

**Public Service Ethics, Values and Spirituality in Ghana:  
Challenges and Opportunities**

Thesis Submitted to the University of Manchester for the Degree of  
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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ADB	African Development Bank
A-G's	Auditor-General's
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
CAGD	Controller and Accountant General's Department
CCT-Gh	Coalition of Concerned Teachers-Ghana
CDD	Centre for Democratic Development
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CMAs	Central Management Agencies
CMS	Central Medical Store
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
EOCO	Economic and Organised Crime Office
ERP	Economic Recovery Programme
FAA	Financial Administration Act
FAT	Financial Administration Tribunal
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FIFA	International Federation of Association of Football
GACC	Ghana Anti-corruption Coalition
GDHS	Ghana Demographic and Housing Survey
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GII	Ghana Integrity Initiative
GJA	Ghana Journalists Association
GNAT	Ghana National Association of Teachers
GOs	General Orders
GoG	Government of Ghana

GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
GYEEDA	Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency
IAA	Internal Audit Agency
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MOFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
NAGRAT	National Association of Graduate Teachers
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NGO's	Non-Governmental Organizations
NIRP	National Institutional Renewal Programme
NPM	New Public Management
NSS	National Service Scheme
NYEP	National Youth Employment Programme
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behaviour
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCS	Office of the Head of Civil Service
PAC	Public Accounts Committee
PHC	Population and Housing Census
PMI	President's Malaria Initiative
PNDC	Provisional National Defence <i>Council</i>
PNDCCL	Provisional National Defence <i>Council Law</i>
PPA	Public Procurement Authority
PRO	Public Relations Officer
PS	Public Service
PSC	Public Services Commission

PSSWC	Public Service Salary and Wages Commission
SADA	Savannah Accelerated Development Authority
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SEAG	School Ethics Advisory Group
SFO	Serious Fraud Office
SOEs	State Owned Enterprises
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TI	Transparency International
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UREC	University of Manchester's Research Risk and Ethics Committee
US/USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
WB	World Bank

**Anthony Sumnaya Kumasey (October, 2017)**  
**The University of Manchester, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**

## **Public Service Ethics, Values and Spirituality in Ghana: Challenges and Opportunities**

### **ABSTRACT**

Concerns over the unethical conduct of leaders and public officials have led to the renaissance of interest in public service ethics and values. Although national and organizational systems and structures have been instituted to either eradicate or ameliorate dysfunctional behaviours such as corruption, sexual harassment and misuse of confidential information in public service organizations, the practices still persist – especially in developing countries, where the impact of such behaviour is more pronounced. The harmful effects of these behaviours on individuals, organizations and nations have led to a loss of confidence in public institutions, undermining the rule of law and leading to underdevelopment. Drawing from the Ghanaian perspective, this thesis empirically examined the extent to which ethics, values and spirituality can reduce unethical behaviours in the Ghanaian public service. Spirituality, for example, has the potential to stimulate the moral thoughts of individuals in dealing with ethical issues, thereby reducing unethical behaviour and generating positive organizational behaviour. Conceptually, the study was placed in the interconnection of public service ethics, values, workplace spirituality and unethical behaviour. Social capital and the principal-agency theories of public management were adopted as the study's theoretical lens, social reality as its ontology and social constructivism as its epistemology. The thesis was therefore a qualitative multiple case study which employed semi-structured in-depth expert interviews, semi-focus group discussions and documentary reviews as the foremost data collection instruments. The findings revealed the perennial reoccurrence of unethical behaviours, which took various dimensions, including fraud and abuse of resources, moonlighting, destroying, altering or falsifying records, waste and misuse of official time, apathy, sexual harassment, payroll irregularities (especially the use of '*ghost names*' on government payrolls), cash and procurement irregularities, and pilfering. The findings further revealed that low remuneration, poor leadership, the extended family system, the working environment and politicization of public service were the main causes of these behaviours. These causes were exacerbated by the weak and ineffective enforcement of rules and regulations, which was touted as main bane of indiscipline in the service. The findings on whether workplace spirituality could be deployed as a catalyst to reduce unethical behaviours were to some extent mixed, but support a call to employ spiritual reawakening in public service organizations as a panacea to overcoming these behaviours. From the theoretical lens, the findings reveal that the existence of these behaviours is characterized by institutional failures, inefficiency and nonadherence to traditional values. The study therefore recommends improvement in the conditions of service; inculcating professionalism in the conduct of public servants; and a 'living' code of conduct that is effectively implemented.

## **DECLARATION**

I, Anthony Sumnaya Kumasey, hereby declare that no portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

**Anthony Sumnaya Kumasey**

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved daughters Michelle, Jeanell and Samuella most especially Samuella who was just two months old when I had to embark on this journey far away in the United Kingdom. This is the end product of your sacrifice that denied you of the fatherly love in your formative years.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH DESCRIPTION

### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the introduction to the study and outlines the background and the key problem under investigation. It contains the aim and objectives of the study as well as the research questions to guide the research. It gives brief overviews of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks adopted and the ethical consideration to be observed in the course of the study. The chapter disposition of the entire thesis is also outlined.

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Concerns over unethical practices such as bribery and corruption, embezzlement of funds, fraud, conflicts of interest, sexual harassment, misuse of confidential information, falsification of records (Trevino and Nelson, 2013; Benavides et al., 2012; Kumasey et al., 2017a; Kumasey et al., 2017b) and other dysfunctional conducts have become common in public sector organizations worldwide. These behaviours have critical consequences on individuals and organizations. For instance, it is believed that about 2.9 trillion US dollars of global revenue is lost annually due to these dysfunctional behaviours (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, 2010). The devastating impact of these practices in the public sector of developing countries has resulted in the decrease in public trust (OECD, 2013; Thaler and Helmig, 2016), loss of confidence (Jurkiewicz and Giacalone, 2016) and an erosion of the rule of law (United Nations, 2001). Turner et al. (2015) among other scholars have described these dysfunctional behaviours as the “disease of government”. Subsequently the growing public outcry over the impact of the inappropriate conduct of public officials have resulted in the resurgence of research interest in ethics (Pajo and McGhee, 2003; Childs, 2012) or what has appropriately been described as the ‘ethics era’ (Kernaghan, 2003: 712). While the media and civil societies have waded into this debate, they mostly deliberate on unethical practices and reference to some progressive actions of public servants mostly go unreported (Cohen et al., 2008; Goodsell, 2004). This calls for the inculcation of ethics in the public service of developing countries and one of such modes is workplace spirituality which expresses employees’ search for simplicity, meaning, self-expression, and interconnectedness to something higher (Karakas, 2010; Marques et al., 2007). Workplace spirituality is perceived to be linked to organizational ethics (Lee et al., 2003) and has the tendency of

reducing dysfunctional behaviours among employees as it gauges their behaviours (James et al., 2011), thereby generating positive organizational behaviour (Sulaiman and Bhatti, 2013).

The Public Service according to OECD (2000) is a public trust and the citizenry expect public servants to serve the public interest with fairness and also manage resources properly on a daily basis. Fair and reliable public service ethics are the fundamental prerequisites to shore up public trust and also a keystone to good governance. These notwithstanding, scandals involving public officials have captured world attention these days. Examples include: Enron, WorldCom, Tyco, Global Crossing, Adelphia, International Olympic Committee (Gino et al., 2011; Ashforth *et al.*, 2008; Calvert, 2002) and in recent years FIFA. In each of these cases, unethical, and illegal activities committed by individuals in positions of trust and responsibility led to the liquidation, restructuring and even the demise of large companies that once engaged thousands of people (Harvey, 2006). In the realm of government, instances abound concerning prominent American politicians who were forcefully or voluntarily removed from office when evidence of unethical behaviours came to light. For instance, in June 2004, the governor of Connecticut resigned from his position to avoid impeachment after an investigation indicated he had received several inappropriate gifts from state contractors (Kauffman and Chedekel, 2004). These behaviours by public and government officials have harmful effects on individuals, organizations, as well as the society at large because they offend public sensibilities, damage organizational reputation, create human suffering as well as harm the perpetrators (Palmer, 2013). As indicated earlier, it is estimated that trillions of dollars of annual global revenue is lost due to various forms of unethical behaviours including corruption (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, 2010; Nasurdin *et al.*, 2014; Palmer, 2013). This phenomenon therefore deserves researchers' attention (Barchiesi and La Bella, 2014; Tang *et al.*, 2011; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010) as there is dearth of scholarly works (Belle and Cantarelli, 2017; Menzel, 2015). Discussions on public service ethics, values and spirituality have been varied. Some scholars discuss the safeguarding of public service ethics and values in a time of privatization (de Bruijn and Dicke, 2006) or economic individualism (Bozeman, 2007), or reconciliation of public service ethics and values in a time of business-like public management philosophies (Frederickson, 2005; Kernaghan, 2000). Others address public service ethics and values in general and propose sets of public values (van Wart, 2003; Gregory, 1999; Van Wart, 1998; Tait, 1997) or derive specific sets of public service ethics and values through empirical research (Beck Jørgensen, 2006; Kernaghan, 2003). In addition, some scholars have studied organizational

ethics and values in relation to organizational culture and climate (Schein, 2004; Paine, 2002), excellence and success (Peters and Waterman, 2005), corporate social responsibility and corporate social performance (Hemingway and MacLagan, 2004; Joyner and Payne, 2002). Workplace spirituality has also been studied variedly, while some scholars researched into workplace spirituality and organizational performance (Kazemipour et al., 2012; Weitz et al., 2012; James et al., 2011; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010b; Fry et al., 2005; Ashforth and Pratt, 2003), others concentrated on religion and spirituality (Furman et al., 2005; Valasek, 2009; Hill and Pargament, 2003; Cash and Gray, 2000) and others also dwelt on spirituality and leadership (Fry et al., 2011; Fry and Matherly, 2006; Dent et al., 2005) and yet still, others also linked workplace spirituality to organizational behaviour (Saleheh and Zare, 2013; Weitz *et al.*, 2012; James et al., 2011; Pawar, 2009; Lee *et al.*, 2003). These studies, it is worth noting, deal with developed countries and an extensive review of literature suggest scholars have largely ignored Africa (Parboteeah *et al.*, 2013; Tsui *et al.*, 2007) including Ghana.

The researcher is motivated to embark on this study because he is a Ghanaian and had resided in Ghana throughout his life prior to commencing the PhD. He has had all his education in Ghana with a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Philosophy in Public Administration degrees from the University of Ghana respectively. Prior to assuming the position of a lecturer in the Department of Business Administration at the University of Professional Studies, he had worked as a Senior Research Assistant and Principal Research Assistant at the Academic Affairs Directorate of the University of Ghana for ten years. As a lecturer, he had taught Introduction to Public Administration, Principles of Public Administration, Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility, Principles of Management, Entrepreneurship Development and Management of Non-Governmental Organizations at the University of Professional Studies, Accra. He garnered interest on this topic during his undergraduate studies when he took the modules; Introduction to Public Administration, Christian Ethics, Islamic Ethics and Comparative Ethical and Moral Situations in Ghana. The interest heightened when he had a first-hand experience as a Senior Research Assistant in the Public Service of Ghana and further heightened in the first year of his postgraduate studies when he took a module in Administrative Ethics and consequently wrote his Master of Philosophy thesis on Ethical Dilemmas Confronting Employees of University of Ghana. His teaching role coupled with his experience in the public service influenced the choice of the topic which examines public service ethics, values and spirituality in Ghana, by looking at its

opportunities and challenges as the latter construct needs additional testing in diverse country and cultural contexts (Benefiel *et al.*, 2014).

## **1.2 The Research Problem**

Ghana is no exception to these unethical behaviours outlined above. In recent times some government appointees and public servants have downgraded the values eschewed in them and engaged in unethical practices. There are several reports indicating that public servants in Ghana, like elsewhere in the world, have been involved in one unethical act or the other including: unprofessional conduct, nepotism, favouritism, bureaucratic bullying, excessive centralization, partiality, lateness to work, absenteeism, ethnic discrimination, moonlighting, conflict of interest, falsification of records (Rashed, 1995) amongst African civil servants, corruption, fraud, abuse and waste, lack of ethics and general low level of productivity in Ghana (Woode, 2000; Ayee, 2000; Quao, 1998). In addition, the Auditor General's Annual Report to Parliament reports of financial malfeasance and irregular accounting procedures by some officials leading to corruption and embezzlement of state funds (Ghana Audit Service, 2014; Ghana Audit Service, 2012; Ghana Audit Service, 2011; Ghana Audit Service, 2010). Further, clients who come into contact with Ghanaian public servants witness attitudes and conducts considered contemptuous, disrespectful, irritating, frustrating and desperation (Ohemeng, 2010). Additionally, Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) has consistently ranked Ghana in the 40s between 2010 and 2016. The question that begs asking is why the upsurge in unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana when attempts have been made to deal with it? And what role does spirituality play on the overall performance of the public service, when Ghana is deemed as a spiritual country?

## **1.3 Scope of the Research**

This research examines the ethical standards, values and norms in the public service of Ghana, to find out whether these ethical standards, values or rules are being violated by employees and if they are, what forms do these violations take and what measures have been put in place to ensure they are reduced or eradicated completely, and the role of spirituality in Ghana's public service. The study includes public service ethics and values, ethical and unethical behaviours, codes of conduct, transparency and accountability issues as well as corruption in the public service of Ghana and not overlooking the role of workplace spirituality. Further, the study linked these issues to social capital and principal-agency

theories of public management to understand the underpinning reasons for these behaviours. The research was conducted in Ghana, specifically in the Greater Accra Region which serves as the national capital and the seat of government. The Region also doubles as the headquarters of all the public service organizations in Ghana, and also serves as one of the ten regional head offices of the public service organizations in Ghana (serving as the central point of all governmental activities). Thus, most of the top level management of these organizations at the national, regional and district offices are located in the Greater Accra Region. This ensured that all the essential information or data requirements for the study were met.

## **1.4 Aims**

The main aim of the study was to examine public service ethics and values in Ghana by drawing on knowledge from documented sources, government officials, senior public servants in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA's) and selected Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) engaged in governance, integrity and transparency issues to understand how public service organizations understand and respond to unethical behaviours and the role of spirituality in the public service organizations of Ghana.

### **1.4.1 Objectives and Research Questions**

Based on the research aim outlined above, the study intends to achieve the following objectives.

1. To examine the ethical standards, values and norms of Ghana's public service.
2. To explore whether there are deviations from the ethical standards and values of Ghana's public service, and if there are, what kind(s) of deviations are there.
3. To investigate how these ethical standards, values and norms are enforced in Ghana's public service.
4. To explore the role of workplace spirituality in the public service of Ghana.

In order to achieve these objectives, the following research questions guided the inquiry:

1. What ethical standards and values (rules) have been set for public service employees in Ghana?
2. Are there deviations from these ethical standards and values, and if there are, what kind(s) of deviations are these?

3. How are ethical standards and values enforced in the public service of Ghana?
4. What role does workplace spirituality play in the public service of Ghana?
5. What are the policy implications of these study's findings?

## **1.5 Concise Conceptual and Theoretical Underpinnings**

The study is conceived along the relationship between public service ethics, values, workplace spirituality and unethical behaviour. The study situates the proper adherence to ethics and values at the nerve of public service organizations for efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism at a time when there is low trust for the service (Abdulai, 2000). The conceptual framework delineates the scope of the research, while identifying specific themes on which the study is focused. The theoretical framework on the other hand is located in public management theories and adopting two of such theories – Social Capital (Putnam, 2000; Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 1993; Coleman, 1990) and the Principal-Agency (Jensen and Meckling, 1976) theories. The use of these theories is based upon the fact that although they have widespread application, they have often not been adopted together in analysing public service ethics, values and spirituality. The theories were used as analytical lens in examining how public service ethics, values and workplace spirituality relate to unethical behaviours in Ghana's public service. These concepts and theories are examined comprehensively in chapter two.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study on public service ethics, values and spirituality was undertaken as a result of the increasing interest in public service ethics and values and the need for all public officials to behave ethically in order to shore up trust in the confidence reposed on them by the citizenry. This study therefore gives a deeper insight into the ethical standards, values and norms of public service organizations in Ghana which, it is believed, will help public servants to jettison what they consider as '*the normal way of doing business*' and behave ethically. The study further helps in identifying the various causes, consequences and effects of unethical practices in public service organizations in Ghana. Additionally, this study delves into workplace spirituality which has gained interest in the field of management by bringing to the fore the Ghanaian perspective of workplace spirituality in the public service. The study therefore provides a greater understanding of ethical and spiritual issues in the Public Service of Ghana and this, it is anticipated, will assist the Public Service Commission (PSC), the Office of the Head of the Civil Service (OHCS) and the Government to formulate better

policies and strategies in relation to the ethical conduct of public service employees. Again, the study will enable researchers, NGO's including international bodies and the general public to get information on issues that bother on public service ethics, values and spirituality in Ghana. Finally, the study serves as a point of reference within the Ghanaian context by contributing to knowledge in the field of administrative ethics, values and spirituality in Ghana.

## **1.7 Outline of the Dissertation**

The thesis is organized into nine chapters. *Chapter one* enfold the introductory chapter which consists of the background, statement of the problem, aims and objectives of the study, research questions and significance of the study. The scope and limitations, and the contribution of the study all constitute part of chapter one.

*Chapter two* consists of an extensive review of literature on public service ethics, values, workplace spirituality and unethical behaviours. The chapter further presents the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the study using social capital and principal-agency theories as the theoretical lens of the thesis.

*Chapter three* chiefly presents the methodology of the study which adopts the social constructivist ontology with the orientation that what is known (knowledge) is socially constructed and contingent upon the interpretation of subjects. The study is basically a qualitative case-study which utilized in-depth interviews and focus group discussions as the key data collection instruments.

*Chapter four* is the contextual chapter which presents an overview of the politico-economic and socio-cultural context of Ghana and goes on to set the tone of this research by tracing the historical development of the public service from the Gold Coast to its present state in Ghana. The chapter attempts to answer the first objective of the thesis by intimating the presence of rules and regulations. However, there are instances where the public service has witnessed unethical conducts.

*Chapter five* addresses the results of the study relating to the second research objective which explored whether there were deviations from the ethical standards and values of Ghana's public service, and if there are, what kinds of deviations are there. Specifically, the chapter



distilled information from the field to focus on the causes, forms and impacts of these unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana.

*Chapter six* explores and analyzes the current mechanisms put in place to enforce ethical standards through the lens of in-depth interviews with some selected employees of the public service and documentary reviews. The chapter answers the thesis' third objective which examined the ethical standards and values in the public service and how they are enforced. The chapter reveals that despite the existence of both internal and external mechanisms, the main challenge is the effective implementation of these mechanisms.

The *seventh chapter* addresses the results of the fourth objective of the thesis which relates to the role of workplace spirituality in the Ghanaian Public Service. The essence of this chapter was to establish within the Ghanaian context whether workplace spirituality could help in ameliorating unethical behaviours in the public service. Ghanaians in general have a tenacious belief in spirituality which is tied to their religious beliefs and this makes them attribute both good and bad occurrences in their private and organizational lives to spirituality. The findings in the field established a mixed impact of workplace spirituality in Ghana.

The *eighth chapter* garnered the findings from the four research objectives and linked this up with the two main theories (social capital theory and the principal-agency) and the extensive literature reviewed in chapter two. This provided the basis for synthesising the contribution of the study to knowledge.

The *final chapter* (chapter nine) presented a summary of the entire thesis, a summary of the major research findings, the contribution of the study to knowledge as well as the policy recommendations and suggestions for future research and conclusions.

## **1.8 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the thesis by setting out the background and outlining the problem statement. It also presents the aims, objectives and research questions to be investigated and an overview of the research, conceptual and theoretical framework. Further, the chapter provided an outline of the thesis detailing the contents of each of the nine chapters to be embarked upon for the rest of the research. The chapter intimates that there is a dearth of knowledge about public service ethics, values and spirituality in Ghana and its relationship

with unethical behaviours and sought to provide answers to questions bordering on the nature of public service ethics, values and spirituality as well as the policy implications of such behaviours in Ghana. The next chapter present a review of relevant literature on the phenomena under investigation in order to establish how this study can provide mortar into the literature to seal off the apparent research gaps.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL OVERVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction and Chapter Overview**

This chapter deals with the theoretical overview of the research by dwelling on the relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks. Conceptually, this study plummets within the NPM literature with a discourse on why the NPM was introduced with its attendant failure to include the ethics infrastructure. The chapter then defines the various concepts of the study including ethics, ethical and unethical behaviours linking it to the public service. The chapter intimates that, public service organizations exist to serve the interest of the public and therefore the actions of public officials should be determined by their specific codes of conduct which deals with acceptable and abhorrent behaviours in organizations. The chapter argues that whereas lots of research exists on public service ethics and values in the advanced world, not much research is undertaken in Africa despite the repeated unethical behaviours in the public service. Workplace spirituality is also reviewed to demonstrate that if practiced properly it could help to reduce unethical behaviours. Finally, the chapter discusses social capital and principal-agency theories as its theoretical lens.

#### **2.1 The Changing Nature of Public Administration**

The frontiers of the state have been expanding as a result of demands by citizens for more responsive governments. As the state expands to absorb the increasing demands, it has become very unwieldy culminating in less responsiveness. This has necessitated calls for change in the orientation of public administration through the proliferation of new agendas including New Public Management (NPM) (Hossain et al., 2017). Gray and Jenkins (1995: 76) have argued that “traditional theories and practices of public administration are under attack from reform agendas and appear driven by what, on the surface at least, seem to be common ideologies and strategies.” The reform efforts have been championed by the advocates of rolling back the state and marketization of the practices of public administration. The need for change to make public administration more effective, efficient and economical (Richards and Smith, 2002; Turner et al., 2015) culminated in the introduction of NPM. Whereas there has been a shift from traditional public administration to NPM as the panacea to the voluminous problems of the public sector, some scholars still hold their faith in the old

paradigm creating two schools of thoughts. The pro-public administration advocates have argued variously on why the paradigm shift must not be made to stand. The NPM was seriously criticised for refusing to acknowledge the difference between the public and private sectors, indicating that a shift from bureaucratic public administration to the entrepreneurial management conflicted with the nature of democratic governance (Ricucci, 2001). The NPM is also said to change the balance of power between the state and the private sector. However, Ricucci (2001) intimates that some pro-NPM advocates argue that the old public administration has lost both its moral and intellectual authority and that it was unable to “mount a sound, meaningful challenge to revisionist thought” (:172). At the very basic level, public administration had been criticised as dead to sensitivity of the public culminating in the need to have a more dynamic form of public administration.

NPM reforms have been a significant influence in various jurisdictions since the 1980s (Rosenberg Hansen and Ferlie, 2014; Hood, 1991) and it is argued that the rise of NPM, comes along with four other trends in the field of public administration namely a reduction in the expansion of government; a move towards private sector involvement in public service provision; more involvement of information technology in public service delivery; and more commitment to supra-national development paradigm (Hood, 1991). Vigoda-Gadot (2008) opined that NPM as an approach in public administration employs knowledge and experiences acquired in business management and other disciplines to improve efficiency, effectiveness and general performance of public services in modern bureaucracies. Its doctrinal exposé include a couple of features identified by Hood (1991) as hands-on professional management of public sector organizations, performance management, results orientation, disaggregation of the state sector, greater competition in the public sector, adoption of private sector management practices and prudence in resource management. This is achieved through partnership, empowerment, restructuring, re-engineering, information technology and continuous learning (Kernaghan, 2000).

These benefits notwithstanding, the issue of the ethical consequences of NPM became apparent only after the reforms were introduced in countries like the US, the UK and Australia (Maeschalck, 2004) and consequently in developing countries including Ghana (Ohemeng, 2005). For instance, Frederickson (1993: 250) had argued that when governmental functions are shifted to the private sector or shared, it becomes a safe sanctuary for increased corruption. Others have also argued that private sector management styles focus

solely on results and this has the tendency to undermine the ‘ethics infrastructure’ in public service (Jancsics and Jávora, 2012; de Graaf and Huberts, 2008; Gregory, 1999). To add to these, Self (2000: 118) also opined that with the introduction of NPM, ‘opportunities for corruption will grow and the expected result would be more fraud’. Further to these, Hood had intimated that the most common failings of the NPM are “bribery and extortion, front-line abandonment, and the use of public organizations for personal ego-trips” (2000: 29). Additionally, other scholars have raised the argument that NPM solely focuses on criteria such as efficiency, effectiveness and economy and neglects probity and public welfare in the traditional sense of equality ( Yesilkagit and de Vries, 2002; Doig, 1998; Savoie, 1998; Gregory, 2002) which are the recipes for unethical behaviours. In a nutshell, the underlying values of public service ethics under NPM have been compromised (Puppim de Oliveira *et al.*, 2015), as there have been significant shifts in public service ethical standards and subsequently, in unethical behaviour by both public servants and public organizations after the implementation of NPM (OECD, 2000; Van Wart, 1998; OECD, 1996), and concern for the prevention of malfeasance specially corruption (Jørgensen and Vrangbæk, 2011). The need to restore public trust and reinstate ethics and values in public service organizations cannot therefore be over emphasised. It is in tandem with this background that the research on public service ethics and spirituality in Ghana is being undertaken.

## **2.2.0 Definition of Terms**

This subsection defines the various key terms and terminologies used in the thesis. These include ethics, morality, values, principles, ethical and unethical behaviours, public service, public service ethics, public service values, code of ethics and workplace spirituality.

### **2.2.1 Ethics and Morality**

“Ethics” according to Davis (2003) originated from the Greek word “ethos” meaning customary conduct and exist in every civilization. Ethics has been defined variedly. Freakley and Burgh (2000: 97) opined that ethics can simply be understood as ‘what we ought to do’, i.e., it requires judgment and reasoning in decision making and raises questions concerning what is right, wrong, good or bad, just or unjust conduct. Others defined ethics as the science or study of the morality of human behaviour (Albanese, 2008; Banks, 2004). Trevino and Nelson (2013) have illuminated that ethics are the principles, norms and standards of conduct that governs an individual or groups. Ethics therefore examines the moral philosophy of human conduct, the goodness and badness, or rightness and wrongness of human behaviour,

drawing on complex philosophies, such as teleology and deontology (Pollock, 2007; Souryal, 2007). Ethics cares about human and natural life, the welfare of others, honest and trustworthy communication, and fundamental individual and group freedom (Bowman and West, 2014).

Ethics is closely related to morality and values and these terms are worth examining. Morality is a moral rule which regulates the conduct of a person or cluster of societies (Singer, 2011). It could also be referred to as the collection of moral principles and norms and “the practice of these principles on a regular basis, culminating in a moral life” (Souryal 2007: 18), or, as Pollock (2007: 10) describes it, “the total person”. Morality is derived from the Latin word ‘*moralis*’ meaning customs or manners and refers to good conduct and permissible behaviour whereas immorality refers to bad or unacceptable conduct (Albanese, 2008; Braswell and Miller, 1992). Morality is shaped and learned through personal experiences with those around us including the family, school, religion, and work as these properties enact certain norms, values, and principles to be charted (Souryal, 2007; Braswell, 2005; Braswell and Miller, 1992). All humans make moral decisions in everyday life to regulate behaviours and this constitutes the morality of a person (Pollock, 2007; Braswell and Miller, 1992). Thus, ethics and morality do overlap.

### **2.2.2 Values and Principles**

A value may be defined as “an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to its opposite” (Rokeach, 1973: 5). de Graaf and van der Wal (2008:84) posited that values are “qualities that are appreciated for contributing to or constituting what is good, right, beautiful, or worthy of praise and admiration”. More specifically, values are judgments of worth of something about which individuals care and attach importance. Values determine who a person is and what gives meaning to life (Bowman and West, 2014). They can include behaviours and attitudes (such as, honesty, loyalty and friendship), social desires and properties (such as, autonomy, power, and family) (Albanese, 2008; Pollock, 2007; Banks, 2004). Values are also linked to the concept of “*principles*” and in some cases used interchangeably, for instance, various organizations and governments describe the same type of document as either a statement of principles or a statement of values. However, while principles can also be values, not all values are principles. Alternatively, principles are often regarded as a broader, more basic

concept than values (Kernaghan, 2003: 712). Principles represent fundamental beliefs which should not be transgressed. Cooper (2006: 22) defined principles as ‘general laws or rules that provide a guide for action’ and Covey (1990: 18-19), argues that principles “are the laws of the universe that pertain to human relationships and human organizations,” whereas values “are internal and subjective”. Kernaghan (2003) argues further that the term principle takes the form of a single sentence containing several values. For instance, he indicates that one of the principles in New Zealand’s Code of Conduct provides that “public servants should perform their official duties honestly, faithfully and efficiently, respecting the rights of the public and their colleagues” and MacCarthaigh (2008) intimates that examples of principles include justice, liberty and equality. In a nutshell, values refer to those things that are most important to a person or an organization. Values are broader and more general than norms, which are regulations prescribing what the proper conduct in certain situations are. Morality on the other hand, denotes values and norms taken together and ethics is the systematic reflection on morality (Van der Wal et al., 2006). The importance of ethics and values are highlighted in Table 2.1 below;

**Table 2. 1 Importance of Ethics and Values**

	<b>Importance of Ethics</b>	<b>Importance of Values</b>
1	Ethics furnishes the norms by which relations among men are regulated.	Values form our perception of reality.
2	Ethics guides human actions in many aspects of life through codes of conduct.	Values give identity to individuals as well as organizations.
3	It reaffirms the uniqueness of man among other creatures in view of the fact that human life is an ethical self-construction.	They guide behaviour.
4	Training in ethics should enable us to see the defects in our own and other people’s conducts and to understand their exact nature, so that we are better able to set things right in our own conduct and to make profitable suggestion to others.	They give meaning to public service.
5	It functions as a societal strategy for improving human life through the preservation of a more humane eco-system and for attaining social and global harmony. It thus facilitates common societal values, rewards/reinforces positive values.	They are necessary for the maintenance of communities and societies.
6	It has intertwining link with religion, implying that it shares close affinity with religion. Most religions are built on the fundamental principle that good conduct will be rewarded and bad/ evil punished.	They are difficult to change and change can be brought about only after careful deliberation.

Author’s Construct 2017 - Adopted from Ikeanyibe (2009) and Bozeman (2007) respectively

### **2.2.3 Ethical, Unethical Behaviours and Ethical Dilemma**

Terminologies such as ethical and unethical behaviours are challenging tasks to define (Tsalikis and Fritzsche, 1989; Lewis, 1985). Lewis (1985) argued that creating a definition of ethics and ethical behaviour that satisfies every researcher's conceptualization of these terms is akin to "nailing Jell-O to a wall". Ethical behaviours have been defined by Trevino and Nelson (2013) as behaviours that are consistent with the principles, norms, and standards of business practice that have been agreed upon by society. Such norms and values according to Mbatha (2005) include; honesty, justice, reasonableness, freedom, truth, decency, integrity, fairness, and openness. A review of literature indicates that disagreement still exists concerning what constitutes unethical behaviour. Noe and Rebello (1994) conceptualized unethical behaviours as that which violates societal norms. Other authors have implied that unethical behaviours are those that violate one's deeply held beliefs concerning what is right and wrong (May et al., 2003; Dubinsky and Jolson, 1991). More broadly, Victor and Cullen (1988) describe unethical behaviours as that which are inappropriate when facing decisions that have implications for others. Despite these attempts, several philosophers and researchers have noted that ethical and unethical behaviours are difficult constructs to define because they convey different meanings to different people of different cultures.

Viewing ethics in this light indicates that individuals are faced with choices when making decisions and there is no apparent one right way between what is right or wrong but one must choose the best in the circumstances. Public officials are mostly confronted with organizational decisions that create tensions between ethics and profits, or between their private gain and the public good and any decision where moral considerations are relevant can potentially give rise to ethical dilemmas (Robinson 2002). For example:

- i. A decision that requires a choice between rules;
- ii. A decision where there is no rule, precedent or example to follow;
- iii. A decision that morally requires two or more courses of action, which are in practice incompatible with each other;
- iv. A decision that should be taken in one's self-interest, but which appears to violate a moral principle that one supports;

It is therefore the imperative to act, combined with the uncertainty of which action to take, that causes a dilemma (Robinson, 2002). Thus, in an ethical dilemma, some levels of tension, paradox, or conflict is present in determining a right action, and all other actions appear to be unfavourable or have undesirable consequences (Sekerka and Bagozzi, 2004). Kidder (1995:



16) opined that many of these ethical dilemmas facing professionals and leaders 'don't center on only issues of right versus wrong, but can also involve issues of right versus right'. They can arise from equally attractive options that could be justified as being 'right' in particular situations (Duignan and Collins, 2003: 283). From the above, it could be deduced that ethical dilemmas are daily occurrences in the organizational lives of public officials and these are difficult situations in terms of their ability to determine the right decision to make among competing sets of claims. Situations of conflict of interest, administrative discretion, corruption, nepotism, administrative secrecy and information leaks are examples of ethical dilemmas (Menyah, 2010) that confront public office-holders. These situations could then lead to one taking an ethical or unethical action.

#### **2.2.4 Public Service**

The public service according to McConnell et al. (2009), encapsulates all that is called government. The public sector/service is made up of government departments in-charge of making available goods and services that each and every citizen values, where the market forces will not provide at all and if they do, will under-provide (Wodzicki, 2007). Parker et al. (2008) have postulated that the public service is an encompassing organization which provides services to the public that are publicly funded, owned and operated. The public service therefore consists of governments and all publicly controlled or publicly funded agencies, enterprises, and other entities that deliver public programmes, goods, or services. Caiden (1971) describes the 'public service' as the collectivity of specialized government institutions or agencies established by law, financed by public money and staffed by professionals and career bureaucrats for the purpose of executing public policies. Based on these definitions, it could be concluded that the public service constitutes the realm within which governmental action takes place. It includes national, sub-national, local government units and regulatory bodies (International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board, 2010). In every country, the public service is significant in three major areas; it is the major employer of people, provider of business and social services, and finally, it is the greater consumer of tax resources (Thornhill, 2006). In line with this, Ayee (2008) has observed that the public service has an enormous impact on the citizenry because it provides goods and services (sanitation, water and electricity) that are essential for development; spearheads economic policy making and management; and also responsible for the maintenance of law and order.

The delivery of these programmes, goods and services are carried out by public servants. According to (Gortner, 2001: 517) public servants are servants of the public, of government, of their immediate organizations and of the law. Their role is traditionally conceptualized as part of an interconnected structure existing alongside but outside the spheres of private organizations. Though public servants perform a myriad of tasks and undertake multitudes of responsibilities regardless of the institution or country, developed or developing, there are common elements to their work. For instance, in 1996, the UN adopted an 'International Code of Conduct for Public Officials' which opened with the following general principles:

1. A public office, as defined by national law, is a position of trust, implying a duty to act in the public interest. Therefore, the ultimate loyalty of public officials shall be to the public interests of their country as expressed through the democratic institutions of government.
2. Public officials shall ensure that they perform their duties and functions efficiently, effectively and with integrity, in accordance with laws or administrative policies. They shall at all times seek to ensure that public resources, for which they are responsible, are administered in the most effective and efficient manner.
3. Public officials shall be attentive, fair and impartial in the performance of their functions and, in particular, in their relations with the public. They shall at no time afford any undue preferential treatment to any group or individual or improperly discriminate against any group or individual, or otherwise abuse the power and authority vested in them (United Nations, 1996).

Public servants therefore have a special responsibility because they are entrusted with managing resources on behalf of the public, delivering essential services and taking decisions that affect the life of citizens. The general public must be able to trust the integrity of the public service decision-making process. Hence the conduct of public officials should be guided by such traits as loyalty, discipline, integrity, honesty, confidentiality and impartiality (Abdulai, 2000). This was manifested in the report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life (popularly known as Nolan Committee (1995)) which outlined the following Seven Principles of Public Life:

1. **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

2. **Integrity:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organizations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
3. **Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
4. **Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
5. **Openness:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
6. **Honesty:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
7. **Leadership:** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example (Nolan and Nolan, 1995:14).

However, these noble principles notwithstanding, Turner et al. (2015: 1) have observed that public service organizations have performed poorly, taken on inappropriate roles and have been both inefficient and corrupt.

### **2.2.5 Public Service Ethics**

Public service ethics are broad norms that stipulate how public servants should behave and exercise judgment and discretion in carrying out their official duties (Tunde and Omobolaji, 2009; Abdulai, 2000). It tries to develop practicable and applicable concepts and tools, skills and expertise to deal with the rapid change in the world, especially the ones relating to growing unethical behaviours in both public and private organizations (Richter and Burke, 2007: 9) and is associated with rules and standards, morals, right and wrong, and value of honesty and integrity (Bowman, 1983). Public service ethics therefore encompasses all other values that guide the public service such as loyalty, neutrality, transparency, diligence, punctuality, effectiveness and impartiality (Abdulai, 2000). These values are better reinforced

if there is a system of administrative policies, management practices, and oversight agents that provide incentives and penalties to encourage public servants to behave professionally (United Nations, 2000). It is therefore considered a form of accountability on public administrators' conduct (Rosenbloom and Kravchuk, 2003; Hossain and Helao, 2008) as they are seen as the custodians of contemporary administrative state (Rosenbloom and Kravchuk, 2003), bedrock of governance (Lawton, 1998), and act in the best interest of the citizenry to gain their trust and also mitigate the incidence of unethical activities (Davis, 2003).

To achieve rapid socio-economic transformation and also perform their roles effectively, efficiently and responsively (Hossain and Helao, 2008); it becomes inevitable to have established ethical codes to guide the actions of public servants and politicians who see to the day-to-day running activities of the state (Ezeani, 2006). However, the so much cherished public service ethics is being challenged by various unethical practices including bribery and corruption, absconding with public funds, fraud, conflict of interest, waste and misuse of resources and falsification of records (Trevino and Nelson, 2013; Benavides et al., 2012; Ryvkin and Serra, 2012; Goodpaster, 2007; Kumasey et al., 2017a) . These unethical practices have dented the reputation of both the public service and its officials (Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007) and consequently led to increased cost to the government as a result of unsatisfactory financial performance (Gustafson, 2013; Nasurdin et al., 2014; Orlitzky et al., 2003; Palmer, 2013).

### **2.2.6 Public Service Values**

Values establish standards of behaviour and action that enable the organization to carry out its mission effectively ( Van Der Wal et al., 2008a; Vrangbaek, 2006; Kernaghan, 2003; van Thiel and van der Wal, 2010). According to de Graaf and Van der Wal (2008: 84), “values are hard to define and hard to locate; they are neither here nor there ... values never come just by themselves; they never appear unaccompanied”. Values are always attached to a value manifestation to express a quality. The word ‘values’ in the narrower sense is used to refer to ‘what is considered good, desirable or worthwhile’, while in much comprehensive sense it denotes ‘all kinds of lightness, obligation, virtue, beauty, truth and holiness’ (Frankena, 1967: 229-230). Williams (1968) viewed values as the criteria people use to select and justify their actions and also evaluate others, including the self, and events. Values can also be understood as ‘ideas about what is good, right, and desirable in a society’ or as ‘conceptions of the desirable that guide the way social actors (organizational leaders, policy-makers, individual

persons) select actions, evaluate people and events, and explain their actions and evaluations' (Schwartz, 1999: 24). Thus, values are societal principles, goals, and standards that members within a group or organization believe to be intrinsically worthy (Thomas, 2013; Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006). Linking it to the public sector, a public value is associated with a principle that must be followed or a standard that must be met by public organisations while they regulate or produce their service (Jørgensen, 2007) and they can become manifest through codes, ethics, norms or principles (Jørgensen and Vrangbæk, 2011). Bozeman (2007: 13) defined public values as 'the rights, benefits, and prerogatives to which citizens should (and should not) be entitled; the obligations of citizens to society, the state and one another; and the principles on which governments and policies should be based'. Therefore, public values help members of an organization to understand how they should act in that organization (Moorhead and Griffin, 1989: 494-497) and also serves as the link between the daily work of public servants and the broad aims of democratic governance (Kernaghan, 2003). Values are not only relevant to organizations but to individuals and societies as well (Bowman and West, 2014; Thomas, 2013) and they impact individuals' attitudes, relationships, interactions with others within organizational settings, and the meanings they assign to situations and behaviours of others. Thus, values are seen as the "prime drivers of personal, social, and professional choices" (Suar and Khuntia, 2010: 443). Individuals therefore bring to the organization, their personal beliefs, perceptions, goals, choices and actions and they rely on these to judge people, situations and also to make decisions (Rohan, 2000; Thomas, 2013; Rokeach, 1973).

What constitute public service value(s) differ from country to country and studies have shown various types of values. For instance, the OECD (2000) has identified eight most frequently cited core values of public service in OECD countries and these are: impartiality, legality, integrity, transparency, efficiency, equality, responsibility, and justice. While in some countries the traditional public service values include integrity, efficiency, effectiveness, neutrality, responsiveness and accountability (Kernaghan, 2000; Gilbert, 1959). Vrangbaek in his study of public service values in Denmark identified four main values namely; responsibility, transparency, maintenance of judicial laws and high professional standards (2009: 525). Tait (1997) believes public service values under NPM should include efficiency, effectiveness, innovation, profit, competence and quality.

### **2.2.7 Difference between Values and Ethics**

The terms ‘values’ and ‘ethics’, are often used synonymously but they do not mean the same thing. Values can be defined as ‘enduring beliefs that influence the choices we make among available means or ends’ (Rokeach, 1973: 5). Ethics relate to issues of right or wrong, good or evil (Kernaghan, 2003; Kakabadse et al., 2003: 478). Values in themselves do not actually do anything, but it is the application of ethical codes to values that leads to particular behaviour. In effect, ethics are the rules that translate values into everyday life (OECD, 1996: 12). Ethics is about determining what is ‘wrong’, ‘good’, ‘bad’ or ‘right’, and ethical choices are informed by values which help actors decide on what option to take when faced with an ethical dilemma (Kakabadse et al., 2003: 479). Van Wart (1998: 163) argues that ethics are a sub-set of values, and that values form our broad, socially derived ethical standards for how the world should operate. Ethics, he proposes, is doing the right thing, that is, acting on values. Values being broader than ethics, could lead to the conclusion that not all values are ethical values, that is, not all values relate to questions of right or wrong, good or evil. Values can be ethical, unethical or simply non-ethical (Henry, 1998: xiv). ‘Ethical values’ are increasingly regarded as a subset of public service values in general (Van Wart and Berman, 1999; Kernaghan, 2003: 711-712; Guy, 1990: 14). Ethics translates values into action (Bowman and West, 2014) and can therefore be conceptualized as a subset of values in general and also assesses the priority of ethical values in relation to other types of values (Kernaghan, 2003: 716; Kernaghan, 2000: 95). Similarly, Gortner (2001: 509) proposes that ‘an understanding of the role of values clarifies many of the issues related to ethics in public administration’. It could be inferred from the above that there is a close relationship between ethics and values which suggests a formalization of this relationship. In this direction, Kernaghan has observed that some countries have merged their ethics and values documents together and a few have provided a value foundation that underpins a superstructure of ethics and other regulations (2003). This study will therefore treat ethics and values as similar since they complement one another (Jørgensen and Vrangbæk, 2011; Thomas, 2013) and adopts Suar and Khuntia (2010:443) definition as the “shared concepts of what individuals believe to be good, desirable, and righteous” for both ethics and values because they both determine how one ought to or ought not behave or act.

From the foregoing discussion on ethics and values, it could be seen that the general public expect public officials to behave ethically in the fulfilment of their duties and also expect their actions to be ethically justifiable especially in the performance of their duties (Mbatha,

2005). This viewpoint is based on the assumption that public service organizations exist to serve the interest of the public and therefore the actions of public officials should be determined by their specific codes of conduct which impinges on impartiality, legality, integrity, transparency, accountability, equality, responsibility, and justice. However, some employees of public organizations do engage in unethical behaviours and this could lead to ineffective and unsatisfactory service provided by their organizations. Public service ethics and values should therefore be seen as the driving force of the organization, to propel individuals to do what is desirable, good, honest, trustworthy and transparent and to prevent them from doing what is abhorred in the organization either individually or collectively as an organization. It is based on this premise that this study examines public service ethics, values and spirituality and its relationship with unethical behaviours as the latter is a cause for worry in the public service of most countries including Ghana.

### **2.3.0 Codes of Ethics**

Codes of ethics have become popular in organizational literature as a means of ameliorating unethical behaviours, however establishing a clear code of ethics has been very difficult (Svara, 2014). Codes are viewed as a set of guidelines and policies that organizations create in order to help govern their employees' decisions and actions (Coughlan, 2005; Kumasey et al., 2017a). Codes guide employees to solve ethical dilemmas especially in their relations with other employees, customers and suppliers (Coughlan, 2005). They have increasingly become a pivotal constituent of ethical infrastructure of organizations that managers employ to educate employees concerning ethical issues as well as informing them of their expectations concerning employees conduct (Schwartz, 2004). Codes are written, distinct and formal document that consists of moral standards used to guide employee or corporate behaviour (Schwartz, 2001; Kumasey et al., 2017a). Thus, codes are designed for regulatory, educational or inspirational purposes (Svara, 2014: 562) and are therefore seen as a guide to both present and future organizational values and responsibilities of employees and other stakeholders (Kaptein and Schwartz, 2008). Codes are characteristically based on a deterrence ('thou shall not') approach that explicitly states behaviours to be avoided (Gibbs, 1975; Svara, 2014), however, they can also be used to promote virtuous, ethical or socially responsible behaviour (Caza et al., 2004; Svara, 2007) and inform external individuals and organizations of what they should expect (Svara, 2014). Codes can be effective in shaping

organizational conduct when it includes punitive sanctions or enforcement processes (Pattison and Wainwright, 2010).

Codes vary in content, specificity and length, but they tend to address certain common subjects. For instance, codes usually cover employee relations with the organization and the organization's relations with employees, shareholders, customers, the government, the local community and, occasionally, the environment (Petersen and Krings, 2009; Kumasey et al., 2017a). Concerning employee behaviour, codes tend to concentrate on conflict of interest, extortion, gifts and kickbacks, insider information, bribery, confidentiality, and theft (Sanderson and Varner, 1984; Hite et al., 1988; Kumasey et al., 2017a), and regarding organizational behaviour, they focus on the violation of laws, fraud and antitrust violations (Sanderson and Varner, 1984; Hite et al., 1988; Kumasey et al., 2017a). Codes can enhance an organization's reputation, signal that the organization is committed to ethical behaviour, create a cohesive corporate culture and help the organization to avoid fines, sanctions and litigations (Erwin, 2011; Singh, 2011; Kumasey et al., 2017a). On the other hand, codes have been critiqued as being too abstract, coercive, unworkable, producing red tape and insufficient to regulate conduct without other social processes (Downe et al., 2016). Further, codes do not in themselves "act" unless they are interpreted and translated into actions by human agents (Downe et al., 2016). Others have therefore queried whether codes are necessary in organizations (Svara, 2014; Ladd, 1980) because unethical employees are more likely to show unethical tendencies whether codes exist or not (Menzel, 2010). These notwithstanding, codes reflect the standards set by the organization and establish realistic modes of behaviour that apply to all important stakeholders in the organization by governing the actions and conducts through the promotion of ethical practices (Kumasey et al., 2017a).

#### **2.4.0 Workplace Spirituality in Public Organizations**

Over the past three decades, workplace spirituality has emerged as a sub-field in management with a growing interest among organizational researchers (Van Buren and Greenwood, 2013; Petchsawanga and Duchon, 2012). This is as a result of the fact that organizations are now making room for the spiritual dimension of its employees, a dimension that deals with meaningful work and sense of community rather than the bureaucratic rules and principles in organizations. Workplace spirituality is conceptualized as the lived experiences and expressions of one's spirituality in the context of work and workplace (Sheep, 2006). For a full understanding of workplace spirituality, this section will attempt to compare religion with



spirituality, look at the dimensions of workplace spirituality and the impact of workplace spirituality as the definition of religion and spirituality appears confusing.

#### **2.4.1 Introduction to Spirituality and Workplace Spirituality**

The workplace in contemporary times has become central to employees' personal growth and development after the declining importance of worship, neighbourhoods and extended families (Jurkiewicz and Giacalone, 2004; Burroughs and Eby, 1998). The workplace is perceived as a place where people spend most of their lives, develop friendships, create value, and make their most meaningful contributions to society (Fairholm, 1996), but this workplace is confronted with socio-economic and environmental problems resulting in greed and the lack of love and compassion (Cacioppe, 2000). These problems have triggered a renewed search for harmony and peace, through spirituality to cure the 'ills of modern management' (Brown, 2003: 396) and to recapture the trust between employer and employee, allegedly lost due to the dehumanized organizational practices that accompanied the massive processes of downsizing, the abuse of workers and other actions that breached psychological contracts (Jurkiewicz and Giacalone, 2004). Spirituality involves a sort of connectedness of an individual to oneself, others, nature and to a larger meaning and is strongly associated with creativity, play, love, forgiveness, compassion, trust, reverence, wisdom, faith and sense of oneness (Ajala, 2013). Workplace spirituality also known as spirituality or spirit at work, organizational spirituality, or the spiritual paradigm (Johnson, 2007) addresses human activities relating to personal development, compassion, meaningfulness and joy at work, honesty, trust, job commitment, and wellbeing of employees (Petchsawanga and Duchon, 2012).

Previously, the fields of spirituality and management were thought to be incompatible however, in recent times they have been linked together (James et al., 2011) and interest in workplace spirituality has increased (Pawar, 2009; Poole, 2009; Gotsis and Kortezi, 2008; Benefiel, 2007; Driver, 2007; Duchon and Plowman, 2005). The reason being that organizations are now making room for spiritual dimensions, i.e. dealing with meaningful work and a sense of community (Armour 1998). This has attracted employees to find ultimate meaning and purpose in their work, strengthen their interconnectedness (Kazemipour et al., 2012) and align their core beliefs to organizational values (Kinjerski and Skrypnek, 2004; Mitroff and Denton, 1999). Many reasons have been ascribed to the resurgence of interest in

workplace spirituality. For instance, Dhiman and Marques (2011: 818) allude that baby-boomers' mid-life soul-searching, arrival of the new millennium, anxiety caused by corporate downsizing and restructuring, search for meaning through work, quest for stability in an unstable world, movement towards more holistic living, greater influx of women in the workplace and developed countries' progression from belly needs to brain needs are some of the factors that have led to this upsurge. Additionally, Moore (2008: 80) has opined that the 'graying' of the workforce, the downswing of the economy, increased distrust of upper management, increased demand for longer work hours and higher profits, and recent reductions in employee retirement and health care benefits account for the resurgence of workplace spirituality. Other researchers (Marques, 2005; Jurkiewicz and Giacalone, 2004; Ashforth and Pratt, 2003; Ashmos and Duchon, 2000) have also given other reasons for the rise of workplace spirituality.

#### **2.4.2 Definition of Spirituality and Workplace Spirituality**

Spirituality at work is not about religion, or getting people converted to a specific belief system (Cavanagh, 1999), but an "internal substance", "a value, belief, attitude, or emotion", "that affects people's behaviour" (Moore and Casper (2006: 109-110). Furman et al. (2005) defined spirituality as an attitude or approach that encompasses the search for meaning, purpose and morally fulfilling relations with the self, others, the encompassing universe, and ultimate reality. Others see spirituality as a framework in which individuals experience a sense of excellence by relying on their own experience in work processes, connecting to others and an anthropocentric force (Giacalone, 2009; Clarke, 2006). There has not been a generally agreed upon definition for workplace spirituality (Giacalone, 2009; Dhiman and Marques, 2011; Ashforth and Pratt, 2003) resulting in Garcia-Zamor (2003: 356) referring to it as a "definitional muss". However, workplace spirituality has been defined variedly by various authors. For instance, Ashmos and Duchon (2000: 137) defined it as "the recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of a community". Milliman et al. (2003: 427) asserted that workplace spirituality involves the effort to find one's ultimate purpose in life, to develop a strong connection to co-workers and other people associated with work, and to have consistency (or alignment) between one's core beliefs and the values of their organization. Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003: 13) on their part perceived it as a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of

transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides a feeling of completeness and joy. Others have opined that workplace spirituality involves the effort to find one's ultimate purpose in life, to develop a strong connection with co-workers and other people associated with the work, and to have consistency (or alignment) between one's core beliefs and the values of their organization (Mitroff and Denton, 1999). From the foregoing definitions, it could be observed that workplace spirituality reflects employee experiences such as a sense of meaning, purpose, community, and transcendence at workplace, revealing the meaning and purpose in life, sense of interconnectedness and belonging, and personal joy and fulfilment (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010b; Pawar, 2009; Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Petchsawanga and Duchon, 2012).

### **2.4.3 Spirituality and Religion Compared**

There have been controversies surrounding the differences and similarities between spirituality and religion (Petchsawanga and Duchon, 2012; Sarkar et al., 2014; Hill and Pargament, 2003). While some researchers perceive religion as a broader concept than spirituality (Rican, 2005; Hill and Pargament, 2003), others perceive spirituality to be a broader concept than religion (Berry, 2005; Marler and Hadaway, 2002). The two concepts are not the same, they differ (Petchsawanga and Duchon, 2012; Paloutzian et al., 2010). According to Guillory (2000), spirituality is considered to be a human experience that is ubiquitous and, yet, has nothing to do with specific religious traditions, and is beyond the dogma of religion. Schmidt-Wilk et al. (2000: 581) refers to spirituality as the personal experience of "silent, unbounded, timeless inner domain that any individual may experience in his/her conscious awareness". Similarly, McKnight (1984: 138) defines spirituality as, "the basic feeling of being connected with one's complete self, others and the entire universe in a certain ends or purpose that go beyond self". Further, spirituality has been defined as a sense of connectedness to a larger purpose that is associated with a sacred, higher power (Day, 2005; Byrne et al., 2011). On the other hand religion is based on the belief systems, including 'creeds, rules, dogma, doctrine, principles, teachings, theologies and/or philosophies' (Pielstick, 2005: 160) of a group of people. It could also be defined as involving membership of a particular community of faith with its own structure, rules, and belief systems (Byrne et al., 2011; Day, 2005). The following characteristics differentiate spirituality from religion. Spirituality is personal, inclusive, and positive while religion/religiosity is external, exclusive,

and negative (Mitroff, 2003; Cash and Gray, 2000; Harlos, 2000). On the part of Mitroff and Denton (1999) religion is perceived to be intolerant and divisive while spirituality is seen as universal and broadly inclusive. Karakas (2010) also argued that spirituality is private, inclusive, non-denominational and a universal human feeling, while religion is the adherence to the beliefs, rituals, or practices of a specific organized religious institution(s). It is further argued that religion is more community focused while spirituality tends to be more individualistic; religion is more observable, measurable, and objective while spirituality is less visible and quantifiable and more subjective; religion is more formal, orthodox, and organized while spirituality is less formal, less orthodox and less systematic; religion tends to be behaviour oriented with an emphasis on outward practices while spirituality tends to be more emotionally oriented and inwardly directed (Johnson, 2007: 92; Hyman and Handal, 2006; Hill and Smith, 2003: 232). Hence, religion is viewed as occurring within a formally structured religious institution such as a church, synagogue, or mosque, whereas spirituality is often characterized by more experiential dynamics associated with personal meaning (Sarkar et al., 2014; Hill and Pargament, 2008; Hill et al., 2000). In contrast, spirituality has been described as an element of religious practice, and it sits within the broader domain of religion (Pargament, 1999). Neal (1997) suggests that the difficulty of defining spirituality in particular comes from trying to objectify and categorize an idea that is very subjective and beyond categorization. Thus, from the foregoing, it could be said that spirituality and religion are complementary to each other or at best regarded as interdependent, but distinct concepts because they converge on the same basic values (Brophy, 2014; DeJongh, 2011; Bolman and Deal, 1995). Spirituality and religion are fully independent of each other; people can be both spiritual and religious, neither spiritual nor religious, or just one and not the other (Byrne et al., 2011; Day, 2005). This notwithstanding, it is believed many people experience spirituality within the context of religion but this is not applicable to everyone (Davis et al., 2017). In this regard, some authors have identified four types of spirituality namely: religious spirituality, humanistic spirituality, nature spirituality, and cosmos spirituality (Davis et al., 2017; Worthington and Aten, 2009; Davis et al., 2015). To Aten and Worthington (2009) religious spirituality is conceptualized as a sense of closeness and connection to the sacred as defined by a particular religion. Humanistic spirituality is viewed as a sense of connection to humankind while nature spirituality is defined as a sense of connection to the environment or to nature and finally, cosmos spirituality is a sense of connection with creation (Aten and Leach, 2009; Aten and Worthington, 2009).

#### **2.4.4 Dimensions of Workplace Spirituality**

Various dimensions have been developed for workplace spirituality because of the ambiguity (Benefiel, 2007). For instance, McKee et al. (2011), Ashforth and Pratt (2003), Ashmos and Duchon (2000), and Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2004) have proposed three dimensions, Pfeffer (2002) has proposed four dimensions, Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2010b) have also proposed ten dimensions and Valasek (2009) identified seven dimensions. The three dimensions are worthy of consideration and as such will be explained further, they are, an inner life or spiritual connection, meaning and purpose in life and a sense of community.

- i. Inner Life/Spiritual Connection or Belief in Transcendence:** This dimension of workplace spirituality has the belief in transcendence, that is, something greater than oneself, a higher power (Ashforth and Pratt, 2003), the sacred (Pargament, 1999). Thus, apart from the physical, emotional, and cognitive needs, employees also have spiritual needs which they bring along to work (Chawla and Guda, 2013; Duchon and Plowman, 2005) and this is the engine that empowers spirituality as a force in employee's lives as they search for meaningfulness and purpose (Houston and Cartwright, 2007) in their organizations.
- ii. Meaning and Purpose in Work:** This dimension represents how employees deal with their day-to-day work activities by not only looking at how interesting and challenging their work is, but also how they can live by their goal in seeking deeper meaning and purpose in the work, and also, contributing to others (Milliman et al., 2003; Paloutzian et al., 2003; Ashmos and Duchon, 2000). It reflects a feeling of wholeness and harmoniousness with some animating purpose that gives direction to one's work (Overell, 2008) and a sense of what is important, energizing, and joyful about work (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000: 141). Meaning and purpose are derived in part from living an integrated life and being connected to the larger system of the universe (Johnson, 2007). A spiritual person develops a sense of meaning and purpose by performing work for which he/she has intended, thereby enhancing his/her relationship with the sacred by showing love and compassion for others (Houston and Cartwright, 2007) and enlivening oneself by the full use of his/her potentials (Fry, 2003).
- iii. Sense of Community/Interconnectedness:** The sense of community represents how employees see themselves connecting with co-workers with the shared purpose reflecting 'the notions of sharing, mutual obligation and commitment that connect people to each other' (McKee et al., 2011: 237; Duchon and Plowman,

2005: 814). Or the extent to which employees feel being a part of their work community where they can experience personal growth, be valued as individuals, and have a sense of working together (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000: 138-141) as life and culture exist in a web of interrelationships (Eisler and Montuori, 2003: 48). Conger (1994) earlier intimated that the workplace has become our main source of community, taking the place formerly held by family, neighbourhoods, churches, and community organizations. This sense of community is based on trust, support, communication, and sincere care. Thus, the workplace is where we contribute to our society by having a sense of compassion and a desire for justice for others (Ingersoll, 2003) as well as living in connection to co-workers and sharing a common purpose (Kinjerski and Skrypnek, 2006).

#### **2.4.5 Positive Impacts of Workplace Spirituality on Individuals and Organizations**

Workplace spirituality has positive impact on individuals, groups and the organization as a whole and is evidenced in research. For instance, workplace spirituality enhances organizational learning (Fry, 2003), unifies and builds communities (Cavanaugh et al., 2001), connects to others at the workplace and work itself (Khanna and Srinivas, 2000). It is equally a source of healing and harmonizing expression, and connectedness that transcends all egocentric, socio-centric, or anthropocentric forms (Abdullah et al., 2009; Maxwell, 2003). This leads to a greater contribution to the organization with the consequential benefits of improved decision-making, increased problem-solving, higher intuitive and creative capacities, and overall efficient use of both human and material resources (Weitz et al., 2012). Thus, if workplace spirituality is appropriately managed, it will serve as a personal mechanism for controlling individual behaviour and well-being at work (Dhiman and Marques, 2011; James et al., 2011) by promoting a feeling of satisfaction through transcendence (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010b). Besides, workplace spirituality results in other positive outcomes such as increased commitment and productivity, improved coping with work-related stress (Chen and Yang, 2012; Hong, 2012; Fry et al., 2011; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010b; Chand and Koul, 2012) and work engagement (Saks, 2011). Additionally, workplace spirituality improves employee well-being (Whitaker and Westerman, 2014; Sprung et al., 2012; Karakas, 2010), reduces depression (Robertson 2007, Yoshioka 2007), a source of inspiration (O'Grady and Richards, 2011), encourages a more dedicated, moral, and efficient workforce that fosters improved organizational performance

(Saleheh and Zare, 2013; Fahey, 2007), builds unity and teamwork thereby reducing absenteeism and turnover (Milliman et al., 2003), leading to organizational effectiveness (Word, 2012; Neal and Biberman, 2004). Furthermore, it has been established that workplace spirituality is interconnected with organizational ethics, (Lee et al., 2003) and this could reduce unethical behaviour among employees by gauging their behaviours at work (James et al., 2011). It is also established that workplace spirituality is negatively correlated with unethical behaviour (Weitz et al., 2012) and generates positive organizational behaviour (Pawar, 2009; Sulaiman and Bhatti, 2013). Additionally, it encourages employees' happiness (Jurkiewicz and Giacalone, 2004). All of these positive outcomes lead to an improvement in employee as well as organizational performance (Dhiman and Marques, 2011; Kazemipour et al., 2012; James et al., 2011; Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Whitaker and Westerman, 2014; Word, 2012).

#### **2.4.6 Potential Dangers of Workplace Spirituality**

The positive impact of workplace spirituality notwithstanding, it has been established that if not well implement, it is likely to pose problems in organizations. The first potential problem is the danger of proselytizing. Expressing ones spirituality at the workplace has the risk of evangelizing other people from diverse religions or worldviews (Karakas, 2010; Milliman et al., 2003; Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002). Using spirituality to exclude others would undermine the basic requirement for respect and inclusiveness at work. This will make employees' feel dissatisfied and frustrated because they are not able to express their own spirituality, not being respected for their diversity, and therefore feel marginalized or coerced (Brown, 2003; Milliman et al., 2003). Additionally, implementing generic spiritual principles would result in alienation and indoctrination of employees (Karakas, 2010; Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002). Moreover, there is also the danger of a group of individuals with similar interests in the organization dictating their own agenda (Cavanagh and Bandsuch, 2002) at the detriment of others. Issues of spirituality (especially pertaining to a particular religion) can have divisive and harmful influences in the workplace if there is no absolute respect for diversity (Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002). Further, there is also the tendency of human rights and equity issues including dangers of favouritism, prejudice and discrimination (Karakas, 2010; Milliman et al., 2003; Cavanagh, 1999).

The second potential problem of workplace spirituality is related to compatibility. Organizations characterized by materialistic and positivist cultures may be challenged to incorporate spirituality issues into their workplace (Cavanaugh et al., 2001), which will be ‘antithetical’ to spirituality (Mirvis, 1997) because there is the tendency of separating ‘church and state,’ ‘faith and reason,’ and ‘the spiritual and the secular’ (Mirvis, 1997: 202) thereby making workplace spirituality an ‘undiscussable issue’ in organizations (Mirvis, 1997). There is also the potential of legitimate resistance to the expression of religion and spirituality at the workplace (Karakas, 2010; Brown, 2003) as some employees would perceive spiritual conversations as ‘too personal’ and invasive of their privacy, and may feel under-pressure (Karakas, 2010).

Another potential danger of workplace spirituality is the tendency of spirituality being used as a management device to manipulate employees in organizations (Fernando, 2005; Brown, 2003). The danger is that spirituality would lose its essence, and authenticity if it is misapplied as a management tool to manipulate employees (Karakas, 2010). Without a genuine commitment to the authenticity of spirituality for its own sake, workplace spirituality would turn into a “management tool, with sinister undertones, which, when unmasked, is likely to prove ineffective and ephemeral” (Brown, 2003). The misuse of spirituality as a management tool would therefore rob managers and employees of deeper meaning, authenticity, and integrity (Karakas, 2010; Brown, 2003; Cavanagh and Bandsuch, 2002).

The fourth major problem is the legitimacy problem workplace spirituality faces in theory and practice. As an emerging field, workplace spirituality is not well established in the scientific literature as well as in professional practice (Giacalone et al., 2005). There are numerous uncertainties and confusion regarding the concept, definition, meaning, and measurement of workplace spirituality (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010b; Hicks, 2003; Ashmos and Duchon, 2000). There are also controversies surrounding the methodological, validity, rigor, and measurement of workplace spirituality (Kinjerski and Skrypnek, 2004; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003). The growing body of literature on workplace spirituality has therefore been criticized for being atheoretical and ungrounded (Dean et al., 2003; Sass, 2000) as well as lacking rigor (Gibbons, 2000) and ample theory (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010b; Dent et al., 2005).

From the foregoing, it could be realized that spirituality and religion affect our daily lives (Kellermanns, 2013) and workplace spirituality is important not only to individuals but



organizations as a whole because if this aspect of the individual is not well harnessed then it could impact negatively on the organization. Campbell (2007) has posited that employees, apart from being humans, are also made up of spirit (spirituality), cognition and emotion. Spirituality is deeply entrenched in the development of the African, and an awareness of spirituality is inspired from an early age and reinforced through daily practices, rituals and ceremonies (Wheeler et al., 2002; Greeff and Loubser, 2008) and led Mbiti (1990) to intimate that the African is notoriously religious because he practices religion from cradle to grave. To the African therefore, spirituality is part of his/her religious life; and so these aspects should not be ignored in organizational studies such as public service ethics and values in Ghana. It has further been argued that focusing on organizational rules and regulations alone are insufficient in eliciting the desired organizational behaviour and subsequently called for finding solutions ‘outside the conventional approaches’ (Mamman and Zakaria, 2016) within the socio-cultural traditions of Ghana. In view of this, the study is examining the impact of workplace spirituality on Ghana’s public service especially its relationship with unethical behaviours.

### **2.5.0 Unethical Behaviours in the Workplace**

Unethical behaviours and workplace deviance have been one of the topical issues in organizational studies. Deviance means beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that are varying in nature from the conventional standards (Misbah and Ambreen, 2012). The most generally used definition of deviant behaviour is by Robinson and Bennett as the “voluntary behaviour that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both” (Robinson and Bennett, 1995: 556). From Robinson and Bennett’s definition, the following characteristics can be deduced; first, to be labelled as deviant, the behaviour must go against organizational norms regardless of societal norms. Second, the behaviour must threaten the well-being of the organization, its members, or both and this means that the violations must be relatively serious (Wendi et al., 2007). Examples of deviant behaviours in organizations include employees not following instructions, intentionally slowing down the work cycle, lateness to work, committing petty theft as well as not treating co-workers with respect and/or acting rudely towards co-workers (Kidwell and Kochanowski, 2005; Galperin, 2002), violence, sabotage, whistle-blowing, misuse of organization’s information, drug and alcohol use and abuse, gambling and harassment (Kidwell and Kochanowski, 2005; Marcus and Schuler, 2004; Aaron and Heatherly, 2001),

occupational fraud and showing favouritism (Marcus and Schuler, 2004). Many names have been attributed to these behaviours including workplace deviance (Bennett and Robinson, 2003), counterproductive behaviour (Mangione and Quinn, 1975; Chi-Ko et al., 2005), antisocial behaviour (Wendi et al., 2007; Giacolone and Greenberg, 1997), organizational misbehaviour (Wendi et al., 2007; Vardi and Weitz, 2004), dishonest behaviour (Wendi et al., 2007) and unethical behaviour (Treviño et al., 2006; Greenberg, 2002; Appelbaum et al., 2007). Some scholars have differentiated between unethical behaviour and deviant behaviour by arguing that while unethical behaviours deals with the breaking of societal rules, deviant behaviours focuses on the violation of significant organizational norms (Spreitzer and Sonenshein, 2004). But, Appelbaum et al. (2007), Treviño et al. (2006) and Bennett and Robinson (2003) have used these terms interchangeably. This research will use unethical behaviours to cover the significant violation of both societal and organizational rules, thus viewing deviant behaviours as unethical behaviours.

### **2.5.1 Impact of Unethical Behaviours in Organizations**

Evidence shows that unethical behaviours have become pervasive and costly to both individuals and organizations (Palmer, 2013; Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, 2010; Nasurdin et al., 2014). According to Harper (1990), 33 to 75 percent of employees in the US have engaged in some form of theft, fraud, embezzlement, vandalism, sabotage, and unexcused absenteeism. Furthermore, incidences of unethical behaviours are now increasing and nearly 95% of all organizations have experienced it (Appelbaum et al., 2007; Henle et al., 2005). In terms of costs, Murphy (1993) has noted that employee deviance accounted for between US\$6 billion to US\$200 billion of organizational loss annually while Henle et al. (2005) estimates it at US\$50 billion. Besides, it has been projected that three-quarters of employees steal at least once from their employer and the financial costs associated with this behaviour is approximately US\$50 billion per year (Coffin, 2003). Additionally, the ACFE estimates that approximately 2.9 trillion dollars is lost annually due to various forms of unethical behaviours (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, 2010). Moreover, victims of interpersonal workplace deviance are more likely to suffer from stress-related problems and show a relatively decreased productivity, lost work time and a relatively high turnover rate (Henle et al., 2005; O'Leary-Kelly et al., 1996), damaged self-esteem, increased fear and insecurity at work, psychological and physical pain (Henle et al., 2005). Owing to these negative impacts, organizations suffer in the form of decreased productivity, increased costs,

inefficient work, deteriorating status and reputation (Misbah and Ambreen, 2012). The negative impact of these unethical behaviours in organizations have motivated this research to be conducted in the public service of Ghana to find out the forms and cause(s) of unethical behaviours, its impact on public service organizations and the policy implication to the government.

### **2.6.0 Other Issues and Aspects of Unethical Behaviours in Public Organizations**

Apart from the various forms of unethical behaviours discussed in the previous section (i.e., employees not following instructions, intentionally slowing down the work cycle, lateness to work amongst others), there are other issues and aspects of unethical behaviours in public organizations. This section treats corruption, conflict of interest, moonlighting and other aspects of unethical behaviours.

#### **2.6.1 Corruption**

Corruption has received enormous interest from scholars dating as far back as Plato (Warren, 2004). In recent times, scholars and international organizations including Transparency International, the World Bank and the United Nations have been at the forefront of studying the socio-economic and political aspects of corruption and also providing rich empirical and policy driven literature on it (Gebel, 2012). Corruption is a world-wide phenomenon and no country is immune from its associated dangers (Transparency International (T I, 2010)). Though difficult to measure, the overall impression is that the level of corruption is increasing (Gebel, 2012; T I, 2010). For instance, Transparency International (T I, 2010) has acknowledged that the world is witnessing a rise in corruption and the World Bank (2007: 40) also opines that ‘while some progress have been made in strengthening state capacity and accountability worldwide, there is little evidence that this has had a significant aggregate impact on reducing corruption’. The Global Corruption Barometer 2010 has indicated that corruption has increased over the last three years, as six out of ten people around the world are perceived to be corrupt and more than 20 countries have reported significant increases in petty bribery since 2006 (T I, 2010). It is easy to talk about corruption, but like other complex social phenomena, it is difficult to define it as the meaning shifts with the speaker (Rose-Ackermann, 2004). According to Khan (1996), corruption is a behaviour that deviates from the formal rules of conduct governing the actions of someone in a position of public authority because of private interests regarding motives such as wealth, power, or status. The World

Bank and Transparency International also define corruption as “the abuse of power for private benefits” (World Bank, 1997; T I, 2004), either by an individual or institution in the public or private sector. Nye (1967: 418) views corruption as an official misuse, abuse, unsanctioned or unscheduled use of public office, entrusted power or public resources for personal gains. Others define corruption as the sacrifice of statesmanship on the altar of partisanship (Werlin, 1994; Dey, 1989), “the use of public power to obtain private pecuniary gains” (Kaufmann et al., 2005; Rose-Ackerman, 2006). Corruption occurs when a corruptor covertly gives a favour to a corruptee or to a nominee to influence action(s) that benefit the corruptor or a nominee, and for which the corruptee has authority (Senior, 2006). From the above, corruption could be said to be any wrongdoing on the part of an authority or powerful party through means that are illegitimate, immoral, or incompatible with ethical standards in order to satisfy his or her private gains. ‘Private gain’ is interpreted to include gains accruing to an economic actor's close family members, political party and independent organization and charitable institution in which the economic actor has a financial or social interest. Corruption occurs in political, bureaucratic and private organizations and can be petty or grand, organized or unorganized. Corrupt behaviours include; abuse of power, bribery, fraud and theft, extortion, conflict of interest, embezzlement of funds, financial mismanagement, waste and misappropriation of state property, nepotism and granting of favours to personal acquaintances, acceptance of improper gifts, kickbacks, manipulation of information, discrimination and sexual harassment, perversion of justice, non-performance of duties, election tampering, tax evasion, illegal surveillance, misuse of office seals and stationary, patronage and cronyism, failure to speak the truth and distortion of reality or ‘doctoring’ of evidence (Agbibo, 2013; Lasthuizen et al., 2011; Vargas-Hernández, 2011; Huberts, 2008; T I, 2000; Bowman and West, 2014). Corruption is therefore used as an umbrella term to cover all the integrity violations including unethical and unprofessional behaviours (Gray, 2013; Lessig, 2011; Huberts, 2008).

### **2.6.1.1 Causes of Corruption**

The causes of corruption are multifaceted and derives from numerous environmental factors, notably among them include; distorted or opaque governmental behaviour and decisions, weak counter-corruption institutions, cultures that intertwine gift-giving with bribery, ambiguous business-government relations, subtle networking practices, shortage of independent and well-functioning market mechanisms and institutions, poor quality of public service, low salaries in the public sector, influence of an underground economy, strong

linkage between officials and family businesses, deficiency in democratic power-sharing formulas, weak media functions and inadequate openness in trade and market access, the nature of leadership, the use of regulations and authorization of permits and licenses, the level of individual honesty and religiosity, the lack of transparency in the funding of political parties and the effect of colonialism (Senior, 2006; Lambsdorff, 2005; Luo, 2005; Goel and Nelson, 2010; Rose-Ackerman, 2001; Goldsmith, 1999; Husted, 1999; Nye, 1967). For instance, (Lambsdorff, 2005: 14) proposed the following as causes of corruption;

- i. Size of the state and the extent of decentralization;
- ii. Institutional quality;
- iii. Competition;
- iv. Liberty of the media;
- v. Extent of democracy;
- vi. Culture and tradition; and
- vii. Other variables including, the effect of colonialism, natural resources, corruption in the neighbouring countries and the percentage of the women in the public institutions.

Bresson (2008: 63) also proposed three main causes of corruption with the following underlying factors:

- a. Economic causes: information asymmetry, extent of discretionary power and rent seeking;
- b. Political causes: transparency of the funding of the political parties, low paid politicians, clientelism, neo-corporatism, the extent of the democracy and extent of centralization;
- c. Administrative causes: bureaucratic market, poverty and inequality and public approval of corruption.

### **2.6.1.2 Typology of Corruption**

Just as it has not been easy to define corruption, it is equally not easy to give a straight forward typology of corruption (Vargas-Hernández, 2011). Researchers have therefore written extensively on various typologies of corruption (Alemann, 1995; Roebuck and Barker, 1974; Punch, 2000; Alatas, 1990; Rose–Ackerman, 2008). For instance, Alatas (1990) proposed seven types of corruption and these are; autogenic; defensive; investive; extortive; nepotistic; supportive and transactive corruption. To Alatas, autogenic corruption is self-generated and typically involves only the individual public official who is the initiator of

the corrupt activities. Defensive corruption is corruption that involves situations where a person needing a critical service is compelled to bribe his way through or engage in corrupt activities in order to prevent unpleasant results being inflicted on his/her interest. Investive corruption entails the offer of goods or services without a direct link to any particular favour at the time of offer, but in anticipation of future situations when the favour may be required. Extortive corruption entails the behaviour of a public official demanding compensation in exchange for service rendered to a transacting individual. Nepotistic corruption refers to the type of corruption where preferential treatment is offered or the unjustified appointment of friends or relatives to public office in contravention of the accepted guidelines in public service recruitment. Supportive corruption is that form of corruption which usually does not involve money or immediate gains but involves actions taken to protect or strengthen the already existing corruption. Lastly, transactive corruption refers to situations where two parties (the 'corruptor' and the 'corruptee') are mutual and willing participants in a corrupt practice to their advantage (Alatas, 1990: 1).

### **2.6.1.3 Impact of Corruption**

Corruption constitutes a major problem in the world because it hampers investment and economic growth (Burke et al., 2011; Klitgaard, 1998), aggravates problems of underground economies (Bjørnskov, 2011; Dreher et al., 2009), exacerbates the difference between the rich and the poor (Uslaner, 2008; Gupta et al., 2002), creates obstacles to economic and political reform (Hellman et al., 2003), imposes considerable human welfare losses (Kaufmann et al., 2005), incurs the loss of legitimacy and effectiveness and adds to the taxpayers burden, and increases openings for organized crime (Bowman and West, 2014). In addition to these, corruption leads to price distortion, subversion of democratic processes, increased financial and commercial risks and a general decline in the ethics and morality of the society (Senior 2006). Further, corruption leads to the loss of government revenue (Burke et al., 2011; Fjeldstad and Tungodden, 2003), high cost of doing business, promote the illegal export of resources, encourage conspicuous consumption, and general distrust (Caiden et al., 2001). Moreover, Corruption also leads to greater political instability and lowers direct foreign investment (Burke et al., 2011: 16). Corruption is therefore seen as an impediment to economic growth and sustainable development especially in emerging economies (Nguemegne, 2011; Balogun, 2003) because it rewards indolence and penalizes hard work, undermines morale and esprit de corps, and compromise's the nation's security (Balogun,

2003). At the organizational level, corruption tarnishes the image of the organization, and makes stakeholders lose trust and confidence in such organizations.

#### **2.6.1.4 Forms of Corruption**

Corrupt practices generally include bribery, fraud, extortion, favouritism, embezzlement, theft and collusion. These are discussed below:

- 1. Bribery:** Bribery is a form of payment either given or taken in a corrupt relationship (Luo, 2005). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, (UNODC, 2004) defines bribery as ‘the bestowing of a benefit in order to unduly influence an action or decision’ and can be solicited either in the ‘active’ or passive’ form. The US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act 1977 and cited in US Department of State (2001) defined bribery as the offer, promise or gift of undue pecuniary or other advantage, whether made directly or through intermediaries, to a person holding public office for that person to commit an act or refrain from acting in relation to the performance of his or her official duties. Bribery is committed when a public servant is offered, promised, or granted money or favour and in return, for an action already carried out or is expected to be carried out. Bribery can be initiated by the person soliciting the bribe or the person offering the bribe and the benefits may vary from money or other valuables to less tangible ones like inside information or employment (Vargas-Hernández, 2011). Other terminologies for bribery include ‘kickbacks’, ‘red envelopes’, ‘gratuities’, ‘grease money’, ‘facilitation payment’ and ‘expediting fees’. To most individuals and organizations, bribing of public officials is the most prevalent form of corruption (Luo, 2005) and it has been estimated worldwide to involve about US\$1 trillion per year, or 3% of global income (Beekman et al., 2014; Dreher and Gassebner, 2007).
- 2. Fraud:** This is ‘any behaviour designed to trick or fool another person or entity for one’s own or a third party’s benefit’ (UNODC, 2004). It is an economic crime that involves some kind of trickery, swindle or deceit and consists of the use of misleading information to induce someone to turn over the property voluntarily, such as the case of misrepresenting the amount of people in need of a particular service (Vargas-Hernández, 2011). Fraud can be thought of as a subset of theft. A person who defrauds another individual or organisation takes assets to which he/she is not entitled to.

- 3. Extortions:** Extortion is a form of coercion where a person, company or institution forces another party ‘to pay money or other valuables in exchange for acting or failing to act’ (UNODC, 2004). This involves the use of threats, exposure or damaging information in order to induce cooperation. Thus, money or other resources are violently extracted by those who have the power to do so. Typically, extortion is a small scale form of bribery which includes paying to pass security check point or soliciting money by low level public officials where the office holders can either be the instigators or the victims of extortion. Under this form of bribery, clients and consumers of public services have to pay bribes in addition to the official price, license, and permits in order to access the services.
- 4. Favouritism:** Favouritism is the human proclivity to favour friends, family and anybody close and trusted, at the expense of public interests or the human inclination to prefer acquaintances, friends and family over strangers. The apparent beneficiaries of the act are individuals who are linked with the public official rather than the official himself or herself (UNODC, 2004). This becomes the misuse of public responsibilities by unfair distribution of public resources or positions (Luo, 2005: 122). Favouritism is closely linked with nepotism and cronyism. Nepotism occurs where public officials offer unfair favours to family members, while cronyism refers to the favourable treatment of friends.
- 5. Embezzlement and theft:** Embezzlement refers to the stealing of funds or property from an employer, company or government. It is the ‘taking or conversion of money, property or valuable items by an individual who is not entitled to them but, by virtue of his or her position or employment, has access to them’ (UNODC, 2004). Embezzlement often occurs by colluding with significant others who are employed to perform some services. Embezzlement and theft therefore involve the taking of property by someone to whom it has been entrusted for personal gains. As such it is seen as a form of corruption.
- 6. Collusion:** Another form of corruption is collusion, where two parties connive to trade off some good or service with the aim of making some gains. For instance, a contractual collusion between two parties (A and B), to convert a non-tradeable contractual condition such as safety conditions into a tradeable condition, earns them a rent over and above normal profits. Thus, corruption could be collusive in nature where individuals escape official regulations or sanctions by paying bribes to officials and making third parties to suffer externalities.



From the foregoing, corruption can take various forms including collusion between firms or individuals, misuse of corporate assets that imposes costs on consumers and investors, payments that involve lobbying, campaign contributions, gifts or offers of post-retirement contracts, bribery and kickbacks (Svensson, 2005).

### **2.6.2 Conflict of Interest**

The term conflict of interest means any or other interest which conflicts with the service(s) an individual provides because it could significantly impair the individual's objectivity and create an unfair competitive advantage for another person or organization. MacDonald et al. (2002: 68) opined that conflict of interest is a situation in which a person has a private or personal interest sufficient to influence the objective exercise of his or her official duties as, say a public official, an employee, or a professional. To Boatright (1992: 191) conflict of interest occurs when a personal interest interferes with a person's acting so as to promote the interest of another when the person has an obligation to act in that other person's interest. A conflict of interest occurs when the personal interests of a public official conflict with those of their obligation to act in the best interest of the state (UNODC, 2004). Simply put, conflict of interest occurs when an individual's judgment or objectivity is compromised (Trevino and Nelson, 2013). In most situations, the individual or public official reaps a monetary or other reward from the decision made in his or her official capacity. From these definitions, three elements can be explored further. First is the private or personal interest. This interest is often a financial one but it could also be another sort of interest, say, to provide a special advantage to a spouse, child or family member. There is nothing wrong with pursuing a private or personal interest; but the problem with this private interest is that it comes into conflict with the second element of the definition (official duty), the duty you have because you have an office or act in an official capacity. As a professional, you take on certain official responsibility, by which you have obligations to clients, employers, or others. These obligations are supposed to triumph over private or personal interest. The third element has to do with the fact that conflict of interest interferes with professional responsibilities by interfering with professional judgement. The major reason why clients and employers respect professionals is that they expect the professionals to be objective and independent. Factors such as private and personal interest that interfere or appear likely to interfere with objectivity are then a matter of concern to the general public. This situation could give rise to either an

apparent or potential conflict of interest. An apparent conflict of interest is one which a reasonable person would think that the professional's judgement is likely to be compromised. A potential conflict of interest involves a situation that may develop into an actual conflict of interest. Some of the categories of conflict of interest include; self-dealing, accepting benefits, influence peddling, using employers' property for private advantage, using confidential information for personal gain, outside employment and post-retirement employment (Kernaghan and Langford, 1990). Conflict of interest if not addressed, erodes trust, customer confidence and is a cost to the organization (Trevino and Nelson, 2013).

### **2.6.3 Moonlighting**

Moonlighting or multiple job-holding has become a common phenomenon in the world (Hyder and Ahmed, 2009), and is commonly understood as having a second or a third job, usually part-time, in addition to a primary full-time job (Betts, 2006). Moonlighting is also considered as a situation where an individual maintains his/her primary employment and also engages in additional work for pay (Shishko and Rostker, 1976). Receiving payment for work done distinguishes moonlighting from hobbies and other vocations and interest (Perrella, 1970). People engage in moonlighting for various reasons such as ensuring continuous employment even in times of reduced working hours in the main job, overcoming financial constraints, accumulation of skills and expertise in other occupations (Dickey et al., 2011; Baah-Boateng et al., 2013; Shishko and Rostker, 1976), a means of capital accumulation (Owusu, 2001), a hobby, ensure job security and obtain satisfaction (Dickey et al., 2011). However, the practice of moonlighting in organizations has potential consequences and these include; placing the employee in competition with the employer, the employee's work performance is affected, gross abuse of the employers' resources, potential breach of confidentiality, the employee using his/her position to solicit business and thus, diverting businesses from his/her employer, and the potential danger of employers suffering reputational problems when employees misapply the work procedure to discredit the employer (Kernaghan and Langford, 1990; Langford, 1991).

### **2.6.4 Other Ethical Issues**

Apart from the above-named unethical issues, scholars have identified other issues confronting organizations. For instance, Butts (2012: 127) and Boyle et al. (2001: 19-20)

identified greediness, engaging in covert operations, producing misleading services, renegeing or cheating on negotiated terms, creating unclear or inappropriate policies that can cause others to lie to get the job done, showing overconfidence in self-judgment, disloyalty and exhibiting poor quality in performance and apathy in goal attainment as unethical issues. Others, according to them include engaging in humiliating and stereotyping tactics, engaging in bigotry, sexism, or racism, suppressing the rights of employees such as freedom of speech and choice, promoting people who are destructive go-getters yet seem to outrun mistakes, stepping on others to climb the promotion ladder, failing to speak up when unethical practices become evident and sacrificing innocent people to get jobs done. They continued to mention other unethical issues as dithering, price fixing as the standard regardless of the real cost, sacrificing innocent people to get jobs done, such as blaming subordinates, knowingly exaggerating the advantages of a plan to garner support and failing to cooperate with others or take responsibility for injurious practices. The final set of unethical issues according to them include lying for the sake of business, obstructing or stalling actions and processes and obeying authority in a mindless routine (Boyle et al., 2001: 19-20; Butts, 2012: 127).

### **2.7.0. Factors Influencing Unethical Behaviours in Organizations**

Many scholars have assigned factors influencing unethical behaviours by individuals in their respective organizations (Treviño et al., 2014; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe, 2008; Harvey, 2006; Treviño et al., 2006; Appelbaum et al., 2005). These factors have been grouped into individual and organizational factors (Loe et al., 2000; Elm and Nichols, 1993) and individual, situational or impersonal or contextual and organizational factors (Treviño et al., 2014; Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe, 2008; Treviño et al., 2006). The factors influencing unethical behaviours in organizations are discussed below;

#### **2.7.1 Gender**

There is conflicting evidence concerning the influence of gender on ethical tendencies (Bowman and West, 2014) and this is as a result of societal expectations, that females are supposed to be more dependent, lenient, affectionate, nurturing, respectful, warm, conforming, and obedient, while their male counterparts are supposed to be more aggressive and independent (Roxas and Stoneback, 2004). Based on these, cultural stereotypes often hold that females are generally more ethical in their behaviours than males (Robert, 2003; Barnett and Karson, 1987). However, research indicates that this stereotype does not hold in all situations. For instance, Barnett and Karson (1987) found that females in quantitative

departments of organizations (finance, accounting and marketing research) were more ethical than the men in those areas. In more qualitative areas, such as advertising and personnel, however, females showed greater unethical tendencies than their male counterparts. The authors concluded that this may be a result of females feeling a greater need to conform to gender stereotypes that dictates they should act in a nurturing and caring way when working in traditionally male-dominated quantitative areas. Their study further indicated that females are more ethical when there is the likelihood that their actions might become public knowledge than when there is no chance of their behaviours becoming known. The males in their study did not show this tendency to the same degree as the females did.

Extensive literature reviewed by Ambrose and Schminke (1999), Razaque and Hwee (2002), and Roozen et al. (2001) also revealed inconsistent findings across studies of ethics and gender. They cited a number of studies showing no significant differences in the ethical tendencies of males and females and several studies indicating that women are more likely than men to behave ethically. The authors also argued that men and women might differ in their views on what constitutes ethical behaviour, with males often favouring a justice approach and females favouring a more teleological approach. Based on this conclusion it seems reasonable that gender differences among researchers might explain some of these conflicting findings. Specifically, male and female observers of behaviour might report different findings based on their notion of what constitutes ethical or unethical behaviour (Ambrose and Schminke, 1999). One fairly consistent finding across studies is the relationship between gender and aggressive forms of unethical behaviour (Bettancourt and Miller, 1996) concluded that in addition to biological differences, many societies socialize men to be somehow aggressive and females to be more submissive. In the view of Harvey (2006), though this line of reasoning does not account for differences in the frequency of unethical behaviour across genders, it might explain differences in the types of unethical behaviours perpetrated by them.

### **2.7.2 Low Level of Integrity**

The construct of integrity is generally thought to consist of four dimensions: conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability and reliability (Sackett et al., 2006) and studies have linked conscientiousness, agreeableness and emotional stability to unethical behaviours (Sackett et al., 2006; Berry et al., 2007). Of these traits, agreeableness has been shown to be the best predictor of unethical behaviours (Berry et al., 2007). This is so because individuals low in agreeableness are inconsiderate, vengeful, and insulting (Goldberg, 1999)

and their interpersonal relationships are characterized by conflict and discord (Jensen-Campbell and Graziano, 2001). Emotional Stability has also been shown to correlate with negative interpersonal deviant behaviours (Mount et al., 2006; Salgado, 2002) due to its role in regulating impulses and decisions. Individuals low on emotional stability are stress-prone, anxious, have poor self-concepts, and are generally unpleasant to interact with (Gonzalez Mulé et al., 2013). Unethical behaviours such as stealing, excessive absenteeism, and violence have also been linked to low level of integrity (Harvey, 2006; Ones and Viswesvaran, 1998).

### **2.7.3 Age, Education and Moral Development**

Personal characteristics like age, experience, education and religion also have influence on individuals to engage in unethical behaviours (Bowman and West, 2014). For instance, a study of corporate executives indicated that subjects became increasingly ethical as they aged (Roman and Munuera, 2005; Barnett and Karson, 1987). The authors concluded that younger executives are generally indifferent to ethical concerns, whereas older employees are ethically conscious of the consequences of their actions. This is in tandem with Harris and Ogbonna (2002) study which concluded that younger employees and males tend to be more inclined to unethical acts. Yet other scholars are of the view that age as a determinant of unethical behaviour is not a causal factor but might be correlated with other variables like education and associated levels of one's moral development (Kohlberg and Candee, 1984; Kohlberg, 1969; Rest, 1986). Some have argued that education serves to shift peoples' individualistic focus to a more communal concern (Kohlberg, 1969; Kohlberg and Candee, 1984; Rest, 1986). Put differently, they argued that education socializes individuals to evaluate the possible negative consequences of self-focused behaviours from a societal perspective. Thus, humans are able to evolve from entirely self-focused creatures at birth to more socially oriented individuals as they aged. Additionally, education is believed to result in greater sensitivity of individuals, so the more educated one is the more sensitive and ethical he/she becomes. This is supported by Roman and Munuera (2005) that, if knowledge is virtue, then education must ennoble individuals, making the more educated to become more virtuous. Research findings have indicated that this moral development process tends to slow or stop at the point where formal education stops (Rest, 1986). It can be concluded that highly educated individuals are often more cognizant of the social implications of unethical behaviours than are less educated individuals.

#### **2.7.4 Values and Ethical Orientations**

One's values and ethical orientation also appears to be an important determinant of unethical behaviours in organizations. Individuals who believe in utilitarianism (those whose moral judgments are based on the consequences of actions) are mostly found to be less ethically sensitive than formalists (i.e., individuals who employ deontological, or principle-based ethics) in the domain of violations of behavioural norms (Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe, 2008; Reynolds, 2006). Similarly, individuals who believed in relativism and idealism are found to be associated with lower levels of moral awareness and likely to behave unethical (Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe, 2008; Sparks and Hunt, 1998). Additionally, Singhapakdi et al. (1996) also found that marketing professionals who adhered to a high standard of professionalism were more likely to recognize ethical issues or problems and avoid them as compared to those whose ethical standards were lower. Thus, the individual's ethical orientation serves as a determinant of unethical behaviour.

#### **2.7.5 National Culture**

Research on national culture has indicated that perceptions of ethics vary between individuals from different parts of the world. For instance, Parboteeah et al. (2005) measured various national-level culture variables to investigate how national culture might contribute to unethical actions of individuals from various countries. They found out that performance orientation and assertiveness were positively related to the willingness of nationals to justify unethical actions, and that institutional collectivism and human orientation were negatively related to the willingness to justify ethical actions. Additionally, Cullen et al. (2004) found evidence indicating that different cultural variables such as universalism and materialism that vary across countries are associated with ethical behaviour. Specifically, the authors concluded that managers from cultures characterized by high levels of universalism and materialism were more likely to justify ethically suspect behaviours and also some other nation-specific variables such as family strength and average educational level were negatively associated with the justification of ethically suspect behaviour. In an earlier research, Lewicki and Robinson (1998) found differences between Americans and non-Americans when subjects were asked to evaluate various negotiating techniques. Although there were general agreements concerning the ethicality of most negotiating techniques included in the study, there were disagreements concerning some of the more marginally ethical techniques. The authors therefore reasoned that differences in the levels of importance that different cultures place on factors such as falsification and selective disclosure of

information might help to explain these differences. Thus, national culture is a contributory factor to unethical behaviours in organizations.

### **2.7.6 Ethical Nature of Leadership**

It has been argued that ethical behaviour is an important component of leadership (Treviño et al., 2014; Johnson, 2012; Kaptein et al., 2005), and the perceived ethicality of a leader can affect the ethicality of subordinates (Ruiz-Palomino and Martinez-Cañas, 2011; Harvey, 2006; May et al., 2003; Bowman and West, 2014). Further, research shows that the ethicality of a leader is positively associated with employee attitudes and behaviours and negatively related to unethical behaviours (Mayer et al., 2012; Ogunfowora, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2012). Ambrose and Schminke (1999), for instance argued that the greatest influence on an individual's ethical behaviour is the behaviour of one's immediate supervisor; who sets the ethical tone for subordinates to follow. If leaders uphold ethics, values and integrity, subordinates will be inclined to uphold similar values. On the contrary, if leaders appear unconcerned with ethics and values then subordinates will be disposed to committing unethical behaviours because they feel that ethical behaviour is not a priority for the organization. Perceptions of poor leader ethics might promote unethical behaviours among subordinates in at least two ways. First, subordinates who perceive the behaviours of leaders to be unethical might act unethically themselves in order to retaliate. A number of studies (Harvey, 2006; Greenberg, 1990; Bowman and West, 2014) have concluded that employees often feel justified in engaging in unethical behaviours such as theft when they believe that their leaders have acted unethically toward them. Second, the behaviours of leaders often set precedents for employee behaviours (Ruiz-Palomino and Martinez-Cañas, 2011; Brown and Trevino, 2006; Bowman and West, 2014). As such, subordinates with unethical leaders might feel that unethical behaviours are tolerated in their organization and may, therefore, act less ethically than they otherwise would. Hannah et al. (2013) have also linked abusive supervision by leadership to increased unethical behaviour in a study of military personnel. They demonstrated that abuse by supervisors increased the likelihood of subordinates to engage in unethical actions and also reduced the likelihood of them reporting any misconduct.

### **2.7.7 Poor Working Environment**

Wells (2001) believes that poor working conditions and workplace environment are important predictors of unethical behaviours in organizations. This is supported by Pulich and Tourigny (2004) who argued that workplace attitudes and behaviour of employees is very

much affected by their expectations toward the organization. Henle (2005) suggested that employee deviation at work depended on the working environment and this portrays the traits and characteristics of the environment within which employees operate. High levels of stress and rigid and unfair rules can cause employees to blame external factors for their problems at work (Martinko et al., 2005; Douglas and Martinko, 2001). Additionally, constraints within the workplace such as insufficient job information, no assistance from supervisors and co-workers and time pressures can also lead employees to engage in both interpersonal and organizational deviance (Penney and Spector, 2003). This blame might then promote the use of unethical behaviours such as theft or violence towards supervisors, co-workers, and even unsuspecting customers as a form of retaliation. Similarly, factors such as high temperatures, loud noise (Neuman and Baron, 1998; Baron and Neuman, 1996), and overcrowding (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 1996) have been linked to unethical behaviours. Therefore poor working conditions would increase the reported incidence of unethical behaviours (Henle, 2005). Additionally, studies have found that some job environmental characteristics like handling guns, guarding valuables, supervision of others, disciplining others, making decisions that affect other people's lives and exercise security functions are linked to employee violence (LeBlanc and Kelloway, 2002) and predictive of aggression (Appelbaum et al., 2007). Even inherently honest employees can be pushed to behave inappropriately if they perceive their work environment as unjust, or if they feel that management has unfairly treated them (Greenberg, 1997).

### **2.7.8 Organizational Culture**

The culture or climate of a workplace can influence the ethicality of employees (Bowman and West, 2014; May et al., 2003). Victor and Cullen (1988) explained that an organization's culture has this effect because it sets the norms that guide employees' behaviours. They argued that employees of organizations characterized by a strong ethical climate would feel a greater responsibility to act in ways that conform to ethical standards than would employees that work in a relatively unethical climate. If the accepted practice is that "anything goes so long as it is not illegal" then dishonourable behaviours are likely to occur (Bowman and West, 2014). The Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997; Wood and Bandura, 1996) can be used to understand the influence of culture on one's tendency to either act ethically or not. This theory holds that members of organizations often learn certain behaviours through observation and modeling. Thus, a culture's norms might promote unethical behaviours



among existing employees whereas the social learning process might facilitate the adaptation of these behaviours by new employees.

The influence of an organization's culture on employee ethics can also be understood in terms of Schneider et al. (1995) attraction-selection-attrition framework. Schneider et al. argued that organizational cultures proliferate by attracting individuals that fit with the existing culture and eliminate others who do not. Thus, if an organization's culture consists of norms that support ethical behaviour, then ethical individuals will be attracted to that organization whereas unethical individuals will not. Conversely, an organization with an unethical culture might attract individuals that have unethical tendencies while driving ethical employees away. Therefore, it can be argued that organizational culture can promote ethical or unethical behaviours directly or indirectly. Culture might influence behaviour directly through the norms and values employees abide by, and might influence behaviour indirectly by attracting either ethical or unethical members. This argument might help to explain why some corporate and government organizations seem to generally be more ethical than others.

### **2.7.9 Lack of Employee Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is defined as the degree to which members of an organization have a positive affective orientation toward their job (Misbah and Ambreen, 2012). In other words, job satisfaction is the general approach of a person towards his job (Lee and Chang, 2008). Therefore satisfied and dissatisfied members have both positive and negative affective orientation respectively towards their jobs (Martin, 1979). A number of factors determine employee level of job satisfaction. Satisfaction is linked with employee's expectations and levels of reward received (Wharton et al., 2000). For instance, Lipman and McGraw (1988) found out that employees who felt they were not treated fairly in terms of compensation were displeased and dissatisfied and were more likely to steal from their managers, co-workers and the organization as well. Fields and Blum (1997) were also of the view that working conditions have an impact on levels of employee job satisfaction. Studies have further revealed that employee satisfaction is also affected by the quality of employee-employer relationship at workplace (Ladebo, 2008). Centralization and formalization have a negative impact on job satisfaction (Dewar and Werbel, 1979). From the foregoing, it can be deduced that work conditions like salary, promotion, job complexity or social relations give rise to job satisfaction (Ladebo, 2008) and employee job satisfaction has the added advantage of increasing employees levels of commitment and organizational performance (Ladebo, 2008). However, if employees are not satisfied, the intention to leave or turnover becomes high

(Amos and Weathington, 2008). Job dissatisfaction and unethical behaviours are very much linked. For instance, job dissatisfaction is one of the reasons for employee theft at the workplace (Kulas et al., 2007). Individuals with lower job satisfaction are prone to unethical behaviours (Srivastava, 2012; Bowling, 2010; Ahmad and Omar, 2014) in organizations.

#### **2.7.10 Organizational Injustice**

Organizational justice is perceived as an employee's personal evaluation or perception of the moral and ethical status of the practices of its manager (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Attitudes of employees related to the policies, actions and decisions of an organization serves as basis for organizational justice (Jordan and Turner, 2008). Organizational justice is a vital characteristic of an organization (Clay-Warner et al., 2005) because it possesses the potential of generating significant benefits to both the employee and the organization (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Research has shown that when employees perceive fairness, they become delighted and work effectively and efficiently (Aguilera et al., 2007). It has been established that personality and behaviour of leaders has a considerable impact on organizational justice (Mayer et al., 2007). Thus, one of the factors accounting for organizational injustice is the nature of the leadership (Campbell et al., 2007) and this is being complimented by the overall structure of the organization, pay system and behaviour of colleagues (Mayer et al., 2007). Research has shown that the overall perception of justice by employees in the organization is predictive to their behaviours (Kim and Leung, 2007; Jones and Martens, 2009). For example, Ambrose and Schminke (2009) conducted two studies, which demonstrated that overall justice perceptions fully mediate the relationship between distributive, procedural, and interactional justice and employee behaviour. Their findings indicated that overall justice is the most proximal factor to outcomes when exploring the relationship between justice judgments and behaviours. Theoretical and empirical research suggests that individuals form overall justice perceptions when exposed to different justice cues in the workplace, and that these cues in tend influence their behaviour (Priesemuth et al., 2013).

If employees experience injustice and react, the consequences is detrimental to both individuals and the organization (Cropanzano et al., 2007). For instance, on experiencing injustice; employees get themselves involved in unethical behaviours as a solution to the injustice (Henle et al., 2005). This could take the form of retaliation in some negative manifestations including production, property and personal deviance (Vardi and Weitz, 2004), stealing (Greenberg, 2002), sabotage (Giacolone and Greenberg, 1997), lying (Grover, 1997) or revenge (Tripp and Bies, 1997). Additionally, employees perceptions of injustice in

the design and implementation of human resource management practices like selection, performance management and pay systems would make them behaviour unethically (Harris and Ogbonna, 2012).

### **2.7.11 Organizational Politics**

Another factor that influences unethical behaviours in organizations is the nature of politics (organizational politics) being practiced in the organization. Organizational politics is a common phenomenon in organizations and it is seen as a pervasive and a necessary functioning of organizational life (Shrestha and Mishra, 2015; Miller et al., 2008). Some scholars perceive organizational politics as the subjective evaluations regarding others' self-serving work behaviours not sanctioned by authority (Ferris et al., 2000). Organizational politics has been defined by Ferris et al. (1989) as the social influence behaviours that are strategically designed to maximize one's self-interest. Cropanzano et al. (1995) on their part viewed organizational politics as social influence acts directed at those who can provide rewards that will help promote or protect the self-interests of the actor. This definition was further refined by Kacmar and Baron (1999) as actions taken by individuals that are directed towards the goal of furthering their own self-interests without regard for the well-being of others within the organization. Organizational politics covers three main areas:

- i. general political behaviour in the organization, which includes the behaviour of individuals who act in a self-serving manner to obtain valued outcomes;
- ii. those "who go along to get ahead" in the organization, which consists of a lack of action by individuals in order to secure valued outcomes, and;
- iii. pay and promotion policies, which involve the organization behaving politically through the policies it enacts (Kacmar and Baron, 1999).

Since behaviour is based on one's perception of reality rather than the objective measure of reality itself (Lewin, 1936), the subjective determination of whether an organizational environment is political will ultimately affect an individual's behaviour. Hence, determining how pervasive politics are in an organization through the eyes of the employees is warranted. In a highly political organization, employees reward, career progress, and even well-being may be put at risk by other influential members seeking to safeguard their own interests (Poon, 2004) and these rewards may be tied to relationships, power, and other less objective elements (Zivnuska et al., 2004). It is further posited that as the organization becomes more political, people are likely to adopt a competitive and self-serving style of behaviour whereby they may band together to fulfill their aspirations without regards for the needs of others. In

such uncertain work situations, an employee cannot be certain that his/her personal effort will be recognized, resulting in feelings of inequity (Kacmar and Baron, 1999) or a sense of violation of the “social contract” (Cropanzano et al., 2007). In order to restore this equity (Adams, 1965), employees are likely to reciprocate by engaging in various forms of behaviours including theft, interpersonal aggression, vandalism, work slowdown (Rousseau, 1995), aggressive behaviour (Vigoda, 2002), absenteeism and low productivity (Shrestha and Mishra, 2015; Shrestha, 2012).

### **2.7.12 Peer Influence**

Further to these factors, another determinant of unethical behaviours in organizations is the peer group influence (Treviño et al., 2014; Moore and Gino, 2013). Peers tend to influence their colleagues a lot and research has shown that the attitudes and behaviours of peers in organizations help to establish a standard of behaviour either through their action or inaction (Moore and Gino, 2013).. Using the in-group member effects, Gino et al. (2009) have established that when an in-group member cheats, other in-group members are also more likely to cheat and according to Gino and Galinsky (2012) this might be related to psychological closeness and feeling connected to being a member of the group. Following from this, an unethical act perpetrated by an in-group member will consequently lead to another in-group member committing similar act.

## **2.8.0 Theories of Public Management**

In order to further substantiate the study, several theories have been espoused in analyzing public service ethics, values and spirituality. Among these are social capital (Putnam, 2000; Putnam, 1993; Coleman, 1990), stakeholder (Freeman et al., 2010), social contract (Donaldson and Dunfee, 1994), corporate social responsibility (Carroll, 1999), moral leadership (Trevino et al., 2000) and principal-agency or agency theories (Atkinson and Fulton, 2013; Jensen and Meckling, 1976). Others include resource dependence, network, institutional, political power, strategy exchange, transaction cost, contingency, decision making, industrial organization, bargaining, evolutionary, structuration, labour law and industrial marketing theories (Oliver and Ebers, 1998:556). These theories have been applied in analyzing various aspects of organizations. For the purposes of this study, social capital and principal-agency theories are adopted as the analytical lens.

### **2.8.1 Social Capital as a Theory of Public Management**

Social capital as a theory has been used extensively in many fields of endeavour including management (Woolcock, 2010; Seok-Woo and Adler, 2014). Putnam (2000: 19) asserts that the “core idea of social capital as a theory is that, social networks have value”. He first defined social capital as “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam, 1993: 167), and later refined it to “...connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam, 2000: 19). Putnam treated social capital as an amalgam of social norms, particularly trust (Fukuyama, 1995), social networks (Bourdieu, 1990; Foley and Edwards, 1999), outcomes (Coleman, 1990) and productivity (Ostrom, 1990). From the above definitions, three distinguished features of social capital become evident and these are:

1. The opportunities provided by the network structure of those relations;
2. The norms and values that constitute the content of those social network ties, give them their motivational force; and
3. The network can be mobilized to bring value (Seok-Woo and Adler, 2014).

Thus, social capital generates positive externalities for members, these externalities are achieved through shared trust, norms, and values and their consequent effects on expectations and behaviour and finally, these arise from informal forms of organizations based on social networks and associations (Durlauf and Fafchamps, 2004: 5). Putnam (2000) identified two types of social capital, (*bonding* and *bridging* social capital). Bonding social capital is derived from relationships between similar persons with respect to socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics (Putnam, 2000; Gittel and Vidal, 1998) and occurs among homogeneous populations. Bridging social capital on the other hand, is derived from dissimilar or heterogeneous persons at the same level of hierarchy (Putnam, 2000; Gittel and Vidal, 1998). Putnam (2000: 23) argued that bonding social capital is good for ‘getting by’ and bridging social capital is essential for ‘getting ahead’. This notion of bridging social capital has captured the imagination of policy makers.

### **2.8.2 Impact of Social Capital in Organizations**

Social capital generates beneficial outcomes through norms and trust including relations inside and outside the family (Coleman, 1988), within and beyond the firm (Burt, 1992), the organization and market interface (Baker, 1990), and in public life (Putnam, 2000; Putnam, 1995). It also promotes cooperation between two or more individuals (Fukuyama, 2001; Putnam, 2000) and the connections that people develop with relatives, friends, co-workers,

and fellow citizens comprise informal networks, which can produce private and public goods (Callahan, 2005). Within organizations, the benefits of social capital include productivity or improved workplace practices (Zarea, 2012; Putnam, 2000; Leana and Van Buren, 1999). Many people form rewarding friendships at work, feel a sense of community among co-workers, and enjoy norms of mutual help and reciprocity on the job. This social networks provide the channels through which people are recruited for good deeds (Putnam, 2000). Additionally, labour unions and professional associations are depended on social capital for their activities (Putnam, 2000). Leana and Van Buren (1999) have also noted that organizational social capital can lead to four beneficial outcomes; by justifying individual commitment to the collective good, facilitating a more flexible work organization, serving as a mechanism for managing collective action, and facilitating the development of intellectual capital in the firm.

Despite these positive benefits of social capital to organizations, it has its drawbacks. The first drawback is the high cost of maintaining social capital in the organization. It is also argued that, the focus on the collective rather than the individual may reduce individual incentives to innovate, making it more difficult for organizations to adopt continuous improvement as a practice or make discrete strategic changes that might be beneficial to the organization. Finally, organizations strong in social capital may be characterized not just by institutionalized ways of thinking but also by highly stable power arrangements, leading to dysfunctional political behaviour and entrenched leadership (Leana and Van Buren, 1999).

### **2.8.3 Principal-Agency Theory of Public Management**

The Principal-Agency theory with its roots in economics and finance (Fama and Jensen, 1983; Fama, 1980; Jensen and Meckling, 1976) has become a cornerstone of many fields including public management (Rogan, 2013; Gauld, 2007; Atkinson and Fulton, 2013; Jensen and Meckling, 1976). The theory, ideally suited for the analysis of hierarchical relationships has also become an important tool of organizational analysis (Moe, 1984). Originally, the theory was based on contract theory and developed as an alternative to the transaction cost theory, with the aim of explaining how contracts are developed in situations of asymmetrical information and risk (Fama, 1980). In this direction, the theory sought to illustrate the relationship between two actors dependent on each other, (a principal and an agent). The theory has therefore been described as a relationship characterized by a contract where a principal (a person or an organization) engages an agent (also a person or an organization) to perform some service on the principal's behalf and which involves

delegating some decision-making authority to the agent (Jensen and Meckling, 1976). Examples of agency relationships are varied and include; lawyer-client, doctor-patient, broker-investor, politician-citizen, and most generally, employee-employer (Blom-Hansen, 2005; Moe, 1984). Applying the principal-agency theory in public service organizations, the government acts as the principal and provider and the public service organizations (MDAs) act as agents or in organizations where managers act as principals and employees as agents (Rogan, 2013).

The principal recruits an agent for various reasons including the lack of specialized knowledge or the legal certification that the agent possesses, and the size or complexity of the task to be performed may require coordinated actions by persons other than the principal (Moe, 1984). Once agents are hired, there is no guarantee that they will pursue the principal's interest because they have their own interest at heart, and induced to pursue the principal's objectives only to the extent that the incentive structure imposed in the contract renders such behaviour advantageous to him/her. As the principal and the agent(s) usually pursue different objectives, there is the likelihood of goal conflicts (Rogan, 2013) in these relationships, making room for opportunistic behaviour on the part of the agent by concealing actions and pursuing personal objectives rather than those of the principal. As the principal does not have equal access to information as the agent, this can be difficult to expose, leading to so-called agent costs. The agent costs are costs incurred as a result of the principal having to set up control mechanisms and incentive systems to prevent opportunistic behaviour (Bjørn et al., 2008).

The Principal-Agency theory according to Gauld (2007) is complicated by a series of factors. One being 'adverse selection' which results from the existence in any relationship of information asymmetries with the basic fact that one party (for instance, a specialist public servant, acting as an agent) is more knowledgeable and also has more access to information than the principal (Bjørn et al., 2008). Adverse selection is said to occur where principals are unable to obtain sufficient knowledge about an agent's background, motivations or capabilities prior to entering into the contractual relationship (Perrow, 1986). The second complication is 'moral hazard', which occurs after contracts have been entered into and stems from the fact that principals are unable to observe or monitor the activities of agents (Moe, 1984). Thus, principals rely on agents to perform as stipulated in contracts. This can result in considerable costs to both contracting parties, as agents place emphasis on work that is subjected to monitoring leading to displaced priority. The third factor complicating the principal-agency theory is a series of conditions unique to the public sector. These include;

- a. Policy refinement which is frequently left to the implementation process and is routinely the responsibility of agents, not principals;
- b. Most government agencies have several and often conflicting tasks and objectives;
- c. Multiple principals and agents characterize the public sector as do situations in which principals often double as agents;
- d. The public sector tends to lack competition in service delivery; and,
- e. The public workforce and agencies are motivated by a complex array of factors, only one of which might be financial incentives (Gauld, 2007; Le Grand, 2003; Dixit, 2002).

Critics of the principal-agency theory have argued that the theory lacks validity outside a specific social context. They contend that the theory relies on an assumption of self-interested agents who seek to maximize personal economic wealth while minimizing personal effort (Lubatkin et al., 2007; Bruce et al., 2005). Thus, their view of the theory is that it applies only to settings in which agents (and possibly principals) hold little regard for others and have little compunction when it comes to shirking one's responsibilities (Wiseman et al., 2012).

#### **2.8.4 Justification of the Theories in Public Management**

Both social capital and the principal-agency theories relates to individuals within groups, teams and organizations. The network of relationships in social capital serves as a precondition for productivity and improved work practices. It also brings members of the organization together because employees feel a sense of community among co-workers, and enjoy norms of mutual help and reciprocity on the job (Putnam, 2000). Similarly, Putnam intimates that in a society characterized by dense networks of civic engagement and where most people abide by civic norms, it becomes easier to spot and punish the occasional 'bad apple' so that defection is riskier and less tempting (1993: 178). People therefore conform to the norm than deviating from it. On the other hand, the principal-agency theory is chosen because of the mutual relationship that is supposed to be developed between the government and in some cases board of directors (as the principal) and public servants as agents. The principal is supposed to monitor the agent(s) to do the right thing leading to efficiency and effectiveness. The two theories propose the framework within which efficiency and effectiveness in public organizations are maintained so as to ensure optimum productivity, and the relationship is supposed to be hinged on trust, honesty, fairness, equity, transparency,



and integrity (Abdulai, 2000). However, the individuals in social capital theory and the agents in the principal-agency theory, serve in 'their own interest' (*bowling alone*) and *agency problem* respectively, where both agents and principals are interested in their selfish gains, leading to unethical behaviours.

Again, as people meet daily to perform their organizational responsibilities, both formal and informal relationships develop (a form of social capital), leading to the formation of group norms and this can influence employees' behaviours in many diverse ways including group conformity, the quality of decision-making and work performance (Litzky et al., 2006). The group norm conformity for instance is influenced by individuals' desire for acceptance, cohesiveness among group members, rewards associated with conformity and punishments associated with non-conformity (Litzky et al., 2006; Asch, 1983). Thus when members of a group in an organization deem unethical behaviours acceptable, new employees are conditioned to conduct business in similar manner (Litzky et al., 2006; Mac Lean, 2001). In the light of the above, public servants find themselves in an ethical dilemma whether to conform to the group norm (agent) or the principal. The generation of this situation can lead to unethical behaviours by public servants.

Another justification for the use of the two theories in this research is to test their suitability in a developing country context. Most studies in public service ethics and values have been conducted in developed countries and therefore do not tell whether such theories are applicable to a developing country like Ghana context. Thus, social capital and principal-agency theories will be used as theoretical lenses to determine how the positive externalities for members in social capital and the trust reposed in the agent by the principal in the principal-agency theory are used to enhance ethics and values or aid in increasing unethical practices in the public service organization of Ghana.

### **2.9.0 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of the Thesis**

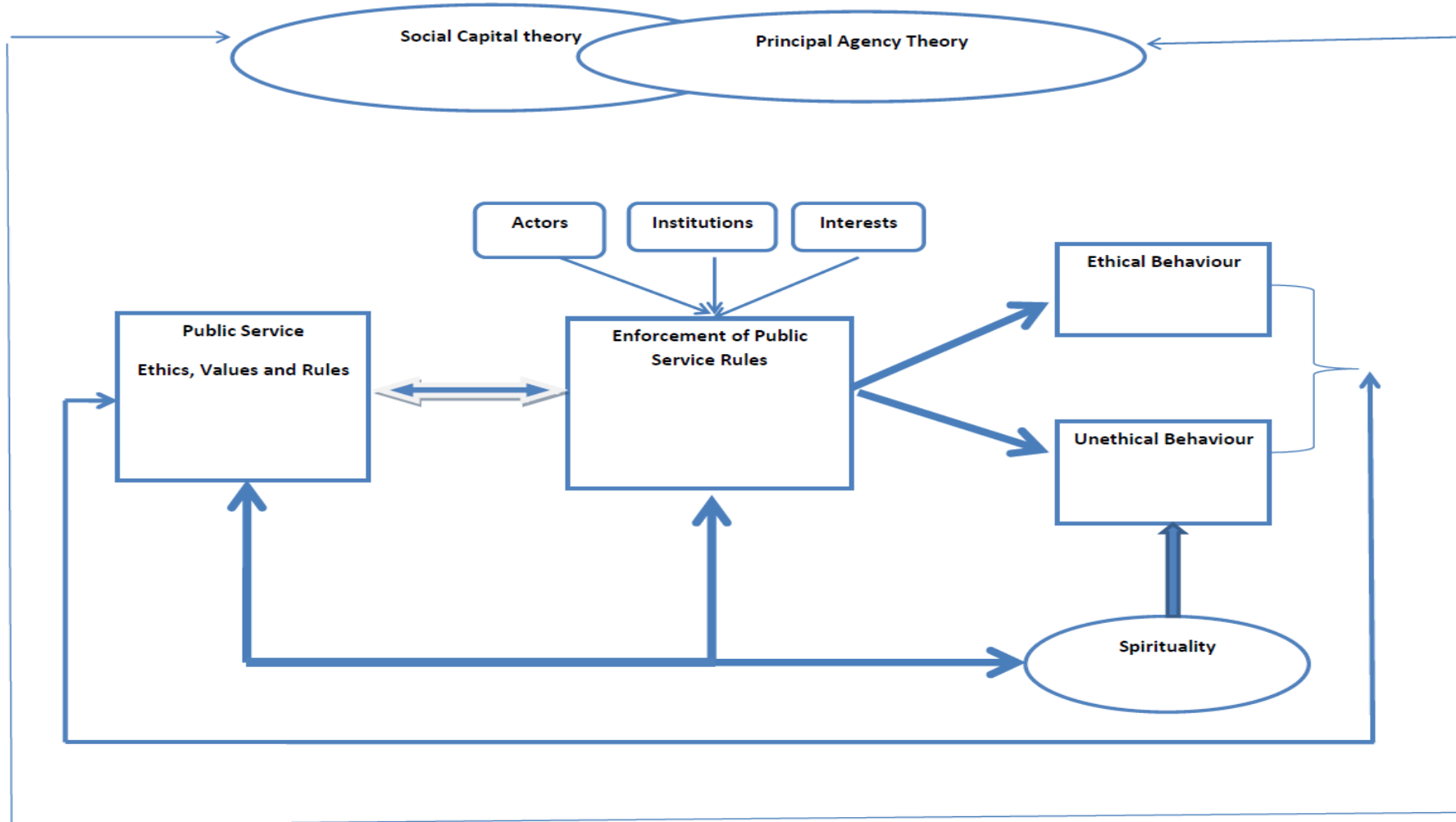
The previous sections reviewed conceptual literature on ethics, values and spirituality as well as theoretical literature on social capital and agency theories. Research has shown that, though the public service is supposed to serve in the interest of the general public, some unethical and illegal practices have downgraded the service leading to distrust among the general public. The impact of these unethical behaviours has necessitated the upsurge of interest in ethics and values world-wide. Social capital and principal agency theories are adopted because of the social network and the mutual relationships that it is anticipated to

generate to improve efficiency and effectiveness. However, literature shows that studies on ethics and values are almost non-existent in Africa, including Ghana. This study therefore examines public service ethics and values to understand how public service organizations respond to unethical behaviours and the role of spirituality in the public service organizations of Ghana. In this direction, the study seeks answers to the following questions;

1. What ethical standards and values have been set for public service employees in Ghana?
2. Are there deviations from these ethical standards and if there are, what kind(s) of deviations are these?
3. What role does workplace spirituality play in the public service of Ghana?
4. How are these ethical standards enforced in the public service of Ghana?

A diagram illustrating the conceptual and theoretical framework of the thesis is depicted in figure 2.1 below;

Figure 2. 1: Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of the Thesis



Sources: Author's Construct, 2017

The diagram above illustrates the conceptual framework of the thesis. It posits that though public service organizations have wide discretionary powers in the exercise of their daily duties, these powers are supposed to be exercised within the remits of the ethical standards and values of the organization that guides their day-to-day activities (as observed in chapters two and four). In situations where these powers and behaviours go contrary to the ethics and values of the organization as shown in the earlier sections of this chapter, then the behaviour of the individual or organization is said to be unethical. However, not all behaviours are deemed unethical, some are ethical and worthy of emulation. Measures must therefore be put in place to ensure that ethical behaviours are enforced, while unethical behaviours are reprimanded through punitive sanctions. These notwithstanding, when it comes to enforcement, several factors come into play to hinder its effective implementation. Workplace spirituality on the other hand is believed to excite the ethical thoughts of individuals to behave accordingly, but research has shown that spirituality at work has its negative consequences as well. Social capital and the Principal-Agency are therefore deployed as the theoretical lens to establish whether the existence of ethics, values, spirituality and strict enforcement of ethics will lead to ethical or unethical behaviours in Ghana's public service.

## **2.10 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter seeks to engage with the research community on the phenomenon of public service ethics and values in Ghana, to understand how public service organizations respond to unethical behaviours and the role of spirituality in the public service. The chapter begins by looking at the factors that led to the introduction of NPM in public administration and its failure to take into account the ethical issues likely to arise. The chapter then delves into the conceptual framework, looking at public service ethics, values, spirituality and unethical behaviour. Theoretically, the chapter discusses social capital and the principal-agency theories of management as its theoretical lens to be used in analyzing these behaviours. The justification lies in the fact that the combined use of the two theories will provide an innovative approach to analyzing public service ethics, values and spirituality at work and their relationship with unethical behaviour which hitherto has not been adequately delved into in the extant literature.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the process adopted in executing this piece of research in terms of the underlying philosophical research paradigms, methodology and the associated data gathering and analysis techniques. It begins with the philosophical foundations of the research, proceeding to examine the research approach, data collection and analyses regimes adopted. The research adopted social reality as its ontology and social constructivism as its epistemology. Methodologically, the study was a qualitative case study which employed semi-structured in-depth interviews, semi-focus group discussions and documentary reviews as the data collection apparatuses. The chapter therefore provided the philosophical and methodological foundations for the study.

#### **3.1 Philosophical Foundation of the Research**

Over the years, the debate on knowledge generation has traditionally been a philosophical enterprise with many paradigms. For instance, Creswell has identified the post-positivist, constructivist, transformative and pragmatic paradigms or worldviews (2014: 6). The nature and results of a particular enquiry is influenced by the paradigmatic orientation of the enquirer. Guba and Lincoln (1994: 105) have also surmised that “an inquiry’s paradigm relates to the underlying beliefs that guide researchers perspectives” of what they study. It could also be viewed as the set of fundamental beliefs and assumptions about how the world is perceived and this perception serves as a framework guiding the behaviour of the researcher (Jonker and Pennink, 2010). The paradigm therefore influences the researcher’s orientation and this orientation then determines the ontological, epistemological and methodological position of the researcher. Thus, paradigms are useful because of their interrelated assumptions about ontology, epistemology and human nature (Jacobs and Manzi, 2000; Kalof et al., 2008; Saunders et al., 2009) and the core elements of the paradigmatic foundations of knowledge according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005 ) and Krauss (2005) are ontology, epistemology and methodology. These foundations shape people’s understanding of social phenomenon and their worldviews. The implications of these foundations manifest in the way research is believed to render the truth about reality; given the unending arguments about whether an

objective reality exists, or what may be considered as reality is only constructed and derived through mediated social interpretation (Tronvoll et al., 2011).

Knowledge generation relates to what exist and the nature of that reality which can be studied. This constitutes ontology. Is the phenomenon to be studied external or internal to human perception? If it is external, it implies it exists independent of human construction and if it is internal, then its reality exists due to the human constructed ideas (Chua, 1986). Consequently, ontologically, reality can either be physically or socially constructed (Chua, 1986). As a social science phenomenon, public service ethics, values and spirituality are socially constructed and therefore its existence depends on human constructed reality (Farquhar, 2012). The phenomenon is better appreciated when it is examined within the interpretations that the subjects and the researchers make of it (Crotty, 1998). Thus, in this study, investigating the phenomenon is based on the interpretations and meanings that subjects attribute to their world. It is also based upon the interpretations and meanings that the researcher makes from the interaction between the subjects and their world.

Epistemology on the other hand, is the beliefs on how to generate, understand and use knowledge that is deemed acceptable and valid (Wahyuni, 2012). It relates to the nature of knowledge about the reality or phenomenon under study. In other words, it relates to “what and how we can know about” what exists (Grix, 2004) and poses the following questions: ‘What is the relationship between the knower and what is known? How do we know what we know? What counts as knowledge?’ (Krauss, 2005). From the foregoing, the ontological orientation of the study is socially constructed; its epistemology is subjective reality. Thus, a social constructivist epistemology in which the researcher values the role of subjects and the subject-researcher relationship in knowledge creation is considered appropriate for this study (Denzin et al., 2006; Farquhar, 2012; Wahyuni, 2012) because it allows a critical examination of assumptions that would have been overlooked by other approaches (Jacobs and Manzi, 2000). Social constructivists contend that the basis of social facts and how the world is understood depends very much on human interactions, life experiences and interpretations thereof. Ontologically, constructivist assume that realities are diversely constructed (Krauss, 2005), and both the researcher and the objects of the study are interactively linked, and influence each other, and eventually become inseparable (Lincoln and Guba, 2000; Krauss, 2005). It is therefore believed that both the researcher and participants are engaged in a dialogue, making understanding possible through interpretations

of the varying constructions generated leading to a complete understanding of the phenomena under study. Thus, both the researcher and his/her participants jointly create or co-construct findings from their interactive dialogue and interpretations (Ponterotto, 2005). The philosophical underpinnings' of this research together with the other paradigms are illustrated in **Table 3.1** below;

**Table 3. 1: Comparison of Fundamental Beliefs of Research Paradigms in Management**

<b>Fundamental Beliefs</b>	<b>Positivism</b>	<b>Realism/Critical Realist</b>	<b>Interpretivism/ Constructivism</b>	<b>Pragmatism</b>
<i>Ontology: the position on the nature of reality</i>	External, objective and independent of social actors	Is objective. Exists independently of human thoughts and beliefs or knowledge of their existence (realist), but is interpreted through social conditioning	Socially constructed, subjective, may change, multiple	External, multiple, view chosen to best enable answering of research question
<i>Epistemology: the view on what constitutes acceptable knowledge</i>	Only observable phenomenon can provide credible data. Focus on causality and law like generalisations, reducing phenomena to simplest elements	Observable phenomena provide credible data, facts. Insufficient data means inaccuracies in sensations (direct realism). Alternatively, phenomena create sensations which are open to misinterpretation (critical realism). Focus on explaining within a context(s)	Subjective meanings and social phenomena. Focus upon the details of situation, the reality behind these details, subjective meanings and motivating actions	Either or both observable phenomena and subjective meanings can provide acceptable knowledge dependent upon the research question. Focus on practical applied research, integrating different perspectives to help interpret the data
<i>Axiology: the role of values in research and the researcher's stance</i>	Research is undertaken in a value-free way, the researcher is independent of the data and maintains an objective stance	Research is value laden; the researcher is biased by world views, cultural experiences and upbringing. These will impact on the research	Value-bond and emic. Research is value bond, the researcher is part of what is being researched, cannot be separated and so will be subjective	Values play a large role in interpreting results, the researcher adopting both objective and subjective points of view
<i>Research Methodology: the model behind the Research process</i>	Highly structured, large samples, measurement, quantitative, but can use qualitative	Methods chosen must fit the subject matter, quantitative or qualitative	Purely qualitative; small samples and in-depth investigations	Mixed or multiple method designs, quantitative and qualitative

Source: Adapted from Saunders et al., (2009: 119) and Wahyuni (2012: 70).

### 3.1.1 The Research Approach

Conducting academic research can be from several perspectives; qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods approaches (Creswell, 2014). Although the researcher has a certain level of freedom to select which of these to adopt, the nature of the study largely influences the choice and shapes the study (Silverman, 2005). This study adopts the qualitative approach.

### **3.1.2 Qualitative Research Approach**

Qualitative research comprises a broad range of research approaches that are often contrasted with quantitative methods. Its foundations are often criticised by quantitative positivists as lacking ‘science’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Berg, 2004). In other words, qualitative research is said to be less robust, lacks generalizability, reliability, evidence and validity, lacks transparency and objectivity and therefore laden with personal values and idiosyncrasies of researchers (Tracy, 2010; Denzin et al., 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). However, qualitative research presents a number of noted potentials that quantitative research may lack. For instance, qualitative research takes on board context, understands processes, subjects’ circumstances and experiences, complexities of situations, emotional circumstances of participants, values and cultures within which the study occurs. It therefore generates richer data and can provide important outcomes with smaller samples (Brown, 2010; Denzin et al., 2006; Maxwell, 2005). According to (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011: 3) qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform and turn the world into a series of representations including field-notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them or how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011: 3; Merriam, 2009: 13). Thus, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world.

The arguments against qualitative research have mostly bothered on fears of lack of quality in the research output. However, quality is a key requirement in research among adherents of qualitative research. To strive towards achieving quality in qualitative research, several features have been proposed including (a) worthy topic, (b) rich rigor, (c) sincerity, (d) credibility, (e) resonance, (f) significant contribution, (g) ethics, and (h) meaningful coherence (Tracy, 2013b: 230; Tracy, 2010:839). In other jurisdictions, triangulation, structural corroboration and referential adequacy have been proposed as guarantees for quality assurance (Eisner, 1997). In addition, qualitative researchers have been advised to ascertain whether qualitative research approach is appropriate for their topic (Silverman, 2005) and the questions being investigated (Creswell, 2003). Creswell (2014) opines that



qualitative research “explores a social or human problem” in which among other things the researcher “conducts the study in a natural setting”.

This study will be conducted qualitatively for a number of reasons. The first being that the researcher intends to study the phenomenon of public service ethics, values and spirituality under its natural environment, that is, the public service organizations in Ghana (Creswell, 2014; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Creswell, 2013). This can be better conducted through a qualitative enquiry because advocates of qualitative research are of the view that knowledge production should be flexible and sensitive to the social context within which data are generated rather than relying on rigid, remote and inferential methods (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005 ). Again, a qualitative method is desired because the study needs a detailed understanding of complex and sensitive issues of ethics, values and spirituality. These details can only be established by talking directly with the participants and allowing them to tell their stories unencumbered (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2010). Thirdly, the study intends to solicit information from experts and senior level public servants (from the MDAs) and other selected officials from NGOs (especially those involved in accountability, governance and transparency issues) whose number constitute a small N-size considered appropriate for qualitative research (Gerring, 2007). In addition, this information will be complimented by drawing on knowledge from documented sources to understand how public service organizations respond to unethical behaviours and the role of spirituality in public service organizations. This approach requires the use of qualitative data collection instruments that will pave the way for in-depth investigation into the subject matter. In-depth interviews as the key data collection instruments are appropriate for collecting qualitative data suitable for qualitative research (Creswell, 2014; Crouch and McKenzie, 2006; Yin, 2010), since participants will offer different perspectives to the discussions. These information from varied sources would then be triangulated and the method involved in triangulation is also purely qualitative (Yin, 2010). Thus, this research will involve a multiple source of data gathering including in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, observation and documentary reviews, rather than relying on a single data source (Creswell, 2014; Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Additionally, the researcher is a key instrument in this study (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2010). As intimated by Creswell (2014: 185), qualitative researchers collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behaviours or interviewing participants and do not intend to use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers.

Further, the persistent growth and proliferation of qualitative research is seen by its proponents as a response to the weaknesses of traditional quantitative approaches that have dominated many social science disciplines until the past few decades (Sandberg, 2005). Qualitative research has in addition gained ground on the basis that traditional positivist claims to objective knowledge have severe theoretical limitations that do not allow deeper understanding of human behaviour and organizational phenomenon (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Prasad and Prasad, 2002). Thus, proponents of interpretive approaches contend that research on organizations should consider the 'lived experiences' of individual members of the organizations or their clients as the basis of empirical knowledge (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Prasad and Prasad, 2002).

### **3.1.3 Case Study Research Strategy**

In qualitative research, there are several traditions and strategies that can be adopted. These include case study, ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, biographical, historical, participatory and clinical strategies ( Yin, 2010; Creswell, 2009; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Denzin and Lincoln, 1995). The research design for this study is a case study because it facilitates in-depth investigation and understanding of a real-life contemporary phenomenon in its natural context (Yin, 2012; Farquhar, 2012; Woodside, 2010). Yin describes the case study approach as 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in a real life context, with particular reference to situations where the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin, 2009: 18). The case study approach therefore allows the systematic analysis of real life issues through data gathering and analyses in order to produce information, develop alternative solutions and offer recommendations (Lethbridge et al., 2002). Case studies can serve a dual purpose, both as a research strategy and as a research method (Punch 2005; Yin 2009). The case study strategy has become popular in organization and management studies due to growing confidence with its use as a rigorous research strategy in its own right (Yin, 2009; Hartley, 1994) because it relies on 'interviewing, observing and document analysis' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011: 14). In addition to these advantages, case studies are not only bounded systems that focus on specific phenomenon; they also seek to preserve the wholeness and integrity of the case or cases under study; and may include data from different sources (individuals, specific groups, organizations and sometimes communities) as well as multiple methods (Punch, 2005; Creswell, 2013). The case study as a research strategy, therefore, comprises an all-

encompassing method involving logical research design, which incorporates specific approaches to data collection and analysis (Yin, 2003). Case study research includes both single and multiple case studies (Yin, 2009), this research adopts the multiple case-study research tradition. As intimated by Yin (2010) case study research is considered appropriate if the study investigates “how” and “why” questions; when the phenomenon under investigation is not under the direct influence of the researcher; and when a real-life context is the subject of investigation. Again, the case study is appropriate because, it allows for an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2014).

### **3.1.4 The Choice and Appropriateness of Case Study in this Research**

As indicated in the previous subsection, this study is a qualitative case study. The practical aspect of the appropriateness of the case study lies in the 3-year duration of this PhD programme which makes it practically impossible for all 38 public service organizations in Ghana to be studied. Additionally, the associated costs of doing such a large scale study will be so gargantuan, and certainly beyond the capacity of funds available for this research. The main strength for the use of this approach is the depth, i.e., the detail, richness and completeness of the case study (Flyvbjerg, 2011: 314). The study adopted a multiple case study research design using two public service organizations in Ghana as the purposive cases, following Creswell (2011) and Flyvbjerg (2006) recommendations basing it on unusual characters. The two selected organizations depicted unusually high levels of employees and unusually high levels of perceived unethical behaviours.

The organizational unit of interest (public service ethics, values and spirituality) is looked at as a totality and not in sub-sections. The aim of adopting this method was to conduct the study in an open and flexible manner characterized by social interaction and communication in its natural setting which is interpreted by the respondents. The topic chosen is typical, and represents a range of cases, thus a holistic approach to this research. Yin (2009) argues that multiple cases strengthen research results by replicating pattern matching and thus increasing confidence in the robustness of data and theory. In view of this, data from a variety of sources was collected for this study as a means of validation. These sources included semi-structured interviews with policy makers (representatives of PSC and OHCS), semi-structured interviews with Chief Directors/Directors of Human Resources of the selected MDAs in the headquarters, regional, metropolitan, municipal and district offices, semi-structured

interviews with a retired senior public servant of each of the selected public service organizations, semi-structured interviews with selected officials of the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD), Ghana Integrity Initiative (the Ghana Chapter of Transparency International), the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), a member of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament and the Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and direct observation. The OHCS was included because it is the human resources office of the MDAs in Ghana, while the PSC is constitutionally mandated to deal with all public service organizations in Ghana, of which the OHCS is a constituent part and CHRAJ serves as the Ombudsman of all organizations in Ghana, complementing the work of the Attorney General.

The semi-structured interview questions were designed based on the themes that arose in the reviewed literature and perceived unethical behaviours as behaviours perpetrated by organizational employees with the intention of hindering the effective functioning of the organization and which the organization frowns upon. Although not in the same format, respondents were referred to a set of questions to serve as interview guide. Due to its flexibility to freely express oneself, the semi-structured interviews were used to elicit the views, responses, experiences and beliefs of participants to generate a deeper understanding of the forms and how dysfunctional behaviours have impacted the public service of Ghana negatively and whether spirituality is the alternative solution to enhance ethical behaviour. Further, the semi-structured interviews provided the opportunity to probe answers that needed further clarifications (Saunders et al., 2009). Thirty-two in-depth interviews were conducted during fieldwork research.

Additionally, semi-focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted to complement the semi-structured interviews. The FGDs were employed because of its ability to generate spontaneous, rich and insightful information from research participants (Wong, 2008) as well as elicit information that would be difficult to generate in one-to-one interviews (Kitzinger, 1995). The researcher conducted five semi-focus group discussions with participants' comprising lower and middle level employees in the selected public service organizations. This illuminated respondent's opinions and experiences about the particularities of their everyday experiences with issues of ethics, values and spirituality in the service. Participants were purposively organized into homogenous groups with similar features within their respective organizations (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Ruff et al., 2005). The fundamental

principles affecting the outcomes of FGDs such as the nature and format of questions, group size, amount of time allocated to each session, and the skills of the moderators to manage participants' expectations in the process of eliciting information were also given due attention (Ruff et al., 2005; Tang and Davis, 1995). The size of each group was managed such that participants fell within the range of six (6) to ten (10) people. Methodologically, the FGDs helped in reducing the individualistic bias inherent in other data collection methods by offering the opportunity to collate varieties of opinions from group interactions. By allowing respondents to consult each other during discussions, the knowledge and experience shared by participants significantly contributed to the construction of meaning with respect to public service ethics, values and spirituality.

Further, the researcher was a key instrument in this study (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2010). As intimated by Creswell (2014: 185), qualitative researchers collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behaviours or interviewing participants and do not intend to use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers. The researcher therefore played a key role by observing and analysing the sequence of events.

The interview respondents were selected using convenient sampling methods. Since the study targeted Public Servants who worked in MDAs, they were conveniently selected from these institutions. However, within these institutions, only employees who consented to participate were interviewed because the entire study was about them. The in-depth interviews and FGDs were conducted between November 2015 and May 2016 and a follow up between June and July 2017 in Accra, Ghana. Participants were interviewed in their respective offices with the exception of one who preferred to be interviewed in his house after work. The interviews were tape-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim by a third-party with the aim of preserving the interviewees' original expressions. This, it is believed, enhanced the credibility and validity of the study (Tracy, 2010). In all thirty two in-depth interviews and five semi FGDs were conducted. The table below summarises the organizations and individuals who participated in both the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions respectively.

**Table 3. 2: Semi-Structured Interviews and FGDs Samples**

<b>Name of Organization</b>	<b>Organizational level</b>	<b>Number of Semi-Structured Interviews Conducted</b>	<b>Number of Focus Group Discussions Held</b>
<b>Organization 1</b>	HQ	4	
	Regional Office	5	1
	District Office	3	1
	Retired Senior Officer	1	
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>Organization 2</b>	HQ	4	1
	Regional Office	4	1
	District Office	2	1
	Retired Senior Officer	1	
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>11</b>	
<b>Policy Makers/Ombudsman</b>	Public Services Commission	1	
	OHCS	1	
	CHRAJ	1	
	Public Accounts Committee on Parliament	1	
	Auditor General	1	
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>Selected NGO's</b>	CDD	1	
	GII	1	
	IEA	1	
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>5</b>

Source: Author's Construct, 2017

In addition to the interviews, secondary sources of data were also used as an additional method for the study. A secondary data is described as data collected by others which is not specifically meant for the study at hand (Stewart, 1984). This study analysed documents from the Auditor-General's report on the public accounts of Ghana from 2009 to 2014, Annual Reports of CHARAJ from 2010 to 2014, the Annual Reports of the Public Procurement Authority (PPA) from 2010 to 2014, The Acts and codes of conduct from the GES and GHS, the Civil Service Act and Codes of Conduct, Reports of some Commissions of Inquiry in Ghana, media discussions on ethical issues bothering public servants among several other documents. These reports are public documents which can easily be accessed from the internet, public libraries or sold in some selected bookshops in Ghana. The secondary data complimented the primary data because they were already in the public domain, and also the type of information being sought for would not easily be obtained from interviews especially in situations dealing with disclosures of unethical behaviours in public service organizations. Further, the secondary data were more likely to be credible and valid thereby augmenting the

data gathered from the interviews. In this light, secondary data research has some remarkable advantages including the ability to easily gain access to information that would be difficult or impossible to obtain (Smith et al., 2011). It is also inexpensive, permits comparisons easily and facilitates replication (Neuman, 2013: 384). Accordingly, most of Yin's (2003) six sources of evidence used in data collection were deployed for this case study with the exception of physical artefacts. Table 3.3 below shows the various options in qualitative data and their advantages and limitations.

Table 3.3: Qualitative Data Collection Types, Options, Advantages and Limitations

<b>Data Collection Types</b>	<b>Options within Types</b>	<b>Advantages of the Type</b>	<b>Limitations of the Type</b>
<b>Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete participant – researcher conceals role</li> <li>• Observer as participant- role of researcher is known</li> <li>• Participant as observer – observation role secondary to participant role</li> <li>• Complete observer – researcher observes without participating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researcher has a first-hand experience with participants.</li> <li>• Researcher can record information as it occurs.</li> <li>• Unusual aspects can be noticed during observations.</li> <li>• Useful in exploring topics that may be uncomfortable for participants to discuss.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researcher may be seen as intrusive.</li> <li>• Private information may be observed that cannot be reported.</li> <li>• Researcher may not have good and attending skills.</li> <li>• Certain participants (children) may present special problems in gaining rapport.</li> </ul>
<b>Interviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face (one-on-one)</li> <li>• Telephone (researcher interviews by phone)</li> <li>• Focus group (researcher interviews participants in a group)</li> <li>• Email/Internet interview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Useful when participants cannot be directly observed.</li> <li>• Participants can provide historical information</li> <li>• Allows researcher control over the line of questioning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides indirect information filtered through the views of interviewees.</li> <li>• Provides information in a designated place rather than the natural field setting.</li> <li>• Researcher's presence may bias responses.</li> <li>• Not all people are equally articulate and perceptive.</li> </ul>
<b>Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public documents (minutes of meetings or news papers)</li> <li>• Private documents (journals, diaries or letters)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable a researcher to obtain the language and words of participants.</li> <li>• Can be accessed at a convenience to the researcher (an unobtrusive source of information).</li> <li>• Represent data to which participants have given attention.</li> <li>• As written evidence, it saves the researcher time and cost of transcribing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all people are equally articulate and perceptive.</li> <li>• May be protected information unavailable to public or private access.</li> <li>• Requires the researcher to search out the information in hard-to-find places.</li> <li>• Requires transcribing or optically scanning for computer entry.</li> <li>• The documents may not be authentic or accurate.</li> </ul>
<b>Audio-Visual Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photographs</li> <li>• Videotapes</li> <li>• Art objects</li> <li>• Computer messages</li> <li>• Sounds</li> <li>• Film</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be an unobtrusive method of collecting data.</li> <li>• Provides an opportunity for participants to directly share their reality.</li> <li>• It is creative in that it captures attention visually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be difficult to interpret.</li> <li>• May not be accessible publicly or privately.</li> <li>• The presence of an observer (e.g., photographer) may be disruptive and affect responses.</li> </ul>

Source: Adopted from Creswell, 2014

### **3.1.5 Sample Population**

The population of the study comprised all permanent workers of the public service of Ghana. However, public service workers from GES and GHS were targeted. The focus on the two selected public service organizations enabled the researcher to solicit diverse views on the phenomenon under investigation. In all 45 participants were earmarked for the semi-structured interviews and six FGDs targeted to complement it. A two-stage selection procedure was adopted. The first involved selecting the public service organizations while the second stage involved selecting the participants. Thus, the sampling was done using both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The organizations were selected using probability sampling method while the participants were selected using the non-probability sampling method. Specifically, the organizations were selected using simple random sampling method. To make this possible, the list of all public service organizations in Ghana was obtained to facilitate the sampling process. Convenience sampling method was used to select the participant's. In the final stage, the researcher conducted 32 semi-structured interviews and five FGDs. This sample size is justified because other case studies have used lesser sample sizes. For instance, Boateng and Agyemang (2015), Groves et al. (2010) used a sample size of 25, while Hinson and Mahmoud (2011) used 14, and both Doherty (2000) and Sen (2006) used a sample size of 7. These sample sizes were far below the sample used in this research. Besides, constant monitoring of the media landscape after the field research in Ghana also served as a source of information for the study.

### **3.1.6 Data Analysis**

The data analysis stage was both iterative and reflexive process and was broken into four phases. The first phase occurred during fieldwork where audio recorded interviews were played several times after each day of fieldwork and before the next day's interview session begun. Tracy's (Tracy, 2013a) suggestion that the researcher should continuously visit and revisit the data by constantly listening to the audio-tapes and reading the interview transcripts over and over again to get connected to the emerging insights of the data and progressively refined his focus and understanding on the emerging phenomenon of the study was adhered to in order to get immersed with the data. This strategy was beneficial in several ways. In the first instance, it helped to address the ambiguities by ensuring that some pertinent questions which were skipped in previous interviews were asked in consequent interviews. It also provided the avenue for further clarification to be sought while the researcher was still within



the organization/region. Thirdly, it provided the opportunity to identify key and recurring themes at an early stage which eventually helped him in subsequent interviews and ultimately aided with the themes adopted in the analysis. Thus, themes established in the literature reviewed section of this thesis guided the development of similar or alternative themes in the data analysis stage. In a nutshell, data analysis was iteratively and reflexively done with each phase feeding into the subsequent phase as well as being illuminated by the aforementioned phase.

The next phase of the analysis was the transcription of the audio-recorded interviews into text transcripts. This was done by a third-party with the aim of preserving the respondents' original expressions. The transcriber's role was only limited to listening to the audio-recorded interviews and typing them out accordingly. To ensure confidentiality, the transcriber was made to sign a confidentiality form which prevented him from divulging any information that he was privy to in the course of carrying out the assignment given him. The transcribed texts were repeatedly read over and over again to establish the themes for the analyses. Other themes also emerged during the fieldwork and were subsequently used to aid the analyses. