

## Motivation to Become a Teacher among Preservice Teachers in Colleges of Education in Ghana

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### Abstract

*Ghana is among developing countries that use incentives to attract preservice teachers to train as early childhood, primary and junior high school teachers in Colleges of Education. This study sought to explore the motivation for the preservice teachers to train as teachers in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. A survey was carried out with 3, 308 preservice teachers from ten Colleges of Education in Ghana. A multistage sampling procedure involving stratified random sampling and purposive sampling methods was used in the selection of the research participants. Questionnaire was used to collect the data from the research participants. The data collected from the closed-ended items was analyzed using both frequency counts/percentages and Pearson's Correlation. The data collected from the open-ended items were analysed qualitatively and presented as narrative description with some illustrative examples. The study revealed among others, that, the motivation to train as a teacher was not the main motive for the majority of the preservice teachers to enroll on the teacher education programme but the opportunity the teaching profession offers for one to eventually leave for the dream career. Implications of the findings for policy and future research are provided.*

**Keywords:** Motivation; Preservice Teacher; Teacher Education; Ghana

### 1. Introduction

Teachers play a crucial role in the education of children. They are the mediators between the curriculum and the learners. It takes a well-trained teacher to use a supposedly bad curriculum to turn out good students. A poorly trained teacher cannot use the best curriculum in the world to turn out quality learners. This is because a teacher's interpretation of the school curriculum has consequence on students' opportunity to learn. It is against the background of the critical role teachers play in preparing quality human resource for the socio-economic development of countries and the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 4, which states; "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (SDG Compass, n.d.), that many countries continue to invest huge sums of monies in teacher education reforms.

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As with many developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, teacher education at the pre-senior high school (pre-SHS) level in Ghana has gone through several reforms in the past and keeps going through further reforms. Within the last twenty years, there have been two major reforms in teacher education at the pre-SHS level. In 2005, the Government of Ghana turned all the then Three-Year Teacher Training Colleges in the country which were then running Certificate “A” programmes into Three-Year Diploma awarding Institutions. This led to the conversion of the Teacher Training Colleges into Colleges of Education. While the structure of the programme remained the same, that is, two years on-campus content and pedagogy training and one year off-campus practical training (In-In-Out), the content of the programme changed. However, after almost a decade of the introduction of this reform, it appears the reform did not have the desired impact on the quality of education in the country. Quality of education at pre-SHS level has been a matter of great concern to stakeholders in education. Issues relating to poor quality of students’ learning outcomes, especially in English, Mathematics and Science (Ministry of Education, 2014; Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Arora, 2012) have often attracted media attention and engaged the entire Ghanaian population.

The persistent problem of poor quality of education in the country resulted in the second major reform. The Ministry of Education in Ghana embarked on a major teacher education reform project at the Colleges of Education in 2015, through the Transforming Teacher Education and Learning Project (T-TEL). This project is a Government of Ghana Project with funding from the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DfID) (Ministry of Education, 2016). The reforms led to the designation of Colleges of Education as tertiary institutions. The Colleges were again mandated to run Four-Year Bachelor of Education degree programmes in 2018. Four-Year degree programmes have now become the standard for pre-SHS teacher preparation in the Colleges of Education in Ghana. The cost associated with some of these reforms are huge. The Transforming Teacher Education and Learning programme, for example, cost 25 million British pounds. The cost of pre-SHS teacher training at the Colleges of Education in Ghana to the state is huge. The Government of Ghana absorbs almost all the cost associated with the training and also pays monthly allowance to all preservice teachers. Preservice teachers at the Colleges of Education in Ghana, for example, enjoy free tuition fees, free accommodation and free utilities.

However, while the nation keeps reforming teacher education at huge cost, very little research has been carried out to inform and direct these reforms. For example, apart from the MUSTER project which was carried out over a decade and half ago to investigate the status of teacher education at the basic school (pre-SHS) level in several Sub-Saharan African countries, including Ghana, not many studies in Ghana have looked at the state of teacher education in the country (Akyeampong & Lewin, 2002). This implies that many of the reforms that have been carried out in Ghana recently might not have been informed by the necessary empirical research evidence.

Studies on the current state of teacher education, with focus on the current reforms, is important in the provision of quality teacher education in particular and quality pre-tertiary education in general. Such studies could inform policy direction and contribute towards the provision of quality education at reasonable cost. It is one thing for the Government of

Ghana to invest huge sums of money in reforming preservice teacher education programmes and attracting preservice teachers into the programmes by paying them monthly allowance, waiving school fees and providing free accommodation, and another for this huge investment yielding the expected results. It is against the background of the need for continuous and sustained research on the current state of teacher education reforms to inform policy direction in teacher education that this study was carried out to investigate the motivation for preservice teachers to enroll on the preservice teacher education programmes run by the Colleges of Education. The researchers focused on motivation because literature suggests that it is related to one's priorities and future ambitions (Snowman, Mcown & Biehler, 2008). In this study, the researchers investigated whether preservice teachers who enroll on the teacher education programme run by the Colleges of Education have the motive to be prepared as teachers and remain in teaching after their teacher education programme or they are there because of other reasons.

Motivation to become a teacher is a topic that has attracted the attention of many educational researchers (Bilima, 2014; Mulholland & Hansen, 2003; Yüce, Şahin, Koçer, & Kana, 2013). Teacher motivation and motivation for choosing teaching as a career have been grouped by education researchers into three broad categories, namely, Extrinsic, Intrinsic and Altruistic factors (Salifu & Agbenyega, 2013; Azman, 2013; Bergmark, Lundström, Manderstedt & Palo, 2018; Yuçe et al., 2013). Intrinsic motivation is the kind of motivation which is driven by internal rewards. Thus, intrinsic factors relate to job-related factors that promote personal satisfaction such as the avenue teaching provides for lifelong learning, a person's desire to work with children, and the many opportunities that the teaching appears to offer. Extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards, it relates to factors inherent in the immediate work benefits such as good remuneration and high status associated with teaching (in some contexts/ countries), job guarantees and having holidays in sync with one's own children. Altruistic motivation is that which originates from the concern for others welfare without necessarily putting self-interest first. Thus, altruistic factors go beyond any tangible benefits that the teaching profession has to offer. Instead, altruistic factors present teaching as a socially worthwhile activity that is related to the development of both the individual and society (Yuçe et al., 2013; Low, Lim, Ch'ng, & Goh, 2011; Salifu, Alagbela & Ofori, 2018). Altruistic motivation is rooted in deep passion for teaching, a great love for children, and a desire to make a difference to the lives of their students (Goller, Ursin, Vähäsantanen, Festner & Harteis, 2019).

Literature suggests that motivation to become a teacher could be based on several motives, while some people make the choice to train as teachers even in their formative years, some simply find themselves in teacher training programmes by accident (Watt & Richardson, 2007). Some of the factors that have been identified as influencing people's decision to become teachers include positive prior teaching and learning experiences as students (Richardson & Watt, 2005). This view is corroborated by Bilima (2014) who observed that preservice elementary teachers' motives to become a teacher are strongly influenced by altruistic motives, followed by prior teaching and learning experiences, work with children/adolescents, and job security. Richardson and Watt (2006) also observed from their study involving first year undergraduate and graduate teacher education students in Australia that the ability to teach well, belief that teaching is an intrinsically rewarding and

enjoyable occupation, among others, informed the research participants' decision to choose to train as teachers. Preservice teachers' motivation to become teachers are also largely influenced by the joy of working with children and enjoyment of the subject they would be teaching (Kyriacou, Hultgren & Stephens, 1999). Again, nature of motivation to choose teaching as a profession has been reported in literature as having bearing on retention of teachers in the teaching profession. Studies in England and Australia have shown that teachers who are motivated by extrinsic factors stay less on the profession than their counterparts who are motivated by intrinsic factors (Bergmark et al., 2018; Goller et al., 2019).

The literature reviewed on motivation to become a teacher, so far, presents a multifaced nature of factors that motivate young people to either join, stay or leave the teaching profession. This observation has been confirmed by other researchers (Bergmark et al., 2018; Low et al., 2011). In this study, we have conceptualised motivation to become a teacher as the drive (either internal, external or societal) that pushes the prospective teacher to choose to train as a teacher. The three broad categorisations of motivation to become a teacher namely, Intrinsic, Extrinsic and Altruistic motivation formed the theoretical perspective with which we investigated motivation to become a teacher in Ghana.

