to the

participants. One teacher narrated during an individual interview:

> There are programmes that are opening up for students now, you finish senior high school, you have no grounds in the mathematics, sciences and English language, you will be taken through a programme until you become a teacher. They write examinations and pass alright but when they come into the classroom, it shows. So, professionally if we are able to organise some training for these people, it is good.

To interpret this quote to help understand the experience of the teacher regarding the

phenomenon, the *programmes* mentioned, are courses of some academic institutions meant for

those pupil's teachers (with senior high school certificates) who want to acquire a teaching

certificate. These academic programmes comprise of distant learning and sandwich ones,

organised during holidays (Larkai, Ankomah-Asare, & Nsowah-Nuamah, 2016). With distance

learning, the students sit at the comfort of their home while taking the required course

assessment and assignments. For a sandwich, the students go to the various campuses during

holidays, for the required course work. Both of them are not considered regular and full-time

students (Larkai, Ankomah-Asare, & Nsowah-Nuamah, 2016). Most of these programmes have a

duration of study ranging from 3 years to 5 years depending on the certificate one is pursuing.

The teacher, as quoted above, who sees some of these programmes to be responsible for the

inexperienced teachers, believes that the programmes do not offer the necessary training, hence

making the graduates of such institutions inexperienced, and in need of retraining through PD

programmes.

On the issue of inexperienced teachers, a supervisor presented it this way: "Some

teachers are not qualified, they are pupil teachers who pose a challenge to teaching and learning.

Some do not know how to teach but they are employed". Most teachers in the Ghana Education

Service (GES) have teaching diplomas and bachelor's in education. The circuit supervisor

narrating the challenge of inexperienced teachers, meant pupil's teachers and those with at least,

the diplomas and bachelor's degrees but are teaching subjects they are not familiar with.

Apart from some teachers being inexperienced, there are some others who would not

cooperate with the CS, even though they have the minimum qualification. Such teachers would

need more of supervisors help. In the context of inexperienced teachers, Pawlas and Oliva,

(2008) made an argument that one of the difficult problems for supervisors is the teachers who

lack the experience but do not cooperate with the supervisor to help them improve. This theme is present next.

Non-Cooperative Teachers

Not only are some teachers inexperienced, but even some of those who have the experience do not cooperate with the CSs, hence the caption "Non-Cooperative Teachers". Regarding this theme, it was only supervisors who mention it; they indicated some teachers do not cooperate with supervisors. They are 'non-cooperative' because, they do not cooperate with the supervisors to do their work, and they would not do what is expected of them. This is a challenge, according to the supervisors, because it makes it difficult for the CSs to help such teachers to develop in their profession. One supervisor lamented that:

> If you go to a school and your teachers are ready to *cooperate*, your work will go on well, but where you have teachers who don't want to *cooperate*, there that you will find it difficult. So, some teachers cooperate and make your work easier, but others do not cooperate and that makes the work difficult.

Such non-cooperative teachers, according to a study by Etsey (2005) do not come to school early and some will not even come at all. In such situations, the supervisors indicated, it is difficult for the CSs to assess the instructional needs of the teachers effectively to be able to help them with any PD programme.

Apart from some teachers not coming to school early and others who would come but would not do what is expected of them, another issue of non-cooperation is how some CSs are treated in some rural areas. A supervisor narrated that they "face attacks from some teachers; some teachers can go as far as mobilizing the community to attack the supervisors especially those [of the supervisors] coming from far away or those living far away from the circuit". All these boil down to the non-cooperative behaviour of some of the teachers.

Apart from attacks on some supervisors due to non-cooperation, another challenge is the commitment on the part of some of the teachers, which the researcher believes, emanates from the attitude of the teachers, can be seen as non-cooperative behaviour . One supervisor explained:

> There are some of the teachers who have this attitude of ' I don't care, I don't mind, and complaining' when we have PD programme, some of them will complain and some of them are reluctant to come for the programme, and some complain of lack of funds to pay especially if it is a paid PD programme.

Not doing what is expected of them as teachers, physical assaults and lack of commitment in the teaching profession, and in professional growth and development on the part of teachers present challenging situations for supervisors to work and that, as they indicated, is one of the challenges they face as they work in promoting teachers PD. The participants explained that it is not only teachers who do not cooperate, sometimes there are political forces that interfere in the work of the supervisor. This is presented next.

Political and Leadership Flaws

Some of the teachers do not cooperate with supervisors because they share a political interest with a supervisor or some authority in the GES office. The situation where they have a political link with a politically influential person in the education directorate, it creates fear in the CS because if the CS wants to correct a teacher (purported to have political influence), by way of taking certain disciplinary measures towards a non-cooperating teacher, the CS risks losing his job since the teacher in question can use his alleged political influence to counter or deal with the CS in certain way. A teacher, during a focus group discussion, put it this way:

> for me, I think political interference and corruption are some of the challenges. Some supervisors do not stamp their authority when it is needed on certain people [teachers] because of the political alignment when you do you put your own job at risk.

The participants also explained that, apart from the political interference, certain times

the opinion leaders influence the decisions of the CSs. One teacher explained during a focus

group discussion:

> Another problem is interferences by opinion leaders. If a supervisor finds that a teacher is
> not doing well and the supervisor wants to report that teacher, some opinion leaders like
> assembly members will want to cover that teacher up. So, meaning that they are impeding
> the CS of doing his duties

The "opinion leaders", as mentioned above, refers to local government authorities such as

assembly members, unit committee members, chiefs and other influential community members,

who sometimes cover up teachers who may be at fault; teachers not doing their work as expected

of them.

To worsen situations, it is not only the political interference, but the participants also

explained that sometimes the directorate does not implement recommendations from the

supervisors who are in the field, and who see and know what is happening in the field and what

can be done with the issues to facilitate teaching and learning. A supervisor explained:

> Apart from that sometimes the office and the CS do not work together. You can make a
> decision about a teacher and the office will not affect it, some teachers can be transferred
> but they will come to the office and stop it since some of them are politically strong. The
> office does not implement our decisions. Some teachers stay too long in a school but
> when you transfer them, they will not go, and the office will not implement your decision

The *office,* as mentioned in the extract right above, refers to the district educational directorate.

In terms of teacher transfer, it is the job of the district director, in collaboration with the circuit

supervisors who can be seen as the 'CEOs' of the various circuits. The code of conduct for

teachers of public schools in Ghana enjoins all teachers to accept transfers from one school to

another where their services are most needed (Ministry of Education & Ghana Education

Service, 2008). Some of these transfers can be done within the circuit. As the circuit supervisors

work in the circuits, they find situations where teachers need to be moved from one school to

another within the same circuit. The CS can do this kind of transfer without necessarily passing

through the directorate since it is a transfer within the same circuit. It is in this context that the

supervisor in the above extract indicated that "…but when you transfer them, they will not go…"

when a teacher refuses to be transferred, the directorate can step in and ensure that the right thing

is done. In the CS's view, sometimes the directorate does not step in to help enforce the

decisions of the CS, probably due to the political influence idea they mentioned.

Apart from the political and leadership flaws, organisation of PD programmes is

problematic. Next is a presentation of issues concerning PD programmes organisation.

Irregular PD Programmes

With politics and leadership irregularities in the district, it makes it difficult for PD

programmes to be organised regularly in the circuits even though the teachers will need it,

according to the participants. CBIs and SBIs are irregular, and general PD programmes are

intermittent. A teacher, during an individual interview, made these remarks:

> Yes, we have PD in the circuit but now it is intermittent, sometimes once in a term,
> sometimes it doesn't even come, it is intermittent now. They are organised as and when
> there are the need and resources to use in organising them

The PD programmes are *intermitten*t, which means they are irregular, hence the theme *irregular*

PD programmes. The resources for their organisation can sometimes be provided by the

government, NGOs and teachers themselves depending on the type of PD programme, type of

resources needed and at what quantity for their organisation.

Another teacher has some reservations about the PD programme in the district. In his

words, he only heard about them, which can be interpreted that he has not attended a PD

programme in the circuit. He also believes the same applies to other schools in the district:

> What I heard is about CBI and SBI and other workshops sponsored by NGOs for teachers, but for about two years now, I have not heard of something like that organised in the circuit or at our school for teachers. I will not say it is only this school, it could be a widespread phenomenon. As to whether the CSs are made to know that things like that are not taking place, I can't tell

> This is one of the themes that only two participants talked about, but it is captured here

because of its importance. It is considered important because it corresponds with a solution

(presented in the solution section) that was provided during the interview.

Aside from the irregular PD programmes, instructional supervisors did not have a key

resource for supervision – supervisors handbook. This is presented next.

Lack of Access to Supervisors Handbook

Not only are teachers not getting regular PD programmes to upgrade their skills and

achieve PD, but supervisors' lack of their handbook is also another challenge that can prevent

them from carrying out effective supervision and PD programmes to help teachers. It was made

known by some of the supervisors that they do not have a handbook to guide their supervisory

activities. Supervisors' handbook is a book that outlines the activities to carry out as a

supervisor. Some of these activities include how to organise teachers' PD. This is what one

instructional supervisor has to say regarding the handbook:

> There are documents, but I don't have one. We have the CS handbook which outlines the activities a CS is supposed to carry out whiles on the field, but as I said these items are scares in the system, so anytime you are appointed as a CS you either, through your own efforts acquire one, or you have to learn on the job, but there are policies guiding the work of a CSs

> Another supervisor also indicated he saw a document in possession of a colleague, which

is likely to be the handbook, but he does not have one for official use:

> There was one document I saw with a colleague when I was appointed as CS which has our core duties. But what I do is that I google to learn about the duties of a CS and what

is expected of me. our appointment letter has some duties, but I think those ones are not enough. So, I have an appointment letter, but I do not have specific guidelines.

The handbook, as they said, outlines activities to carry out in the field, including professional development activities but unfortunately, they did not have it. This implies they knew there were resources like the handbook that supervisors can use, however, some supervisors did not even say anything to indicate they know of a handbook. One of them only indicated other resources that he uses: teachers' code of conduct, which does not contain issues of teachers' professional development.

> Yes, we use the GES code of conduct. How teachers are supposed to perform, sometimes we look at the curriculum and also in the syllabuses, to check whether teachers are really following that content and certain behaviours they put up, whether it is befitting what the teachers should behave as according to the GES code of conduct.

Another supervisor was straight forward about whether or not they use supervisory guides or handbooks. He put it this way:

> No! not really. That is what it is supposed to be because if you give me your work, you are supposed to give me orientation, give me a document where I can always refer to, in case of anything, but these things are virtually absent. We learn the supervision on the job, you learn it in the field. As you go, you ask questions from those who have been through that, and then from other people and then even from the work that you do. Apart from that, as a supervisor, if you say they will give you a document to guide your work, I don't have that.

None of the supervisors have the handbook in possession to use for supervision. One of them indicated he saw it. The others do not seem to have seen one. They, however, have other documents that they use to guide their activities.

As in the data presented, challenges faced by supervisors included transportation issues, logistical constraints, issues of teachers' experience and cooperation, leadership and unavailability of key resources like the handbook of supervisors. These challenges do not allow

instructional supervisors to perform their roles effectively to promote teachers' professional development.

Another area of importance for this study was the solutions proposed by the participants in order to address these problems. Solutions are important because one of the **Purpose of the Study** was to "obtain solutions from the participants, to address those challenges", which informed the formulation of **Research Questions** 5. To this end, participants were asked to describe possible solutions to address the challenges faced by supervisors. The next section analyses the views of the participants under a pre-determined section for *solutions*. The subthemes under the section are, however, data-driven, treated under an a priori section or theme *solution*.

Solutions to Address the Challenges Faced by Instructional Supervisors

This section presents and analyses the data on perceived solutions proposed by the participants. The section addresses **Research Questions** 5. According to the symbolic interaction theory, social groupings have individual and shared meanings about what is right, what is supposed to be done and by who (Blumer, 1969). This is in connection with the interpretations they make of the social and or organisational structure, as it relates to their daily happenings. Put in another way, the teachers have role expectations of supervisors. Supervisors have internalised those expectations and would like to display them within the context of their symbolic and official positions as supervisors and authority, but they are unable to do so due to certain challenges that militate against them. As they interact in this situation, they can construct and interpret other ways of doing things for supervisors that can minimise the challenges they face; they can manoeuvre through the challenges by caving different 'paths'. In this context, as the participants raised issues and challenges faced by instructional supervisors, they can, as well,

propose solutions (cave paths) to deal with those challenges. This makes, the theme, like the other ones, very key to addressing the research topic.

Most of the participants believe the first solution is to fix the transportation problem for supervisors, hence, a solution to perceived transportation problems is presented.

Improve Transportation System

With the role supervisors play and the challenges they face, there is a need for some measures to be taken to deal with the challenges. One of these measures interpreted by the participants is for the government to improve transportation. They believe if the government provides means of transportation such as proper motorbikes, they will be able to do their job of supervision effectively to help in teachers' PD. One supervisor was very explicit about a solution to the transportation challenge when he said: "I will demand a favourable means of transport; a better motorbike for me to carry out my work. This motorbike they gave us about 4 years ago is too weak for me to carry out my duties". This is to say that, according to the supervisor, they were given official motorbikes four years ago but now, those bikes are not strong enough for the work of a supervisor. Another supervisor indicated the solution in a similar fashion: "One, logistics should be made available to the supervisors such as means of transport such as motorbikes and when the bikes are provided there should be fuel and there should be an allowance for maintenance". With adequate transportation, which includes good roads to the schools, the participants believe supervision will be improved.

They thought of improved transportation by way of the good road network, which will help them in their supervision activities, as some teachers said during a different focus group discussions: **"**Government should construct the roads to facilitate the movement of supervisors". Another teacher said during a focus group discussion:

> To improve upon their performance, the CSs should get what they need one of which is to improve the condition of the road network. The government should construct roads and repair others linking schools, to help the CSs' movement and improve upon their work.

The government of Ghana is responsible for the construction of roads and repairing others to ease transportation. It is against this background that the participants are asking the government to construct and repair the roads in the circuits.

Apart from the provision of better motorbikes and construction of roads, the participants also believe that "…the office [education directorate] should also release transportation funds as early as possible for them [supervisors] to be able to run the affairs of the circuits". To interpret the idea of education directorate releasing funds timely for supervisors to use, the directorate is responsible for receiving funds from the government meant for supervisors' transportation such as buying fuel and disburse the same to the supervisors. It was in this context that the teacher believes if the funds for fuel are released on time, it will help minimise the transportation challenges for supervisors to work much better. Closely related to improved transportation is CSs transportation allowance, presented next.

Provide Responsibility Allowance for Circuit Supervisors

Not only should the transportation situation in the district be improved, but they CSs should also be paid responsibility allowance, maintenance allowance and be supported with funds to write their reports. The supervisors indicated; this will help ameliorate their plight.

Responsibility allowance, according to one supervisor, is an amount of money added to one's monthly salary due to an extra duty one performs in addition to the main duty. For example, when you are appointed to serve as a headmaster or headteacher, an allowance is added to your monthly salary as compensation to you for your extra work as a headteacher. One

instructional supervisor who ever served as a headteacher laments how the responsibility

allowance he used to enjoy has been withdrawn, as soon as he became a supervisor:

> I supervise schools where every headteacher enjoys responsibility allowance. I am a CS
> who supervises these headteachers, I don't enjoy the responsibility allowance. I used to
> enjoy the allowance but immediately I became a supervisor, they withdrew the
> allowance, leaving me with my raw salary. So really it is discouraging enough.

It is discouraging enough, as the supervisor said in the above extract. By way of interpretation,

the supervisor meant that it is discouraging to not enjoy responsibility allowance while a

headteacher he supervises, benefits from such allowance. Among other solutions, one supervisor

also thinks their role in the teaching profession is key and should, therefore, be motivated with

allowance to work:

> There should also be an allowance for supervisors to help in their work. if you look at the
> teaching profession, supervisors are key, they are the pivot of everything, so they should
> be looked after critically so they will be able to do their work.
>
> Apart from the support in the form of responsibility allowance, a supervisor also believes

that they should be given financial support to enable them to perform certain services such as

writing and printing their field reports.

In addition to resolving transportation issues and paying responsibility allowance to

supervisors, the participants also believe the challenges of supervisors can be handled if teachers'

postings to schools are more balanced, as presented next.

Adopt More Balanced Teacher Posting

In connection with the transportation and responsibility allowance, the participants want

the district to adopt a more balanced teacher posting culture. Here, the idea is that enough

teachers should not only be posted to the schools, but the education directorate should avoid

posting only females to a school, as some may become pregnant and take maternity leave of the

school, evident in this expression of supervisor:

> Considering the school environment, you don't put only male or only female teachers in a school. You try to put males and females together, if you don't do that and for instance, the female teachers are dominating, some can get pregnant and the school will be left there.

> Teacher posting is the responsibility of the government – the Ministry of Education

(MOE) and Ghana Education Service (GES) – working through regional, metropolitan,

municipal and district capitals. The supervisors explained that there are instances more female

teachers are posted to a school especially schools around major towns in the district. It is in this

context that the supervisor wants a more balanced teacher posting. The theme is framed, *more*

balance to mean that teachers posted to school should include males and females in equal or

nearly equal numbers. According to the National Labour Law of Ghana, women can take up to

12 months of maternity leave ("National Labour Law Profile," 2011) upon delivery of a baby or

any maternity related issue that warrant leave of absence. The CSs' concern is to prevent any

situation where female teachers may give birth, take maternity leave, leaving a few teachers in

the schools.

It was also advocated by a supervisor that "there should be enough teachers posted to the

schools, there should be resources that the teachers can work with. This is corroborated by

another supervisor from a different circuit. In his case, a school has as many as four hundred and

fifty (450) pupils, but the teachers are only four (4) in number:

> Teachers! I need teachers! I don't even have enough teachers! I need teachers! A school that has a population of about 450 pupils, and you have just 4 teachers, how many classes? About 8 classes and we have just 4 teachers, it is a big problem! I complained but nothing is done about it.

Also, one supervisor explained that teachers should be posted to their hometowns to teach, to help minimise lateness and absenteeism:

> I will also say that as much as possible, teachers should be posted to where they come from, to help avoid the issue of lateness and absenteeism, I'm not saying it should be limited to only those from such communities, but as much as possible, those who come from there should accept posting to those communities.

This statement was made against the background that some teachers come to school late due to the distance they have to travel to get to school. In the supervisor's view, such lateness can be minimized if not avoided, if teachers are posted to their home communities where they do not need to travel long distances to schools.

The participants also believe that some circuits are too large for a supervisor; they should be re-demarcated. These findings are presented next.

Re-demarcate some Circuits

Some of the participants were of the view that some circuits in the district were too large for one supervisor, such that even if teachers were posted in a more balanced manner, it would still be difficult for supervisors in such circuits to handle the teachers and other duties of supervisor effectively. According to one supervisor "CS should be given a few schools to supervise, where you can have effective monitoring of the teachers and do effective work other than that, it is always difficult". They explained that some circuits have as many as 19 schools. They, therefore, recommended a re-demarcation of such circuits as the way forward. With this, large circuits should be split into two to give CS few schools of not more than ten to supervise, as in the words of this teacher during an individual interview:

> they should create more circuits out of the existing ones, for example, a circuit with 19 schools, a circuit of 9 can be created out of it so that you have smaller circuits. If you have 10 schools to a supervisor, that one will be more effective than 19 schools to a supervisor. So, more circuits should be created by the district and regional directorates.

This idea was also suggested by another teacher, also during an individual interview:

> when a supervisor is assigned to a particular circuit, as in the case of the basic schools, the schools should not be more than 10 or 9, so that the supervisor will be able to attend to all the schools, but if you have 20 schools, it becomes a challenge…it is not a cluster. So, we expect that if the ideal situation will be maybe a few schools to a supervisor so that the supervisor can give support to the teachers all the time supervisor should not have more than ten schools to supervise – large circuits should be divided.

A supervisor explained how difficult it is to handle many schools, especially when there are problems that need CS attention. In his view, by the time you get to the last school to solve the problems, things would have gone bad:

> Another challenge is the teachers especially when you are supervising a large number of schools. It is very difficult. If there is a problem in one school you have to go there at least twice, by the time you get to the last school, things would have gone bad. You should be given at least, few schools so that you can do effective monitoring of the teachers

The next findings to present is training and workshops. It was found that training both teachers and supervisors was an important move to ensure they experience professional development to be able to work more effectively:

Organise Training and Workshops for Staff

The participants believe that if circuits are re-demarcated and some supervisors and teachers (who need training) are not trained to do their work, they may still find it challenging. It was against this background that they believe there should be orientation, training, and workshops for supervisors and teachers who lack the necessary experience. The orientation should be given to newly appointed teachers and supervisors to help them join the profession effectively. One supervisor captured training and retraining this way:

> Supervisors should also be trained and retrained. Of late, if we are still using the old ways of monitoring teachers, we need to also change. Supervisors should also change as things have changed. The old way of supervision, which was like we were hunting the teacher,

trying to always find fault with the teacher, no, that shouldn't be the case. Supervisors should let teachers know they are there to help them and not to find fault with their work

The old way of supervision was more of fault-finding than it was helping the teachers, as this supervisor indicated. One of the old ways of supervising teachers was characterised by fault finding on the part of the supervisor, as can be seen in the statement above; he believes the change can be gotten if supervisors are trained and retrained.

Apart from helping supervisors to change from the old way of doing things, some supervisors also believe organising training and workshops for teachers would help them learn and improve their methods of teaching. A supervisor presented his views:

We also need training for teachers to help them with the methodology. There should also be resources provided to facilitate supervision. The more the supervision, the better the performance and effectiveness of the school

One supervisor equally thinks that "as a supervisor immediately you are appointed to that office there should be an orientation, and there should be some guidelines where you can follow to do your work". In his view, the training and workshop for supervisors should follow shortly after the appointment and there should be a reference document [a handbook] to help in doing the work. For him, when this is done, supervisors can work more effectively.

Some also believe that apart from the training and workshops, authorities in the district should collaborate among themselves. This is presented in detail next.

Collaboration among Authorities

The Kasena Nankana West district assembly is the local government authority in the district that is responsible for providing infrastructure including educational facilities and resources, while the GES directorate delivers the education (Nudzor, 2014). For supervisors to work effectively to ensure teachers PD, the participants indicated, there must be a collaboration

among these authorities, such that resources allocation in general and furniture distribution to schools in particular, is done in a participatory fashion – with all stakeholders in the known of the resources and their distribution to the schools – as to which school gets how many pieces of furniture. This is how a supervisor put it:

> The education directorate and the District Assembly, they have to collaborate in order to support the schools. I have a number of schools and there are some of the schools where the children are sitting on the bare floor… For example, we have situations where district assembly will just sit down and locate furniture to schools without informing us of it, we are the field workers, I have been moving around, I know which school needs what at a particular time, I have not been consulted. There was this issue two terms ago, where I have to re-allocate furniture to schools. The head was dragging his feet and the community was not happy with me. I said this one is not a community affair it is an education affair. Once furniture is giving to you and you have enough, even with some left, and you said they are taking your community thing away? It is not your community thing it is about education. So, at least there should be a collaboration between GES and the assembly.

District Assembly as a local government authority, responsible for the provision of infrastructure should collaborate with the GES in furniture distribution, the interpretation of the extract. The CS explained, however, that in some instances the assembly distributes furniture to schools without collaborating with the GES. In such situations, some schools get more furniture than they really need whiles other schools do not have enough for the learners. It is in this context that he needs the authorities to collaborate.

Some participants were also of the view that the collaboration can be more effective if supervision is decentralised. Here, "if a circuit could have office accommodation and a residential, if the supervisors come, they can stay there" so they do not need to travel long distances, and they do not need to worry so much of fuel and vehicle maintenance allowances. Another teacher, during an individual interview, indicated that decentralisation will allow the headteachers to work more on behalf of the supervisors at the school level.

> The supervision is centralized in the office… if you look at our district, it is so large; Chiana side, Paga, come to East… it is so large for one supervisor, and most of the time they call the headmasters to the office [district education office]. Look at the distance [to the office] and so many inconveniences. So, if they are to decentralise it, at least, the headteachers can be empowered so that they can take charge of the schools…instead of inviting teachers to the office to execute training programmes, the supervisors can limit it to the headteachers… so that the facilitation will be easier, and teachers will not have to leave their classes.

The terms, Paga, Chiana and East, are names of major towns and locations in the district.

As part of the collaboration, a supervisor believes that the circuit supervisors should also be supervised. This is how he put it:

> I think supervision should be done interchangeably; a team from the office should also go to the field to check whether what the CS has been doing is really effective so that if there are problems, we can be told, we need to be told, we are not perfect. So, we need to have a back-up in the supervision.

With interchangeable supervision, this instructional supervisor believes, can serve as a feedback mechanism, to help the supervisors track their performance, weaknesses and strengths.

With collaboration between authorities, the participants believe supervision and teachers' PD will be improved. Another solution that relates to collaboration is the call for supervision to be modernised.

Modernise Supervision

In line with collaboration, some of the participants believe that supervision should be modernised. With modernising supervision, the participants meant using teacher-centered methods of supervision (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Thakral, 2015) where supervisors can work with teachers in a collegial atmosphere. Some of them explained that supervisors can use video conferencing tools such as Skype calls to have a meeting with headteachers in the circuits to discuss issues of importance. In line with modernising supervision, they proposed that

supervisors adopt the clinical approach as well as the collaborative style. Regarding the video

conferencing tool, this is what a teacher said during an individual interview:

> What I think is that you know there is now technology, if there could be a way of organizing that type of tools, sometimes the supervisor can organise us in a form of video conference so that we interact and then whatever issues are to be resolved we can resolve them

> Another teacher thinks that to modernise supervision, CS needs the clinical approach of

supervision. This is how he put it during another individual interview:

> One, I think supervision should be clinical like a supervisor is coming to supervise you or is coming to look at your work, then you should be informed that 'tomorrow I will be coming to your school to see how you are performing', then you know that someone is coming to look at your work, they shouldn't take you by surprise, that is what we expect the supervisors to do.

This teacher believes that the clinical approach of supervision would help avoid the issue of

teachers being taking by surprise, as is the case in certain instances.

As part of modernising supervision, some of the teachers also think that "supervision

should be collaborative; supervisors should collaborate with the teachers. We should always

collaborate to develop teaching and learning. Supervisors should not only be criticizing teachers

for what they have not been doing". The teacher made this comment during a focus group

interview. To collaborate, in the views of the participant, is to work together in a friendly and

collegial atmosphere, where teachers are not targeted for criticisms but can even be encouraged

to learn from the supervisor and from their own mistakes. The theme is framed 'modernise

supervision' because all these approaches advocated for, by the teachers are some of the modern

approaches to supervision, according to Baffour-Awuah (2011).

Another theme that can be framed from the data is exhaustive supervision.

Ensure More Exhaustive Supervision

In relation to modernising supervision, the participants indicated supervision should be

more exhaustive. The theme is framed *exhaustive supervision* because, all the issues that the

teachers mentioned, if done by supervisors, can lead to comprehensive supervision – exhaustion.

For instance, they want official information that is meant for the teachers, to be delivered to them

at their schools and on time instead of pasting same on the GES directorates office's notice

board, where most of the teachers may not go there for up to a month:

> When there is information for teachers the supervisor will put it on the notice board at the
> district office, by the time teachers get to hear of the information the purpose for it would
> have past or three days for the information to expire

Again, for supervision to be exhaustive, the teachers want the supervisors to always enter

the classrooms and observe teachers teach instead of sitting in the schools' offices and returning.

Likewise, they want supervisors to be practical by seeing teachers teach rather than focusing on

lesson notes and lesson plans of the teacher. These are some of the statements made by the

teachers in relation to exhaustive supervision in the schools: First of all, two teachers on separate

occasions: during an individual interview on the one hand and during focus group discussion, on

the other, want the supervisors to be *practical*:

> Again, when they come and they are going to check instructions, they should enter into
> the classroom and monitor or hang around to see how the teaching is done. Instead of
> coming to sit in the office, we expect them to come and see the actual teaching and see
> what is happening so that they can see the problems and be able to solve them.

> supervisors should not always be emphasising on the written aspect of the teachers; they
> should not always emphasise on lesson notes. Usually, they are always looking at the
> lesson notes, I think the lesson notes will not help because others will write to them and
> keep them. So, they should look at the teacher teaching on the board rather than marking
> lesson notes and going away. They should be more practical! they should see teachers
> teach!

As can be seen in the views of the teachers, being practical means seeing teachers teach, it means

going beyond the lesson plans and lesson notes, and observing the teacher teach.

Secondly, another teacher thinks supervisors should deal *directly* with teachers instead of giving information about them to headteachers to be communicated to them, the researcher captured this under *exhaustive supervision* due to how complete they want the supervision to be, evident in this teachers' view during a focus group discussion:

> supervisors should sometimes deal directly with the teachers because sometimes you will be in class, you are teaching and the CS will come, you will not even know, he will come and sit in the office, take an attendance book, lesson notes and he is gone. So, what have you come to supervise? Is it the books in the office or the human beings [the teacher] in the classroom?

Thirdly, a teacher during an individual interview explained that "the CSs themselves should be monitored by the DD supervision, to see their work in the schools". With this, he explained, can encourage the CSs to work much harder.

Next, the idea of the PD programme is also crafted from the data.

Intensify Organisation of Professional Development Programmes

In the words of four participants, and in the body language of many of the interviewees, PD programmes are not regular in the district. The words of the participants are captured in the extracts presented below, but the body language of the others is gotten from their facial expressions when they are asked of PD programmes. Even as some would not give a direct answer to indicate PD programmes are not regular, their body language can be interpreted to mean *PD programmes are irregular*. That formed the basis for presenting *irregular PD programmes* as part of the challenges in the district that impede on supervisors' role as they thrive to ensure teachers' PD.

The participants believe that if all the proposed solutions are implemented, there is a need for PD programmes to be intensified to ensure the realisation of teachers' PD. SBI should be

organised at least once a term rather than nothing at all, as one teacher indicated during an

individual interview:

> To support the teachers, I think every term if nothing, we should have one PD activity maybe on teacher competencies in English Language, methods of teaching mathematics, so that you can improve upon your delivery, but if the whole year you may not even get it once, sometimes, it does not help you. You have a challenging issue or a challenging topic which you need to address, but the help you need through PD activities is not forthcoming. So, we think that ideally, every term, we should get one PD activity.

> They believe government can support the PD programmes and more importantly make it

a policy for the programmes to be organised in the district, this a view by another teacher, also

during an individual interview:

> With regard to CBI and SBI, the government should help organise these programmes regularly. Governments should support education otherwise; basic education is losing its value and that is because the government has not been taking PD and education seriously as it is supposed to be.

> A supervisor indicated the constant organisation of PD programmes will help teachers

sharpen their skills as the system of education is dynamic, meaning it is ever-changing:

> The government should do well to constantly organise PD training for teachers to sharpen their skills. The system is dynamic, the teacher himself can also pay and attend some workshops, but the government should make it a policy to constantly organise the training for teachers so that when I go to the field, everything will go on smoothly.

> Another supervisor said that the PD programmes should not be organised for only

teachers, but the "government should also organise PD programmes for CSs". He explained that

"since I became a supervisor, I have not had any training to equip me to do my work". This

means supervisors themselves also need PD programmes to sharpen their supervisory skills.

Having presented the findings on the role of supervisors in teachers PD, the challenges

faced by supervisors, and the solutions to deal with the challenges, it is important to conclude by

presenting a summary of the chapter.

Summary

The chapter started with a background of participants and an overview of what supervision is as well as the meaning of teachers' PD as perceived by the participants. Regarding teachers' PD, findings on the definition as well as its organisation were presented. The chapter also covered the role of instructional supervisors as it is captured in the supervisors' handbook. It was found that in the supervisors' handbook, instructional supervisors play diverse roles but those that relate to teachers' PD and were synthesised included school visits, performance appraisals, and organisation of INSETs. Perceptions of supervisors about their role were also presented alongside teachers' perceptions about the role of supervisors. Challenges faced by supervisors as they work for the realization of teachers' PD were also presented after which findings on proposed solutions were outlined.

As a reflection, this chapter revealed a lot of issues that would be reflected on, in the next chapter in the context of literature. Also, in the next chapter, the researcher tried to make sense of the data from the perspective of the participants. As the data presentation was a learning exercise, the next chapter would sustain the learning as it helps make more sense of the findings of chapter four.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter situates the major findings of the study within the literature. The chapter is divided into six sections apart from the introduction. The first section situates the definitions of supervision and teachers' PD within the literature. The second section deliberates on the major themes in regard to the role of supervisors and other factors that promote teachers' PD, within the context of the literature. The chapter compares and contrasts the perceptions of teachers and supervisors about supervisors' roles with the view to answering **Research Questions** 3. The third section is dedicated to issues that militate against teachers' PD, some of which are the challenges supervisors faced, situating them within the literature. An ideal situation for supervisors and teachers is also discussed in light of the literature as a fourth section. The chapter is summarised and concluded in the fifth section and recommendations are provided for practice and for further research in the sixth and last sections respectively. The strengths and limitations of the study are presented as the last section.

It is important to indicate that the discussion is not only situated within just the findings of the previous studies, but it also relies on the SIT as advanced by Herbert Blumer (Blumer,1969), and applied in some other contexts by different scholars of academic standing (Carter & Fuller, 2015; Cole, 2018; Munson, 1979). The researcher, as indicated earlier, is well aware of Snow and other scholars views and how they attempted extending the Herbert Blumer's (Snow, 2001), however, the ideas of Blumer are relied upon, due to the symbolism, interpretations of actions and the meaning-making argument Blumer's ideas presented (Blumer, 1969). Next is the discussion on the definitions.

How Teachers and Supervisors Defined Instructional Supervision and Teachers' Professional Development

Different people have a different understanding of issues and how they will define and conceptualise them can be different as well. This section discusses the findings on instructional supervision and teachers' professional development. In reference to the second premise of the symbolic interaction theory, things are constructed and are giving meaning based on the interactions among people and based on what such interactions are interpreted to be (Blumer, 1969). With this in mind, definitions provided by participants are discussed in light of the literature, starting with instructional supervision.

Participants defined instructional supervision differently. While some considered it as a support for teachers, checking teachers' performance, and helping teachers to improve, others viewed supervision as an act of checking and monitoring their performance. The diversity in the meaning of instructional supervision symbolises the experiences teachers have with supervisors and how they interpret those experiences. Teachers can, perhaps, be interpreting what they see supervisors do in an interactive process. The definitions are, consistent with those provided in the literature. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) believe that supervisors are to provide support for teachers to improve. To Zepeda (2012), supervision is to promote the growth of the professional capacity of teachers. In each of these definitions, supervision can be seen as an act of supporting teachers which can be after checking their performance, to determine the appropriate support for them such as guidance, encouragement, for the teacher to, among other things ensure her PD

Participants also defined teachers' professional development in various ways, which are consistent with the literature. The findings showed that teachers' PD is an act of being up to date with relevant skills and competencies to ensure professional growth to help maximise

instructional output. In the literature, teachers PD was seen as any activity that improves the capacity of the teacher for better instructional performance (Avalos, 2011; Chambers & Lam, 2008; Desimone, 2009; Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007; Richter, Kunter, Klusmann, Lüdtke & Baumert 2011).

In the framework of symbolic interaction theory, the definitions provided by the participants reflect how they construct and interpret teachers' PD, and that by implication, indicates that they take teachers' PD seriously. In that regard, it is expected that teachers would be enthusiastic about attending PD programmes. However, that has not been the case as the data shows that some of them had to be "encouraged" to attend PD programmes. Does that mean their knowledge about the importance of PD activities is different from their actual participation in the PD activity/programme? Put in another way, why should they demonstrate their knowledge of the importance of PD through the definitions they provided, but would need encouragement to attend the PD programmes? Whiles this question, yearns for answers, a look at the organisation of teachers' PD programmes raises questions as well.

PD programmes can be organised by the supervisors, teachers, the district directorate or NGOs depending on the type of programme and the cost involved. Even as different entities in charge of teachers PD organisation can be seen as desirable, there is the tendency that any of these entities would be waiting for the others to organise the programme; teachers may be waiting for the district to organise or vice versa. That could be one of the reasons for the irregular organisation of teachers PD programmes in the district.

Role of Supervisors and other Factors that Contribute to Teachers' Professional Development

Teachers' PD is considered very key to improving teachers' instructional practices (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009' Guskey & Yoon, 2009), therefore, the contributions of instructional supervisors in ensuring that teachers experience PD, is very critical (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Against this background, the role supervisors play and the supervisory guide they use, that contribute to teachers' PD are discussed in this section. The section also addresses the first and second **Research Questions**, where it discusses the findings as a *directive* in the supervisors' handbook and as a *practice* in the participants' view, situating all in the context of the previous studies and the theoretical framework – the literature.

The first assumption of the symbolic interaction theory, states that people act towards things based on the meaning they derive from the things, put differently, the meaning of things to people determines interactions (Blumer, 1969). The discussion in this section hinges upon this premise. As a consequence of this, a look at how teachers and instructional supervisors perceived the role of instructional supervisor, gives a fascinating picture. Apart from the constructions in the findings, the supervisors' guide (GES, 2002) reinforces this role of supervisors.

The **Research Questions** that are addressed in this section relates to (1) what the Ghana Education Service (GES) policy and documented guidelines regarding the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' professional development are, in the district; and (2) what the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' professional development is, from the perspective of teachers and instructional supervisors. The findings in the handbook, document analysis, are that supervisors evaluate learning, appraise teachers and organises INSETs for teachers. This suggests that supervisors' role in teachers' PD is not only critical but has documented basis and

guidelines in an official document that guides supervisors' work – a directive. The findings also suggest that instructional supervision as a directive includes approaches that can ensure teachers' PD if followed well. It was, however, surprising to learn that only two out of the six supervisors interviewed, seem to have seen and or used the handbook. Even though the handbook contains important guidelines about instructional supervision, the supervisors are not benefiting from them. They would have to learn those guidelines through their own means such as learning on the job or inquire from colleagues elsewhere in the country. The directorate must endeavour to procure copies for the supervisors to use. Next is the participants' views about the role of supervisors in teachers' PD.

Teachers and supervisors have basically similar perceptions about the role of supervisors in teachers PD; how the role of supervisors mean to these two groups of participants, and how they construct it, is basically the same, apart from encouragement role – where supervisors are silent about, even though the two groups differed in their description of some of the roles especially the monitoring role of supervisors. Having almost the same construction for the role of supervisors does not only come as a surprise owing to the job orientation of these two groups of participants, but it contradicts a finding in the literature. In Ethiopia, a study conducted by Abera (2017) to assess teachers' and supervisors' perceptions, did find that these two groups of participants differed in a variety of supervisory roles, unlike the current study.

Out of the five major roles found in this study, the teachers and the supervisors who were interviewed differed in encouragement role, and in their description of the monitoring role. Owing to this, the **Research Questions** 3 which states that "In what ways are the perceptions of teachers and instructional supervisors about the role of supervisors, similar and in what ways are they different?", can be answered by the evidence that their perceptions are similar in the four

roles of supervisors (training and facilitation, guidance, monitoring and liaison officer roles), but are different in one role (encouragement role). Put in another way, their perceptions are similar in the way they all perceived the four roles of supervisors to be, but they are different in the way supervisors were silent about *encouragement* which teachers mentioned as one of the roles of supervisors. The two groups were not expected to use the same words to describe the roles, however, one teachers' description of the monitoring role seems to suggest it is an act of forcing them to do their work. These are the two major areas the two groups differed.

Instructional supervisors employ these four roles for different reasons in their supervisory practices, based on the level of the teachers' motivation and their capacity, the researcher can interpret. This interpretation is consistent with developmental supervision approach of Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2007), which stipulated that a supervisory practice can be exercised in three phases for different reasons. These phases are a diagnostic phase, an application phase and a fading phase. These levels of practices and the philosophical assumptions behind them are discussed detailly under *developmental supervision* in the section **"Practices of IS that Enhance Teachers' Professional Development"** of chapter 2. The developmental supervision resonates strongly with the researcher's own theoretical understanding and the resolve to conduct this research beyond just the role of supervisors in teachers' PD, but also the reasons for supervisors playing such role. Additionally, the researcher believed the focus of the study which is to understand the role of supervisors in teachers' PD, can most likely be achieved by showing the reasons for such roles and not just presenting the roles descriptively, and this is what the model (figure 5.1) seeks to do.

The researcher adopted the ideas of development supervision to construct the model of Figure 5.1, which is consistent with an argument advanced by Braun and Clarke (2006), that

"researchers cannot free themselves of their theoretical and epistemological commitment" (p. 84). The model is used to help make sense of the data regarding the role of supervisors, by helping us see beyond just the roles, but possible reasons for supervisors resorting to a particular role or the other.
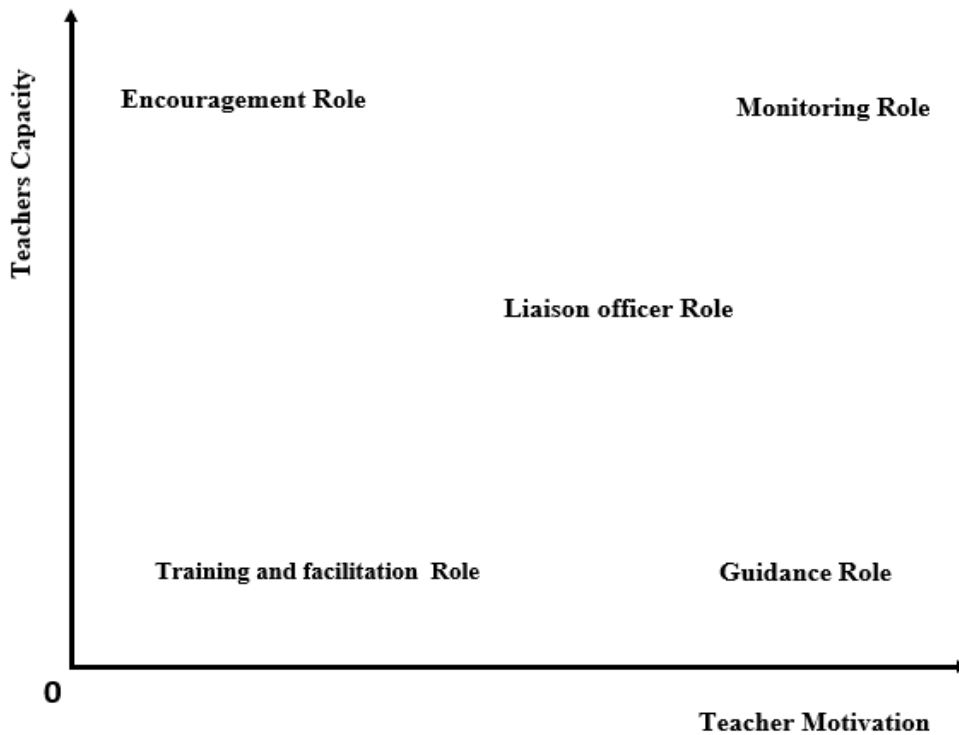
Figure 5.1. A supervisory model representing the roles of supervisors in teaches' PD

It must be indicated that the current supervisory model (figure 5. 1) has some similarities and differences compared with the developmental supervision approach. In terms of similarities, they both take into account the different levels of expertise and readiness of the teachers. To this end, teachers who would experience the application phase of the developmental supervision approach, are different from those to enjoy the fading phase. In the same vein, for the current supervisory model, teachers who would be encouraged are different than those who would be guided by the supervisor as an instructional specialist. In terms of their differences, while

developmental supervision is practiced in phases, the current supervisory model does not

necessarily work in phases since a teacher who can only be monitored at the moment, may need

encouragement sometime later. In that respect, the current model does not claim to perfectly fit

the orientation of the developmental supervision approach. Explanation of the supervisory model

can help appreciate the differences and similarities as well as its applicability, much better.

In the horizontal axis of the model, is the teachers' motivation. The researcher used this

term because it is that which determines who becomes a teacher in the first place. Without

motivation, people will not choose the teaching profession let alone avail themselves for

supervisors. The vertical axis represents the capacity of the teacher who is being supervised.

Capacity suggests the competence and skill level of the teacher, which, if combined with

motivation, determines the role supervisors play in the teachers' PD, which, again is similar to

the developmental supervision approach. Since the participants indicated the roles differently, it

suggests the same supervisor can resort to any role at any given time. The *teacher motivation* and

teacher capacity (figure 5.1), are terms chosen by the researcher to help illustrate the roles. The

five different roles (encouragement, guidance, monitoring, training and facilitation, liaison

officer) are taking from the data as major findings.

Reference to the figure 5.1, supervisors conduct *training and facilitation* programmes for

teachers mostly when the teachers are new in the system, are showing an inability to carry out a

certain instructional activity, such as lacking techniques of lesson notes or lesson plans writing,

coupled with low motivation where some may think of quitting the job. The supervisors

recommend the training or facilitate the training themselves to build the teachers' capacity and

boost their morale. Training as an alternativity for teachers' PD agrees with Sofo and Abonyi

(2018) who found in one rural district in Ghana that teachers experience PD through training and

workshops. Similarly, Esia-Donkoh and Ofosu-Dwamena (2014) found that supervisors conduct

workshops and training for teachers in different schools to help in their PD. In this study, training

and facilitation is done at SBIs, CBIs and sometimes at the district level. It must be noted that

training as a role of supervisors, was not only the participants' view but it was captured in the

supervisors' handbook as well. In that respect, training and facilitation are evident in the data,

supported by the literature and the supervisors' manual (GES, 2002). There are some instances

where instructional supervisors do not train and facilitate but they guide teachers.

Sometimes, teachers are motivated to work but they lack capacity. In such a situation, the

supervisor employs *guidance* as an instructional specialist. Guidance as a role to help teachers

experience PD is consistent with the literature as it was found in three different studies

conducted in Ghana. In those studies, it was found that guidance, coaching and mentoring are

some of the approaches used by supervisors (Dayelle 2013; Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena

2014; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). The supervisors can guide the teachers to perform functions that

they only lack capacity but are motivated to do. It is in this context that the *guidance role* is

placed to the end of the *teacher motivation* or horizontal axis of the model.

In the symbolic interaction theory, interpretations determine reciprocal interactions

(Blumer, 1969), such that teachers can see themselves as subordinates to supervisors, hence, they

would, by nature, want to seek guidance from supervisors especially when they lack the capacity

to perform some tasks. In the same vein, supervisors would always be in the position to help, to

live up to their official duty, based on the interpretations and the meanings they make of

teachers' behaviour and expectations towards them as instructional specialists (Blumer, 1969).

In a similar fashion, the model shows that supervisors play an *encouragement* role when

teachers have adequate capacity but are demotivated to work. Where teachers have the necessary

skills and competencies for the work, but they are not performing, it is in such instances that supervisors encourage them. Interestingly, it is only on this role that teachers and supervisors differed in their perception of supervisors' role. While supervisors did not mention the encouragement role, teachers indicated it, as part of the roles supervisors employ when teachers' motivation level is low. A study conducted by Esia-Donkoh and Ofosu-Dwamena in Ghana in 2014, found that supervisors encourage teachers to adopt different ways of problem-solving and to engage in other activities that ensure their PD. The reason for supervisors' silence regarding encouragement role, could be that the supervisors interpreted behaviours of teachers about them (supervisors), to mean that they, as supervisors, are not playing encouragement role for teachers in the framework of the symbolic interaction theory (Blumer, 1969).

A look at the model (figure 5.1) shows the supervisors also do play the role of a *liaison officer* at some point. The supervisors can serve in this role when the teachers are motivated enough and have the necessary skills and competencies to work. In this situation the supervisor works for the teachers by sending any information that needs to be delivered to the district education office on behalf of the teachers, and bringing as well, any information that is supposed to be given to the teachers – the supervisor basically works between the schools and the district office. It should be noted that even with such motivation and capacity levels, the supervisors still serve as a go-between for the office and the schools, otherwise, the teachers can get demotivated and slip back to low performance. The liaison officer role is similar to one of Chmeissani (2013) findings in Lebanon. In her study, Chmeissani (2013) found that the supervisors serve as liaison for administration, teachers, and community; linking these entities up on one assignment or another. Regarding the current study, when the necessary resources are provided through the liaison officer role, the supervisor would then monitor the teachers as they work.

The *monitoring* role is resorted to, when teachers' morale, competencies, and skills are relatively high, and when the minimum resources such as lesson notebooks, textbooks and other teaching and learning materials are available to be used. With the minimum resources and skills in place, coupled with relatively high motivation and capacity, teachers can now be monitored to do their work, hence the participants use of the terms such as "to ensure", "teaching and learning", "lesson notes" and "discipline" when they mentioned monitoring as supervisors role. Teachers' description of monitoring is consistent with Baffour-Awuah (2011), in his study in Ghana, which also found that teachers conceptualisation of supervision of instructions included monitoring classroom activities to *ensure* effective use of instructional time. The question is, how will teachers be monitored if they do not have the basic skills and competencies to work? What will monitoring be about, if the basic resources for teachers to work with are not available? It is in this context that monitoring is considered a higher-order supervisory activity. In this situation, the supervisor monitors *lesson planning*, *teaching and learning*, *discipline* and students behaviours *to ensure* that the teachers work according to plan.

The data, however, showed that a teacher described monitoring as an act of forcing teachers to do what is right. That is a divergent view challenging any possible generalisation of the participants and or teachers' views about monitoring (Bazeley, 2009). It suggests that the participants do not have a similar understanding of *monitoring* as the role of supervisors. This, however, does not necessarily defeat the classification of *monitoring* as a higher-order supervisory activity, it shows that generalisation of participants' views is not data-driven. To this end, the idea is not to generalise monitoring as a higher-order supervisory activity for all participants, and it is not claimed either, that teachers appreciate and enjoy monitoring and would

like to be monitored. The claim is that supervisors monitor teachers, instead of train, guide and encourage them when they see teachers' morale and capacity are relatively high.

Hoy, Miskel, and Tarter (2012) indicated monitoring is done to provide constructive feedback to the teacher after initiating a programme – which, in the context of this study, can be described as a PD programme. The monitoring role is captured in the supervisors' handbook, stated as "…monitoring classroom teaching and learning…" (GES, 2002, p. 37), which is done during school visits. This shows that monitoring as an activity is both a directive and a practice. What is intriguing, however, is that teachers and supervisors conceptualised the role of supervisors as monitoring, but supervisors do not have the handbook that shows what and how to monitor. One supervisor during the interview indicated that:

> We learn the supervision on the job, you learn it in the field. As you go, you ask questions from those who have been through that, and then from other people and then even from the work that you do…

According to the third premise of the symbolic interaction theory, people make meanings through interpretive processes when they are dealing with things and situations they encounter (Blumer, 1969). Against this background, teachers interpret and refer to supervisors as such, with certain expectations such that even though supervisors do not have their handbook, they would construct, internalise and adopt ways of doing their work including monitoring, because that is what they interpreted the situation to be.

To summarise the section, the perceptions of teachers and supervisors about the role of supervisors in teachers PD do not vary much; they both believe supervisors train and facilitate, guide, monitor and link teachers to the education office and vice versa, all of which are consistent with the literature. Perceptions of these two groups are, however, different regarding how they perceived monitoring. While the supervisors perceived it as *monitoring* classroom

activities, one teacher differed by saying it was an act of forcing teachers to do their work. With the encouragement role of supervisors, none of the supervisors mentioned it as part of their roles, but teachers did, and that is also the difference. Training, as well as monitoring roles, were major findings in the views of the participants, which are, as well, captured in the instructional supervisors' handbook (GES, 2002).

Appraisal of headteachers was found only in the supervisors' handbook as a role of supervisors but not in the interview data. To that extent, it was not considered as one of the major findings of the study, even though it was described as a finding under the section "**Role of Instructional Supervisors as Captured in their Handbook**" (GES, 2002) of this chapter.

Next, are the challenges and other issues militating against instructional supervisors.

Factors that Militate against Teachers and Supervisors in their Collective Effort to Ensure Teachers' Professional Development

There are different challenges faced by supervisors in their supervisory activities. This section discusses the major challenges faced by supervisors within the context of the literature. The section discusses the findings in relation to **Research Questions** 4. The major challenges identified can be described as internal and external ones; where internal challenges mean those that are related directly to teachers, with external ones denoting the challenges that are experienced by supervisors outside the schools and are beyond teachers' control. The discussion relies on the meaning-making and social construction of meanings ideas of the symbolic interaction theory (Blumer, 1969), to make sense of the challenges as they relate to supervisors' duty. According to the second assumption of the theory, the meaning of things [work and work-

related in this case] arises out of social and cultural interaction among people in a given social

context (Blumer, 1969). On that premise, it can be interpreted that as supervisors work with

teachers – engaging in social intercourse – some issues could arise that make the interaction

difficult, which they constructed as challenges based on their understanding. Using the model

(figure 5.2), constructed by the researcher for the discussion purposes, the challenges as major

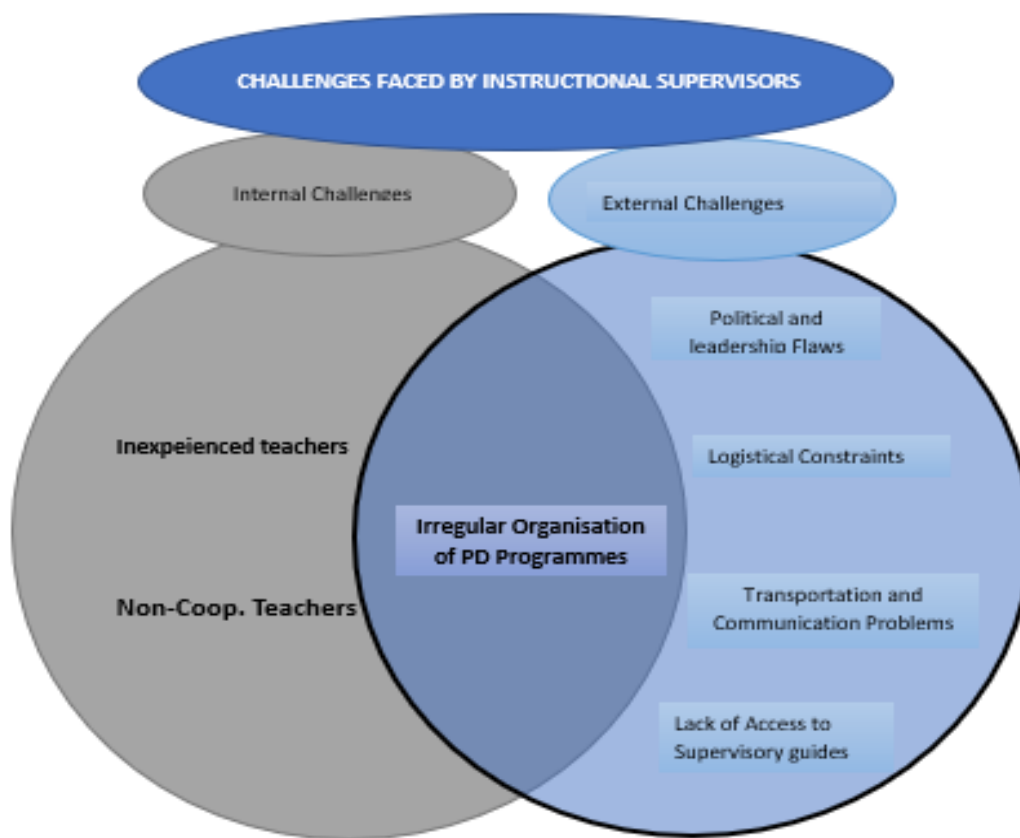findings, are discussed, situating them within the literature.

Figure 5.2. Challenges faced by instructional supervisors: teachers' and supervisors' views.

The philosophy behind using this model, just like any other in this discussion, is to form

an explanatory picture that can help understand the linkage and the connections between themes.

This is consistent with Bazeley (2009) who argued that "themes only attain full significance when they are linked to form a coordinated picture or an explanatory model" (p. 9). To this end, categorising them as internal and external ones contextualises them to help understand their relevance and their connectivity. The internal challenges are about teachers who are inexperienced and those who do not cooperate with supervisors when being supervised. It can be interpreted that teachers do not cooperate when they feel supervisors emphasise too much on lesson plans that teachers considered not as relevant as the actual teaching in the classroom.

In the literature, Baffour-Awuah (2011) found a teacher-related challenge for supervisors to be the teachers' attitude towards classroom observation and towards supervision in general. Similarly, Dayelle (2013) found in Wa, a regional capital in Ghana, that one of the challenges supervisors battle with, is the non-cooperative attitude of some teachers. Supervisors can help teachers cooperate by showing more interest in the teachers' welfare (Dayelle, 2013).

In the southern part of Ghana, Baffour-Awuah (2011) found that one of the challenges facing supervision of instructions was *inadequate PD programmes*, which is consistent with the issue of irregular organisation of PD programme, found in the current research. However, while the current study looked at challenges facing instructional supervisors, Baffour-Awuah (2011) was concerned about challenges facing supervision of instructions, indicating that both of the studies looked at the same thing but from two different perspectives – the relevance.

The issue of logistical constraints and transportation-related challenges are not peculiar to this research, because it was revealed in the literature that some of the challenges facing instructional supervisors in Ghana and Nigeria are lack of resources and fuel for transportation purposes (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011; Ekundayo, Oyerinde, & Kolawole,2013). Supervisors who face transportation challenges will find it difficult to get to the

schools. Therefore, they would hardly be able to help carry out any PD programme even if they have the experience and the capacity to do so.

The literature also revealed that in some schools in Ghana, headteachers and supervisors spend much time helping the novice and inexperienced teachers (Baffour-Awuah, 2011), suggesting that the issue of inexperienced teachers was an issue for headteachers and instructional supervisors, as it is found in the current study. Handling inexperienced teachers by implication denotes the supervisor guides and mentors them to learn. Mentoring teachers was an instructional supervisory approach according to the literature (Owusu-Mensah, 2014; Russel & Rusell, 2011). To this end, the issue of inexperienced teachers, as a finding in the current study is consistent with the finding by Baffour-Awuah (2011), and such inexperienced teachers are mentored by instructional supervisors to grow, leading to spending of much time helping them.

Political and leadership flaws, found in this study, corroborated a finding in another study carried out in Ghana by Dickson (2011). In the study, Dickson found that district directors do not work promptly on the reports of CSs. This suggests a lack of attention on supervisors' reports, described as a *leadership flaw* in this study, can be a general issue in Ghana. However, the aspect of political influence within the theme of political and leadership flaws in this study contradicts an argument advanced by Baffour-Awuah (2011), that politicians are not likely to interfere with education issues in Ghana. Even though this was not a finding in Bafour-Awuah's study, he made the argument against the backdrop that educational issues at the basic school level are managed through bureaucratic processes that do not allow political interference.

The general lack of access to supervisory guides for supervisors, found in this study, can pose a professional development challenge, as supervisors may have to learn how to conduct PD programmes from other sources instead of doing same from the handbook. Supervisors' lack of

access to the guides, is a novel finding of this study, as far as the literature is concerned. None of

the previous studies in Ghana and elsewhere in the literature mentioned anything concerning

supervisors handbook as an issue. This is, therefore, one of the contributions of this study to

knowledge.

The discussion in this section was on both the internal and external challenges that face

instructional supervisors, and both of these levels of challenges perpetuate irregular organisation

of teachers' PD; a situation that can be worsened by supervisors not in possession of their

handbook. Apart from the handbook, that could help supervisors, there were other interventions

proposed by the participants. These interventions are discussed next, in the context of the

literature and the theory.

Creating an Environment Conducive to Successful Professional Development of Teachers

A successful PD of teachers can be relative in different contexts, but in the context of this

research, a PD of teachers can be described as successful if it is tailored to the needs of the

teachers (Shin, Edmonds, & Browder, 2011). It can also be defined as a programme of activities

organised for teachers that are linked to the schools' development goals, (Darling-Hammond, et

al. 2009; Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon, 2007). A conducive environment that contributes

to a successful PD of teachers is that which is characterised by collaborative activities, with the

necessary up-to-date resources (El-Murr, 2015; & Shabeeb, 2011). This section discusses the

perceived solutions that can contribute to a successful PD of teachers. As usual, the discussion is

situated in the context of the literature; making sense of the solutions against the background of

the literature.

With the symbolic interaction theory, this section relies on the third premise that, meaning can be "…modified through an interpretative process" (Blumer, 1969, p.5). The solutions provided by the participants are constructed through the interpretative process of the challenges the face. Put differently, the participants provided their own interpretations of what a successful PD can be for supervisors to function effectively. This is discussed next.

In this section, just like the previous one, the researcher created symbolic and visual explanatory models (Bazeley, 2009; Blumer, 1969), to represent the perceived interventions. Therefore, the models are meant to help understand how the interventions can possibly work to minimize the challenges, to facilitate instructional supervision. Against this background, the solutions are divided into those that can better be implemented by the government and those the local authorities can implement.

The findings of this study are relevant in different ways as far as a conducive environment for the successful PD of teachers is concerned. The first relevance is that most of the findings are consistent with the literature; collaboration among authorities, for instance, found by this study is consistent with what Shabeeb (2011) also found in Lebanon, that collaborative opportunities promote teachers' PD. Also, in the theoretical literature, Nias (2005) argued that collaboration has a positive impact on the PD of teachers. Apart from collaboration, six other findings are consistent with previous studies in Ghana. These are the findings and the previous studies they corroborated:

1. the need to improve transportation – (Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011),

2. payment of supervisors' allowance – (Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011),

3. intensification of teachers' PD programmes – (Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011; Hervie & Winful, 2018)

4. organisation of INSETs for teachers – (Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011)

5. the need to modernize supervision – (Baffour, 2011),

6. ensuring more exhaustive supervision – (Baffour, 2011; Dayelle, 2013)

The second relevance is that some of the findings are novel, contributing new knowledge to PD literature. The findings that are not in the literature are:

1. the need to re-demarcate some circuits – ?

2. more balanced teacher posting and teacher deployment – ?.

To the extent that these two solutions found in the study are novel, they enriched and support the significance of the study to both practice and theory. A discussion of their workability is provided next for better comprehension.

Responsibility of the central government in implementing the proposed interventions is key to ensure that supervisors go about their duties efficiently. These interventions can better be implemented by the government because they are the government's responsibility in the first place. To that end, the government's implementation strategy can start from anywhere among the three proposed solutions captured in figure 5.3; the government can re-demarcate the circuits, construct roads and provide other resources to improve the transportation and communication situation, and can pay responsibility allowance to supervisors to ease their financial burden.

The need to improve transportation and communication situations is consistent with other studies in Ghana. Dayelle (2013) and Dickson (2011) found that improving the road network and transportation situations would lead to effective supervision in Ghana. This suggests that transportation can be an issue that affects a wide range of supervisors' work in Ghana and not

just in the current study district. These previous studies also found the payment of supervisors'

allowance as the way to go to ensure effective supervision.

Dayelle (2013) and Dickson (2011) again, found that paying CSs' responsibility

allowance would help them take care of their financial needs and be able to go about their

supervisory duties effectively. The government needs to pay the allowance to supervisors.

Figure 5.3. Proposed solutions to be implemented by the government to ensure teachers' PD

The interesting thing about these interventions is that if one of them is implemented, it

affects the other two positively. For instance, should government decide to construct roads, give

proper motorbikes and provide enough fuel, the transportation and communication problems is

solved (Dayelle, 2013; & Dickson, 2011) which will shorten the amount of time it will take for

supervisors to travel to the schools, and eventually reduce the amount of money supervisors spend on fuel to travel on the same road. In effect, the issue of responsibility allowance for supervisors may not be too critical any longer since their spending of money on fuel and motorbikes maintenance would have reduced. The challenge also, in traveling from one community to another within a circuit will drastically be reduced due to the improved road network, corroborating Dayelle (2013) Dickson (2011).

In the same vein, when the large circuits in the district are re-demarcated, supervisors will not need to travel long distance to get to schools to supervise teachers, since they would now be responsible for fewer schools than before, which are more likely be in close proximity, if not in the same community than they were before the re-demarcation. Consequently, re-demarcation of the circuits will reduce the workload for supervisors such that without responsibility allowance (even though they will still need the allowance, anyway), they can still work effectively. Paying responsibility allowance to supervisors, obviously will not only motivate them but it will facilitate their work since they will have money to buy fuel and maintain their motorbikes to ensure they work efficiently, irrespective of the size of the circuits and the conditions of the road network (Dayelle, 2013; & Dickson, 2011).

The model (figure 5.3), showing the different solutions that form a complete whole, indicates a clockwise and a positive movement. The discussion is not only on the connectivity among the parts forming the whole but also on the positive and active interaction that symbolizes solution rather than chaos and disorder, that symbolizes evolution rather than stagnation. It also symbolizes that even though implementing one solution can have a positive effect on the others, leaving any of them out will make the intervention incomplete, and will still have some level of negativity on the supervisors' work and on teachers' professional development, for that matter.

With regard to the proposed solutions that can be implemented by the local authorities, the model (figure 5.4), help illustrate how the solutions can work, and why they are better implemented by the local authorities, than any entity else.
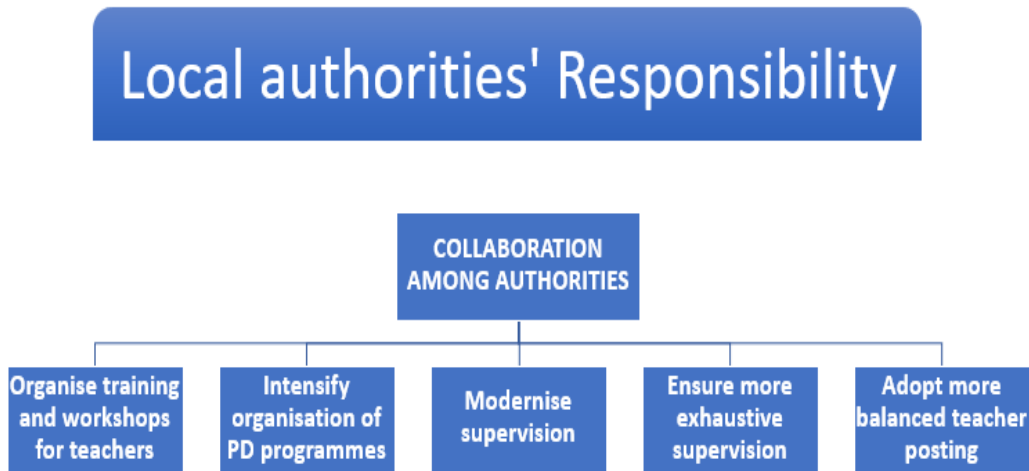
Figure 5.4. Proposed solutions to be implemented by local authorities to ensure teachers' PD

Local authorities, in this context, refer to the authorities in the district assembly, those in the district education office and the supervisors themselves at the circuit level (Gilbert, Stevenson, Girardet, & Stren, 2012).

In reference to figure 5.4, an implementation of the solutions starts when the authorities collaborate among themselves (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Shabeeb, 2011; Nias, 2005). Collaboration is not only important in teachers' PD, but it is also key to achieving diverse goals in education (Loop, 2017). Collaboration is an orderly way of the authorities working together; taking different decisions and performing actions that lead to the achievement of collective goals for supervisors and by extension, the education system in the district (DuFour, 2004). To this end, the model (figure 5.4) demonstrates the linkage between collaboration on the one hand; and organisation of training and workshops, intensification of teachers PD organisation, modernising

supervision, exhaustive supervision and more balanced teachers posting, on the other.

Symbolically, taking the proposed solutions as a branch of fruit tree that has ripped fruits – just

to illustrate – one can reach out to all the other parts of the branch and collect the fruits by simply

pulling the stalk which is represented by the act of collaboration among the authorities.

Collaboration as a means to achieve PD goals is consistent with the literature. Apart from

Nias' (2005) argument about the importance of collaboration to PD, Shabeeb (2011) found that it

is a recipe for teachers' PD. In Ghana, Baffour-Awuah (2011) found as well, that collaboration

among teachers and supervisors was key to students' academic performance. The difference

between this study and that of Baffour-Awuah's is that while Baffour-Awuah's (2011) finding

was about teachers and supervisors, the current study found the need to collaborate among

supervisors and other authorities. With reference to the figure 5.4, when authorities collaborate,

school furniture for instance, that was an issue in one circuit, will be shared equitably among the

schools in the district; when authorities collaborate, teachers' PD needs can be identified and

addressed; when there is collaboration, authorities will be able to plan and allocate resources for

training and workshops for teachers, and for organisation of other PD programmes. This can

ensure that teachers' PD programmes are not only intensified but they are tailored to the

instructional needs of the teachers, consistent with Shin, Edmonds, and Browder (2011). When

the authorities collaborate, instructional supervisors' reports will not only be worked on, but

recommendations contained in such reports can be implemented (Dickson, 2011). This can

make supervisors more committed to their job, knowing their views are treated with respect, and

that can positively affect instructional supervision and teachers' PD.

Training and workshops for teachers to help in their PD is consistent with the literature.

Hervie & Winful, (2018) found in Ghana that lack of training for teachers contributes to

students' low performance in standardised test in the country. They also found that teachers' classroom performance can be improved through training programmes. Organisation of in-service training and workshops for teachers as a way of ensuring teachers PD was, as well, found in three different studies in Ghana (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle 2013; Dickson, 2011). Gusky and Yoon (2009), however, argued that workshops on their own do not help teachers, unless they incorporate to the practice, research-based instructional activities and continuing active learning culture. To this end, training and workshops for teachers can be good but there are challenges associated with them, just like any other PD programme and activity.

The proposed solution that supervisors should conduct exhaustive supervision corroborates two other studies in Ghana. Baffour-Awuah (2011) and Dayelle (2013) both found in their studies that teachers and supervisors believe supervision of instructions should include supervisors entering classroom to observe lessons. In this study, supervisors entering classroom was seen as exhaustive supervision that can enable supervisors to identify the PD needs of teachers and help address them.

Baffour-Awuah (2011) also found that teachers would like supervisors to use the modern approaches of supervision which is consistent with the proposed solution for supervisors to modernise supervision. In the context of this study, to modernise supervision means to adopt supervisory approaches that are contemporary in orientation – clinical supervision, collaborative supervision, and other more teacher-centered approaches.

There are two findings that are not in the literature are (a) the need to re-demarcate some circuits and (b) adoption of more balanced teacher posting. These can, as well, be achieved if authorities collaborate among themselves. Even though *re-demarcation of circuits* is classified as external intervention, whereas *more balanced teacher posting* is local intervention, when the

authorities collaborate at the district level, they would not only be able to engage in exhaustive supervision, but they can lobby for the central government to do the re-demarcation of the circuits considered as large since there is power in collaboration (Loop, 2017).

As a summary, this section focused the discussion on the proposed solutions, putting them into those for government and those for local authorities. It is not by chance that the interventions that can be implemented better by the government are discussed first, the idea is that the government is a major decision-maker regarding educational matters, such as the interventions. It is the government that distributes the resources and instructs the local authorities to take actions deemed important and necessary. Therefore, for these solutions to work, the one with the symbol of authority must act first. The actions can then be implemented at the local level as well. More specifically when roads are constructed, circuits re-demarcated and instructional supervisors paid, it will be much easier for the local authorities to collaborate to bring about the needed professional development for teachers.

The Findings in the Context of Culture of Ghana and Africa

The general consensus between the findings of the current study and the literature in Africa, and for that matter Ghana, seem to suggest that the role of supervisors in teachers' PD has similar characteristics across the continent. Culture has an influence on education and its supervision (MacBeath, Swaffield, Oduro, & Bosu, 2010). Therefore, the cultural and social dynamics in the continent that are relatively similar could account for the general similar perceptions on supervision and teachers' PD (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1998; Tesfaw & Hofman, 2014).

In Ghana, especially in the rural communities, relationship in a professional space is influenced by the cultural norms, such that there is very little difference between professional and informal interactions between teachers on the one hand, and supervisors on the other. In some rural districts including the KNWD, where cultural norms are indirectly observed and subconsciously practiced at schools, an interaction between a superior and subordinate – a supervisor and teacher for that matter – takes into account the cultural approaches of interaction. Here, the subordinate is expected to submit to the superior, with a reciprocal expectation of being treated well by the superior. While this is not the case for everyone in the district, many teachers and supervisors interact along these lines. The implication of this subordinate – superior relationship among teachers and supervisors respectively, is that teachers are more likely to be positive about the role of supervisors even if, in practice, supervisors do not play a positive and supportive role in teachers PD.

Overall, teachers and supervisors in the KNWD who were interviewed, have similar perceptions about the role of supervisors in teachers' PD, and these perceptions corroborated previous studies across the country (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011; Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014; Mensah, 2016; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). While many reasons can be adduced for the synchrony of perceptions of the teachers and supervisors, those (reasons) that are backed by both data and cultural norms in Africa and particularly in Ghana, are the ones that can be relied upon in respect of this research findings. To this end, the reasons are (1) supervisors role in teachers PD, is, indeed, positive; (2) the positive perceptions of teachers and supervisors about the role of supervisors are more likely to be influenced by the cultural norms of the district, implying culture has an influence on people's understanding and interpretations of role of supervisors.

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to understand instructional supervisors' role in teachers' PD, unravel the challenges supervisors face in their contribution to teachers' PD, and solicit solutions to address those challenges; all from the viewpoint of the teachers and the instructional supervisors. This section summarises and concludes the major findings with respect to the purpose of the study, against the background of the symbolic interaction theory. The theory essentially champions the view that human interaction basically depends on the reciprocal interpretations of the actions of one another and the meanings drawn from the interpretations guide the actions of the individuals involved (Blumer, 1969). By implication supervisors and teachers' interpretation of the role of supervisors depend on the interactions among them and how together they interpret actions of supervisors towards teachers in issues concerning teachers' PD. Even as there are reciprocal interpretations of actions of each other in these two groups in the context of supervision, the emphasis has always been on how they both interpret and make meaning of (1) supervisors role in teachers' professional development, (2) the challenges supervisors face in their bid to help in teachers' PD, and (3) the solutions that can be proposed by teachers and instructional supervisors to tackle the challenges. The first and the second premises of the theory are relied upon in this section.

It must be clarified that the conclusions in this section, relied, as much as possible, on the findings and the theory. However, interpretations of the findings that precede the conclusions are the researcher's interpretations, which can, as well, affect the conclusions. Therefore, it is possible for same findings to be interpreted and concluded differently by different readers, consistent with some assumptions that "communication of meaning is always negotiable" (Dey, 2005, p. 38), because "even if we have confronted all the evidence, we may still 'misinterpret'

our data" (Dey, 2005, p. 236). Fundamentally, meaning is subjective and not absolute (Creswell, 2007; Dammak, 2015). With this in mind, readers can make their own interpretations from the data or the research findings, should the need arise.

Understanding the Role of Instructional Supervisors

To understand the role of supervisors is to know what supervision is, the specific roles supervisors play, the context and the circumstances that can evoke the role and how it is interpreted in an official context – basically to understand why they play the role.

Instructional supervision was defined by teachers as the practice where instructional supervisors support teachers by checking their performance to identify the instructional needs in order to help improve teaching and learning.

A model was constructed to help illustrate the conditions under which a particular role can be resorted to. It is important to state that supervisors do not play one role, as the findings indicated. There are five major roles that can be activated (by supervisors), incumbent on the circumstances and the context. These five roles are not only based on the views of the participants, but they have underpinnings in the supervisors' handbook. There are two major conditions that determine the role of supervisors, in the interpretations of the researcher, similar to the developmental supervision model of Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2007). These conditions are a teacher's capacity and motivation to teach. For training as a role, previous studies found the same in Ghana (Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). Therefore, even as basic as it is, supervisors in Ghana use training as one of the tools to promote teachers' PD. Training is considered useful and more appropriate when the teachers are new, demoralised and lack the necessary skills for a particular programme, activity or

instructional work. It must be stated that other conditions that are not mentioned here can equally activate the usage and the application of training.

Supervisors also guide teachers for various reasons but in this study, guidance is seen as an approach that is employed to help teachers when they are motivated, but they lack the skills and competencies necessary to work. Guidance as an approach was equally consistent in the literature in Ghana (Dayelle, 2013; Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018). It must be said that this reason for which supervisors use guidance is the researchers' own interpretation. It, therefore, must not be seen that it is the only condition under which guidance can be employed; teachers can be guided in different situations but in this study, it fits the context to indicate the conditions most suitable for its application.

The fact that only teachers mentioned 'encouragement' as one of the roles of supervisors, is an indication that teachers see supervisors as a source of encouragement. As it was demonstrated, encouragement works better when the teacher is well-versed with knowledge and skills but does not feel motivated to proceed. Since supervisors did not mention encouragement as part of their roles, it suggests that they do not believe they are a source of encouragement to teachers. In the framework of the symbolic interaction theory, roles are played in the context of people's interpretations (Blumer, 1969). This suggests supervisors and teachers differ in their interpretation of *encouragement*. Encouragement as a role was not only found in this study but was in the literature (Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014), suggesting it is a practice that some teachers would like to see more employed by supervisors.

It must be mentioned that supervisors linking teachers and district education office together (serving as liaison officers), does not only help teachers concentrate on their job but it creates the impression that supervisors are 'servants' and or 'messengers' to teachers and the

district office; working, especially when teachers are relatively motivated and have minimum

professional skills to work. This was not found to be the case in Ghana per other studies in the

country, apart from what Chmeissani (2013) found in Lebanon, that the supervisor is a liaison

between teachers and the education administration. This does not only make this finding very

important in Ghana, but it also shows that some teachers in the study district want supervisors to

act more as liaison officers, serving them (the teachers) with the necessary information and

resources to help them work effectively.

The monitoring role of supervisors, which is consistent with one of Baffour-Awuah's

(2011) findings, is not only used by supervisors to ascertain teachers' effective use of the

instructional time, but it helps supervisors to identify the challenges faced by teachers in order to

help address them. A teacher, however, described monitoring in a way that suggests teachers are

forced by way of monitoring to do their work. This is also where teachers and supervisors differ

in their perception of supervisors' roles. The monitoring of teachers is also a higher-order

supervisory practice. Put differently, teachers are monitored to work after they are giving the

necessary resources and are encouraged and guided through the basics of instructional practices,

placing monitoring role at a higher-order level, and this is the researchers' conclusive

interpretation.

Understanding the Challenges Supervisors Face

Many issues face supervisors in the context of their work, but the specific ones found and

discussed are summarised and concluded on, in this subsection.

Categorising the challenges as internal and external ones, put them in context to help

understand them (Bazeley, 2009). To this end, the major challenges supervisors faced at the

school level are interpreted to be the failure of the teachers to cooperate with the supervisors,

coupled with the teachers' inexperience (Baffour-Awuah, 2011). Knowing this will help the schools to find appropriate solutions to deal with them, so supervisors can work effectively to address the more important challenges; how to help teachers improve professionally.

Though the other challenges are considered as external ones they have everything to do with the internal operation of the school: Politics and leadership problems can affect the school, lack of logistics, transportation issues, and absence of supervisors' guide have a direct negative impact on the internal running of the school, and more importantly, they affect the role of supervisors in teachers' PD (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011). Therefore, to understand the challenges, they can be examined separately as internal and external ones, constituting the bigger picture of challenges facing supervisors in the district. It must be indicated that there could be other ways of looking at the challenges (Mason, 2002), but in the researchers' view, putting them in the context of internal and external ones, using the overlapping circles, gives them a touch of symbolism as those that overlap, and this can help understand them much better.

Understanding the Proposed Solutions

Just like the challenges, the proposed solutions or interventions can also be viewed as those for government and those for local authorities. It was interpreted that collaboration among local authorities is the key to implementing all the other local solutions for instructional supervisors to work effectively (Loop, 2017). Implementing the local level solutions allows supervisors the space to work while waiting for the government to address the other major ones. The central government has three major interventions to implement. These interventions can be implemented as solutions if the government approaches them all instead of leaving some out. Even though implementing one solution can have a positive impact on supervisors' work,

addressing all of them as a whole will allow supervisors to function more effectively. Just like

the other models, it must be stated that these are, but few ways of viewing and concluding on the

findings, there could be many other ways of doing so. However, in the researchers'

understanding and with the understanding of the symbolic interaction theory, and the data, these

are better ways to conclude on the findings. Recommendations are then made for practice and for

further research, but before that a look at the findings in the context of culture.

Understanding the Cultural Influence on the Findings.

Teachers and supervisors in the KNWD have similar perceptions about the role of

supervisors in teachers' PD, and these perceptions corroborated previous studies across the

country (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011; Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-

Dwamena, 2014; Mensah, 2016; Sofo & Abonyi, 2018), for two reasons: (1) supervisors role in

teachers PD is positive and (2) the positivity is likely to be influenced by the cultural norms of

the KNWD that share similar characteristics with other districts in the country and in Africa,

implying culture has an influence on role relationships among teachers and supervisors.

Recommendations

This section provides recommendations for practice and for further studies in the context

of supervision and teachers' professional development.

Recommendations for Practice

It was found that one of the challenges for supervisors was that they do not have access to

the Circuit Supervisors' Handbook. In that regard, for effective supervision and teachers PD, it

is recommended the district procures and distribute the circuit supervisors' handbooks to all

supervisors to use. Supervisors should equally endeavour to procure some for themselves since the handbooks will make their work much easier.

Even though the perceived challenges and proposed solutions for regular PD programmes was about teachers, it is important for supervisors to get training as well, to improve in their supervisory skills, put in another way, whereas the need for regular PD programmes was meant for teachers' PD, it is important to recommend it for supervisors too since they equally need enhanced skills and competencies to work effectively. It is, therefore, recommended that the district directorate organises training and workshops for supervisors, at least once in a year, to help supervisors sharpen their skills and competencies.

As it was found, no supervisor hinted of encouragement as part of their roles in teachers' PD. From the symbolic interactions theory point of view, it means supervisors do not consider it as their role. It is recommended that supervisors talk about the encouragement and motivation of teachers as part of their role in teachers' PD. By so doing, supervisors can internalise and make it part of their daily routines in their interactions with teachers. This can be in the form of praises to teachers when they (teachers) make progress in their PD journey, irrespective of how small, and by being more positive about teachers' capabilities than otherwise.

It is also recommended that teachers cooperate more with supervisors during instructional supervision. This will ensure that supervisors do not only deliver on their mandate, but they will feel honoured and respected to work much harder to help teachers attain a higher level of PD.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Further studies can look into other approaches to funding supervisory activities in the district since logistics and other resources to conduct teachers' PD programmes were found to be a challenge.

It will also be of importance to conduct a study into other ways through which teachers can attain PD in the district apart from doing so through the role of instructional supervisors. This way, the challenges that face instructional supervisors in their role in teachers' PD will no longer be an issue in teachers' PD

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

Every study has its own weaknesses and strength and this study is no different (Dey, 2005). This section looks at the strengths and weaknesses of the study to help readers make an informed decision about the usability and applicability of it.

Strengths

This research goes beyond the traditional presentation of *what* happened and discussed possible *reasons* and *why* it happened. For example, a model was used to show possible reasons and *why* supervisors do what they do with teachers. Also, in this research, the readers are not only shown the specific roles, but they are also given a symbolic representation of the roles, the challenges and the solutions participants provided, to deepen readers' understanding.

Another strength is the fact that this research relied on data from two sources – a document analysis source and interviewed source. With these, the role of supervisors could be understood from the perspective of the document (Bowen, 2003), which was the supervisors' handbook (GES, 2002), and from the interviewed data; the participants' perspectives.

Apart from the fact that most of the findings are consistent with empirical literature (Baffour-Awuah, 2011; Chmeissani, 2013; Dayelle, 2013; Dickson, 2011), suggesting participants in the respective studies have similar understanding and interpretations of supervisors' role, the three findings which are, supervisors' lack of access to their handbook (a challenge) on the one hand, and the call for re-demarcation of some circuits and the need for more balanced teacher posting (proposed solutions) on the other, which are not consistent with the literature are considered strength of the study. This is because they are contributing to the literature on challenges and solutions in the role of supervisors in teachers' PD. As new findings, they also present different perspectives for scholars to think about, regarding challenges and possible solutions for supervisors in their field of work.

Limitations

Considering the sample size of the study which is thirty-six out of a target population of over a thousand, the sample cannot pass the test of representation and therefore the findings cannot be generalized to other parts of the district (Creswell, 2007; Myers, 2000).

Apart from the small sample size, the purposive sampling approach based on criteria (those who serve up to five years as teachers and supervisors) that was employed has the potential to recruit participants who meet the criteria but are not necessarily information rich. With this, the interviews could generate responses that may not necessarily reflect the perceptions of participants in the district. Their views that may not necessarily be the true reflection of participants could affect the credibility of the findings.

Other stakeholders of education such as parents, students, and watchmen could have added a perspective to the topic, but the method of data collection did not include them. Therefore, the fact that only supervisors and teachers were interviewed, could deny this study,

other perspectives that could have led to a much deeper understanding of the role of supervisors

in teachers' professional development

Appendix A (I)

Interview Guide for teachers (one-on-one)

PART I. **The perspective of teachers and supervisors about the role of instructional supervisors in teachers' professional development**

1. What do you think instructional supervision is about?
2. What are the professional development programmes or activities (if any) organised in the district for teachers? Could you please give examples?
   a. What are the roles of supervisors in the conduct of these professional development programmes, if any? How do they play these roles?
   b. How regular are these professional development programmes organised for teachers, if available?
3. What feedback will you give about instructional supervisory practices in the district?

PART II. **Challenges faced by instructional supervisors in their roles in teachers' professional development**

4. What challenges face supervisors in their duties, if any?
5. Could you please describe the challenges (provided there are some)?
6. How do these challenges affect the role of supervisors in the conduct of instructional supervision?
7. How do these challenges affect teachers' professional development?

PART III. **Proposed solutions by teachers and instructional supervisors, to mitigate the perceived challenges faced by supervisors**

8. How would the supervision of instruction be improved in your school?
   a. How different do you think instructional supervisors should play their role to promote teachers' professional development?
   b. What are the solutions that can be proposed to solve any challenges of instructional supervisors to facilitate their role in teachers' professional development?

Appendix B (II)

Interview Guide for Instructional Supervisors (One-On-One),

PART I. **Perspective of teachers and supervisors about the role of instructional supervisors in teacher's professional development**

1. How do you perform instructional supervision in your circuit?

2. Do you have documents (like policies, supervisory guides, and manuals) that you use to guide your instructional supervisory practices? Could you please describe these documents?

3. What are the professional development programmes organised in the district for teachers?

   a. Who is responsible for organising these professional development programmes?

   b. What are the roles of supervisors in the conduct of these professional development programmes? Better still, what do supervisors do in carrying out these professional development programmes and activities?

4. What feedback do you receive about instructional supervisory practices as a result of the professional development programmes in your circuit?

PART II. **Challenges faced by instructional supervisors in their roles in teachers' professional development**

5. What challenges face supervisors in their work to promote teachers' PD?

6. Could you please describe the challenges (provided there are some)?

7. In what ways do these challenges affect the role of supervisors in the conduct of instructional supervision?

8. In which way do these challenges affect teachers' professional development?

PART III. **Proposed solutions by instructional supervisors and teachers, that would mitigate the challenges faced by supervisors as perceived by teachers and supervisors**

9. How would the supervision of instructions be improved in your school?

   a. How different do you think instructional supervisors should play their role to promote teachers' professional development?

   b. What are the solutions that can be proposed to solve any challenges of instructional supervisors to facilitate their role in teachers' professional development?

Appendix C (III)

Interview Guide for Deputy Director for Supervision

PART I. **Perspective of teachers and supervisors about the role of instructional supervisors in teacher's professional development**

1. How do you supervise circuit supervisors in the district?
2. Are there documents (like policies, supervisory guides, and manuals) that guide the work of circuit supervisors in the district? Could you please describe these documents?
3. What are the professional development programmes organised in the district for teachers?
   a. Who is responsible for organising these professional development programmes?
   b. What are the roles of supervisors in the conduct of these professional development programmes? Better still, what do supervisors do in carrying out these professional development programmes and activities (list them if you may)?
4. What feedback do you receive about instructional supervision and teachers' professional development programmes in the district?

PART II. **Challenges faced by instructional supervisors in their role in teachers' professional development**

5. What challenges face supervisors in their work to promote teachers PD in the district?
   a. Could you please describe the challenges (provided there are some)?
   b. In what ways do these challenges affect the role of supervisors in the conduct of their duties?
   c. In what ways do these challenges affect teachers' professional development?

PART III. **Proposed solutions by instructional supervisors and teachers, that would mitigate the challenges faced by supervisors as perceived by teachers and supervisors.**

6. How would supervision of instructions be improved in the district?
   c. How different do you think instructional supervisors should play their role to promote teachers' professional development in the district?
   d. What are the solutions that can be proposed to solve any challenges of instructional supervisors to facilitate their role in teachers' professional development in the district?

Appendix D (IV)

Interview Guide for Focus Group (TEACHERS)

PART I. **Perspective of teachers and supervisors about the role of instructional supervisors in teacher's professional development**

1. What do you think instructional supervision is about?
2. What are the professional development programmes organised in the district for teachers?
3. Who is responsible for organising these professional development programmes?
4. What are the roles of supervisors in the conduct of these professional development programmes? Better still, what do the supervisors do in implementing these professionals development programmes and activities? How do they play these roles?
5. What feedback will you give about instructional supervisory practices and teachers' professional development in the district in general?

PART II. **Challenges faced by instructional supervisors in their roles in teachers' professional development**

6. What challenges face supervisors in their work to promote teachers' PD if any?
7. Could you please describe the challenges if you know of any?
8. In what ways do these challenges affect the role of supervisors in the conduct of instructional supervision?
9. In which way do these challenges affect the conduct of teachers' professional development?

PART III. **Proposed solutions by instructional supervisors and teachers, that would mitigate the challenges faced by supervisors as perceived by teachers and supervisors.**

10. How would the supervision of instructions be improved in your schools?
    e. How different do you think instructional supervisors should play their role to promote teachers' professional development?
    f. What are the solutions that can be proposed to solve any challenges of instructional supervisors to facilitate their role in teachers' professional development?

Appendix E (V)

Guide for document and or content analysis

Research question 1.

2. *What are the Ghana Education Service (GES) policy and documented guidelines regarding the role of educational supervisors in teachers' professional development in the Kasena Nankana West District of Upper East Region?*

Upon collecting or retrieving the policy guides and supervisory manuals, look for the following

1.   Guidelines, if any, about the methods and approaches of supervision in Ghana

2.   Guidelines, if any, as to how supervisors should go about their duties

3.   Guidelines, if any, concerning the specific roles supervisors play in teachers professional development

4.   Any other information about the supervision of instructions and professional development contained in the document(s) that will help understand the role of supervisors in teachers' professional development

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