### **The Research Question and Hypotheses**

The research question that guided the study was; “what is the motivation for preservice teachers to train as teachers in Colleges of Education in Ghana?”

The Null Hypotheses were:

1. There is no significant correlation between the entry grades of preservice teachers and their motivation to become teachers.
2. There is no significant correlation between the ages of preservice teachers and their motivation to become teachers.

## **2. Methods**

### **Research Design**

A cross-sectional survey design was employed to investigate the motivation of preservice teachers to become teachers at the Colleges of Education in Ghana. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches was employed to collect data for this study. Specifically, a concurrent mixed methods design was employed in which both quantitative and qualitative information were collected simultaneously. The mixed methods design is recommended for thorough investigation of the various facets of the issue being investigated (Creswell, 2012).

### **Research Participants**

The population of the study comprised all 48, 702 preservice teachers (on both degree and diploma programmes) from all the 46 Public Colleges of Education in Ghana. A multistage sampling procedure was used to select the research participants. The first stage involved selection of ten Colleges of Education through stratified random sampling procedure.

Public Colleges of Education in Ghana have been grouped into five, based on Conference of Principals of Colleges of Education in Ghana (PRINCOF) zones. These are; CENTWEST, ASHBA, EAGA, VOLTA and NORTHERN zones. The stratified random sampling procedure was used to select colleges from each of the five PRINCOF zones. The zones formed strata from which Colleges were selected. In each of the zones, the number of Colleges selected depended on the concentration of Colleges in the zone. One College was selected from CENTWEST zone, three from ASHBA zone, two from EAGA zone, two from VOLTA zone and two from NORTHERN zone. The second stage of the sampling procedure involved the use of purposive sampling to select the second year preservice teachers (who were the first Cohort of the new B.Ed programme) and the final year preservice teachers (who were the last batch of the Diploma in Basic Education programme). The first year preservice teachers had not reported to the College at the time of the study. They were therefore not included in the study. The third stage of the data collection involved the use of stratified random sampling procedure to select preservice teachers from each of the two year groups. In this study, the second years are referred to as the B.Ed preservice teachers and the final year preservice teachers are referred to as the Diploma preservice teachers. In all 3, 308 preservice teachers comprising 1,511 B. Ed preservice teachers and 1, 797 Diploma preservice teachers were selected. This number formed more than 5% of the population of the preservice teachers. The literature suggests that 5% of a given population forms a good sample (Sarantakos, 2013).

### **Research Instrument**

A questionnaire was developed and used to collect the data. The instrument had both closed-ended and open-ended items. The open-ended items afforded all the respondents the opportunity to express their views freely in writing without any restrictions by way of choice. This provided a rich source of qualitative data for the study. The questionnaire was developed by the researchers and validated in one College of Education which was excluded from the main study in Central Region of Ghana. The validation process involved administration of the instrument to 50 preservice teachers, after which 20 of them were interviewed to ascertain how they understood each of the items. This enabled the researchers to ensure that each of the items elicited valid response. A reliability test conducted yielded a Cronbach value of 0.88, implying the instrument also had a very good level of reliability.

### **Research Procedure**

Ethical clearance was sought from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Cape Coast before the commencement of the research project. Permission was also sought from the research participants' institutions before data collection. In each of the institutions, the rationale for the project and the potential benefit(s) to the research participants, in particular, and development of teacher education in Ghana, in general, was explained to the research participants. Consent of all participants were sought before the administration of the instrument. The instrument was administered by a research team made up of the researchers and some trained research assistants. This provided the research participants the opportunity to clarify issues that were not clear to them. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed in the data analysis. The data collected through the closed-ended

items were analysed using frequency counts/percentages and inferential statistics (Pearson's Correlation), while the data collected through the open-ended items were analysed qualitatively and presented as narrative description with some illustrative examples. For the purpose of analysis, the responses from the preservice teachers were coded as PST 1, PST 2, PST 3, ..., PST 3308, where PST1 represents preservice teacher 1, PST2 represents preservice teacher 2, ... and PST 3308 represents the last preservice teacher participant.

### 3. Results

As this study also sought to investigate the correlation between the age of respondents and their choice to train as teachers, the demographic characteristic of the respondents becomes important part of the data. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The results in Table 1 show that the majority (58.1%) of the participants were males. The ages of the overwhelming majority (94.6%) were between 18 years and 28 years. Only a few (1.8%) were either below 18years or above 35 years of age.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the preservice teachers

Item	Category	Frequency		Total
		Number	Percentage	
Sex	Male	1903	58.1	3274 (100%)
	Female	1371	41.9	
Age	Below 18years	33	1.0	3285 (100%)
	18-22years	1245	37.9	
	23-28 years	1864	56.7	
	29-34 years	116	3.5	
	35 years and above	27	0.8	

Reporting of the rest of the results of the study follows the order in which the research question and the hypotheses were presented in the introduction.

*What is the motivation for preservice teachers to train as teachers in Colleges of Education in Ghana?*

In this study, respondents were requested to indicate whether training to teach was their main motivation for enrolling on their teacher education programme. The results are presented in Figure 1. The results in Figure 1 show that the majority (1,983 representing 61.2%) indicated that training to teach was their main motivation for enrolling on the teacher education programme.

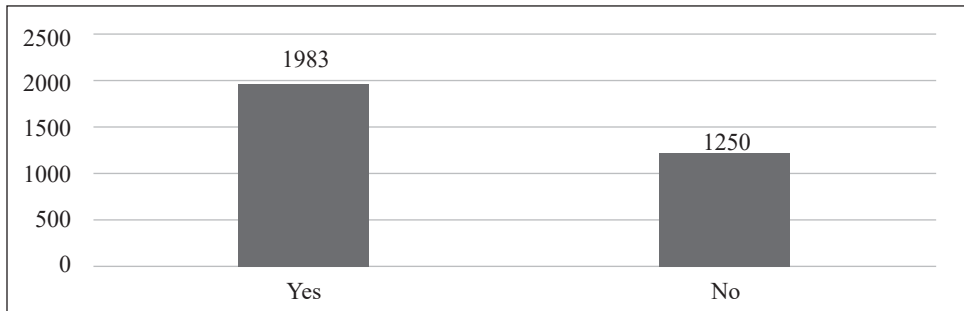


Figure 1: Was training to teach your first choice?

Some of the typical responses of preservice teachers who indicated that training to become teachers was their first choice included the following:

- [I will stay] above 20 years till retirement because teaching is a noble profession (PST 11)
- After entering into it, I have really gotten much interest in the teaching work (PST18)
- Because I always wanted to be a teacher (PST55)
- Because I have passion for teaching and irrespective of all difficulties I will face (PST87)
- I love to teach and would like to impact more knowledge into every group of individuals I meet (PST609)
- I really love the teaching profession and the kids are my source of motivation (PST633)
- I so love the profession and wish to serve the people of Ghana and the world (PST640)
- I was born to be teacher (PST718)
- Teaching has always been my passion and I enjoy most (PST969)
- Teaching is lifelong passion (PST986)
- Teaching is one of the professions I really love most and need to be there for some years (PST1000)

The remaining 38.8 % of the preservice teachers who said training to teach was not their first choice career were requested to name their preferred careers. Table 2 presents preservice teachers preferred careers and the number and percentage of preservice teachers who chose them. The results in Table 2 show that the preservice teachers preferred careers were varied. Their choice covered more than 24 different careers. However, more than a third (35.2%) preferred health related professions namely nursing, medicine and pharmacy. While almost one-tenth (9.7%) preferred other professions such as Fashion Design, Farming and Politics. The top five preferred careers were Nurse, Medicine, Armed Forces, Law and Accounting/Finance.

Table 2: Preservice teachers preferred first choice career

Career	Response	
	Number	Percentage (%)
Nurse	266	22.2
Medicine	135	11.3
Armed Forces	130	10.8
Law	98	8.2
Accounting/Finance	86	7.2
Journalist	80	6.7
Banker	52	4.3
Engineer	43	3.6
Administrator	37	3.1
Police	37	3.1
Computer Science/ICT	34	2.8
Immigration Service	20	1.7
Pharmacy	20	1.7
Businessman	17	1.4
Football	14	1.2
Pilot/Aviation	12	1.0
Other	119	9.7
Total	1200	100

Note: Other included Insurance Officer, Surveyor, Custom Officer, Ghana Fire Service, Architecture, Fashion Design, Farming and Politics.

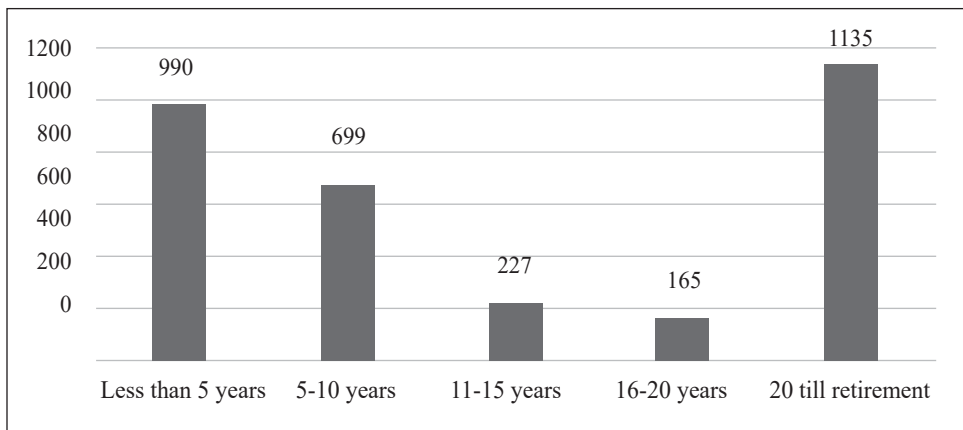


Figure 2: Number of years preservice teachers intend to stay in teaching after training



Although the majority (61.2%) of the respondents indicated teaching as their first choice career from Figure 1, the results in Figure 2 show that only 1,135 (35.3%) had plans of staying in teaching between 20 years to retirement. A good number (990 representing 30.8%) had plans to leave the teaching profession in less than 5 years after their training.

The preferred choice of careers for preservice teachers who had plans of leaving the teaching profession after sometime are presented in Table 3. The results in Table 3 show that the careers the preservice teachers said they preferred to enter after leaving the teaching profession were varied. Their choice covered more than 27 different careers. The top five careers were Business/Entrepreneurship, Armed Forces, Law, Nurse and Medicine/ Medical Assistant.

Table 3: Preferred choice of career for those who wish to leave the teaching profession in future

Career	Response	
	N	%
Business/Entrepreneurship	292	14.5
Armed Forces	174	8.7
Law	155	7.7
Nurse	154	7.7
Medicine/Medical Assistant	128	6.4
Accounting/Finance	120	6.0
Journalist	119	5.9
Politics	90	4.5
Banker	71	3.5
Police	67	3.3
Engineer	56	2.8
Pastor	57	2.8
Computer Science/ICT	48	2.4
Administrator	43	2.1
Immigration Service	34	1.7
Farming	34	1.7
Fashion Design	31	1.5
Agric Officer	20	1.0
Other	310	15.2
Total	2002	100

Note: Other include Surveyors, Graphic Designer, Custom Officer, Midwifery, Ghana Fire Service, Economist, Football/Coaching, Pharmacy, Lecturing, Pilot/Aviation and Architecture

The preservice teachers provided several reasons for deciding to leave the teaching profession after some time for other professions. The reasons why these prospective teachers would want to leave the teaching profession after sometime could be classified under five main themes namely, *Conditions of Service/Economic, Pursuance of Dreams in Life, Lack of Respect for Teachers, Teaching as Stepping Stone and Political Reasons*. Some of the typical reasons the prospective teachers gave under each of the themes are provided as follows:

Conditions of Service/Economic reason was the most common reason the prospective teachers gave to justify why they would not want to stay in teaching till retirement. Some of the typical reasons relating to conditions of service were;

- Though teaching is my first career choice and it is because I love the teaching career. I would leave after years to another career to fetch me enough financial support. (PST 1227)
- The teaching job is not lucrative, the salary is very minute and I think staying the job will lead you to poverty. (PST1228)
- This is because teachers' condition of service and salaries are not encouraging. (PST1097)
- I want improved salary. (PST649)
- This is because it's not a highly paid job as compared to the sacrifices in the work. (PST1093)
- Their salary is not encouraging as compared to other government workers. (PST 1062)
- Man need to ride in expensive and luxurious cars ... (PST 908)
- Want to have a better life (PST1172)

Some of the typical responses relating to Pursuance of Dreams in Life included:

- So that I can switch to my dream (PST 944)
- Will be going back to my career choice (PST1182)
- Will like to still pursue my dreams after some years of serving in the education and teaching field (PST1196)
- Would like to achieve my dream of becoming a computer engineering (PST 1218)
- Would want to pursue what my heart desire to do in future (PST 1226)
- To gather some money and continue with my education to become a Pharmacist (PST 1229)

Some of the typical responses relating to Lack of Respect for Teachers included:

- Because Ghana leaders (Government) does not respect teachers and our salary alone can't cater for a family (PST51)
- Because in Ghana here they don't respect teachers (PST229)
- Because teaching as a profession is not recognise much in the country and also salary is not well paid. (PST301)
- Because teaching is the only job in Ghana they disrespect. You suffer much but less pay. They don't even recognize teachers in the midst of other profession. (PST328)
- I have realized that teachers not given the maximum respect as compared to other professions. (PST517)

Some of the typical responses relating to Teaching as Stepping Stone included:

- I just want to use teaching as a stepping stone since it is highly difficult to secure job in the country. (PST552)
- I want the teaching profession knowledge prepare for other life activities (PST652)
- It is just a base for me to do what I really want to do. (PST867)
- Teaching is a stepping stone so if I get any improved or appreciable job will attend to that. (PST981)
- Because teaching is stepping stone. (PST326)

Some of the typical responses relating to Political Reasons included:

- Because education has turn to politicians (PST48)
- Since my interest in teaching has fade off due to the political infiltration to the educational system (PST935)
- The education sector has been governed by politicians nowadays (PST1034)
- The government keeps on playing with our future. Today this, tomorrow that (PST1038)
- The teaching profession is now complicated due to politics (PST1058)

*There is no significant correlation between the entry grades of preservice teachers and their motivation to become teachers*

The number of research participants whose entry grades could be obtained during the period of data collection was 2,664. Their entry grades ranged from aggregate 6 to 37. The mean entry grade was aggregate 18 with the standard deviation of 5. Only 2.1% enrolled on the programme with aggregate between 6 and 9. Less than 1% enrolled with aggregate higher than 30. The bulk of the participants (75.1%) enrolled on the programme with aggregate between 10 and 20 (see Table 4). The lower the aggregate the higher the quality of the entry grade. This result suggests that the common notion in Ghana that only senior high school graduates with very weak aggregates are trained as teachers at the pre-senior high school level appears to be changing.

Table 4: Entry grades of the research participants

Aggregate	Responses	
	Number	Percentage (%)
6-9	56	2.1
10-20	2001	75.1
21-30	591	22.2
More than 30	16	0.6
Total	2664	100

In order to find out whether the entry grade of the preservice teachers has any effect on the choice to train as a teacher, the researchers investigated the correlation between the two variables, using the Pearson's Correlation (see Table 5). The results in Table 5 show a very weak negative but significant correlation between entry grades and the choice to train as a teacher ( $r = -.075, p < 0.001$ ). This is an indication of very weak inverse relationship between preservice teachers' West African Senior School Certificate Examination/ Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE/SSSCE) grades and the choice to train as a teacher.

Table 5: Correlation between WASSCE/SSSCE grade and choice of training to become a teacher

		Aggregate in WASSCE/SSSCE	Was training to become a teacher your first career choice?
Aggregate in WASSCE/SSSCE	Pearson Correlation	1	-.075**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	2664	2626
Was training to become a teacher your first career choice?	Pearson Correlation	-.075**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	2626	3242

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

*There is no significant correlation between the ages of preservice teachers and their motivation to become teachers*

In order to find out whether the age of the preservice teacher has any effect on the choice to train as a teacher, the researchers investigated the correlation between the two variables, using the Pearson's Correlation (see Table 6). The results in Table 6 show a weak negative but significant correlation between age and the choice to train as a teacher ( $r = -.110, p < 0.001$ ). This is an indication of a weak inverse relationship between preservice teachers' age and the choice to train as a teacher.

Table 6: Correlation between choice of training to become a teacher and age of preservice teachers

		Was training to become a teacher your first career choice?	Age
Was training to become a teacher your first career choice?	Pearson Correlation	1	-.110**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	3242	3227
Age	Pearson Correlation	-.110**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	3227	3285

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

#### 4. Discussion

The results from the study appear to show that training to become a teacher was the first choice career option for the majority (61.2%) of the preservice teachers. The reasons for

their choice of teaching as first choice career also appear to show that it is because of their love for the teaching profession. This was echoed in the responses of some of the preservice teachers such as; “because I have passion for teaching and irrespective of all difficulties I will face” (PST87), “I love to teach and would like to impact more knowledge into every group of individuals I meet” (PST609) and “I really love the teaching profession and the kids are my source of motivation”(PST633). The reasons these preservice teachers gave appear to show that their motivation to train as teachers was not influenced by any external reward. Preservice teachers PST 609 and PST 633 responses, for example, show that their motivation was not based on tangible rewards. Their motivation appears to be altruistic (Goller, Ursin, Vähäsantanen, Festner & Harteis, 2019; Salifu & Agbenyega, 2013).

However, a significant minority (38.8%) were compelled to train as teachers because they could not get the opportunity to enroll on their preferred profession. The top five careers these preservice teachers preferred were Nursing, Medicine, Armed Forces, Law and Accounting/Finance. More than a third (35.2%) of them preferred to go into health-related profession. This group of preservice teachers’ motivation to train as teachers could be described as being extrinsic (Azman, 2013; Salifu & Agbenyega, 2013).

Again, of all the preservice teachers who participated in this study, only 35.3% had plans of staying in teaching from 20 years till retirement. A good number (30.8%) had plans of leaving the teaching profession in less than 5 years, after their teacher education programme. The top five careers which these preservice teachers would want to enter were Business/Entrepreneurship, Armed Forces, Law, Medicine/Medical Assistant. This result indicates that even many of the 61.2 % of preservice teachers who chose teaching as their first choice career have not come to stay in the teaching profession for long. They have plans to leave the teaching profession after sometime, probably not because they have lost interest or love for the teaching profession but due to compelling external pull factors. This is echoed in response of preservice teacher PST1227 as; “though teaching is my first career choice and it is because I love the teaching career. I would leave after years to another career to fetch me enough financial support.” (PST 1227). This is an indication that conditions of service offered by other professions such as health and military serve as a pull factor for preservice teachers who love the teaching profession to leave the profession. This finding makes their motivation more extrinsic than altruistic.

It is not surprising that conditions of service was the first among the five main reasons why the majority (64.7%) of the preservice teachers would want to leave teaching profession after sometime. This is because as with many developing countries, the conditions of service for teachers in Ghana are generally not good. For example, while the monthly salary of a beginning primary school teacher in Japan is about US\$1,460.00, that of Ghana is about US\$330.00. This also explains why some of the preservice teachers said they would want to leave teaching profession after sometime to pursue their dream careers as echoed in the responses of preservice teachers PST 1218 and PST 1229 as; “[ I ] would like to achieve my dream of becoming a computer Engineering” (PST1218) and “[ I want] to gather some money and continue with my education to become a Pharmacist” (PST 1229) respectively.

Some of the other reasons the preservice teachers gave to justify why they would want to leave the teaching profession such as Lack of Respect for Teachers and Teaching as Stepping Stone are also related to the poor conditions of service for teachers. This was echoed in the response of preservice teachers PST 51 and PST 981, “because Ghana leaders (Government) does [sic] not respect teachers and our salary alone can't cater for a family” (PST51) and “teaching is a stepping stone so if I get any improved or appreciable job will attend to that.” (PST981). Preservice teacher PST51 links the lack of respect for teachers to low salary, while preservice teacher PST981 argues that teaching will serve as a stepping stone for a better job. Indeed, like in many developing countries, Ghanaian teachers do not feel they are respected because of their conditions of service. Many of them end up seeing teaching profession as a stepping stone for a more rewarding profession. This study has shown that these negative sentiments about the teaching profession are formed by prospective teachers even before they enter into the teaching profession.

The politically related reasons given by the preservice teachers who would want to leave the teaching profession after some time such as; “since my interest in teaching has fade off due to the political infiltration to the educational system” (PST935) and “the government keeps on playing with our future. Today this, tomorrow that” (PST 1038), were surprising to the researchers. Currently teacher education in Ghana is undergoing major changes in both content and structure. The Three-Year diploma awarding Colleges of Education have since 2018 become Four-Year degree awarding institutions (as already noted in the introduction). This reform has occasioned regular briefing on the progress made by the Ministry of Education of Ghana on the reform. The responses of preservice teachers such as PST 935 and PST 1038 suggest that some of them appear to have some resentment about the current reform.

The finding on weak inverse relationship between entry grades of the preservice teachers and the choice of teaching as a first choice career suggests that generally there is a weak correlation between the two variables. This indicates that preservice teachers who entered the teacher education programme with high entry grades were not necessarily those who chose teaching as their second choice career. This finding supports the earlier observation that the teacher education programme appears to be attracting high quality senior high school graduates. This finding contradicts earlier observation by Akyeampong and Lewin (2002) that Teacher Training Colleges in Ghana do not attract high quality senior high school graduates. The weak inverse relationship between age and the choice to become a teacher suggests that age is not a strong predictor of the choice to become a teacher. This finding could be attributed to the demographic characteristics of the preservice teachers. Almost all (93.9%) of the preservice teachers were between the ages of 18 and 28. The age range was therefore not very wide.

## **5. Implications and Conclusion**

The findings from the study have shown that motivation to train as a teacher was the main drive for the majority of the preservice teachers in this study. However, the preservice teachers' professed love for teaching appears to be temporary. This is mainly because of external pull factors such as better conditions of service offered by other professions such as Law and Nursing, perceived lack of respect for teachers and the teaching profession in

Ghana, and perceived political interference in Education. The opportunity teaching offers as stepping stone for one's dream profession appears to be the major motivation for the majority of the preservice teachers to train as teachers. Thus, although the majority of the preservice teachers claimed their motivation to train as teachers was due to the love they had for the profession, their future aspirations showed that they would not retire as teachers. The preservice teachers' motivation to train as teachers could therefore be generally described as being extrinsic rather than intrinsic or altruistic.

Business/Entrepreneurship, Armed Force, Law, Health and Accounting were the main professions the majority of preservice teachers preferred to enter in future. Based on the results of this study, it can also be concluded that incentives such as allowance, tuition waivers which are meant to attract prospective teachers into teacher education programmes (as done in Ghana) are not enough guarantee to attract the caliber of people who will train as teachers and remain in the teaching profession till retirement. Teacher education programmes offered at the Colleges of Education in Ghana appear to now attract senior high school graduates with very good WASSCE/SSSCE aggregates since this study revealed a weak correlation between choice to train as a teacher and entry grades of preservice teachers. Age is not a strong predictor of an individual's choice to train as a teacher.

These findings have implications for policy and future research. Policy makers in Ghana and developing countries that use incentives to attract prospective teachers into teacher education programmes may have to reexamine such a policy to ascertain whether it is attracting prospective teachers who will train as teachers and remain in teaching. This will prevent the situation where the nation's scarce resources are spent on training people who will eventually leave the profession. Further studies are needed to throw more light on what might have informed some of the preservice teachers' ambition to quit the teaching profession because of perceived political influence in education and how that could be addressed. Again, this study was carried out only at the Colleges of Education in Ghana. These Colleges train only pre-senior high school teachers. Further studies might be needed to cover preservice senior high school teachers in order to ascertain the picture across the pre-tertiary level.

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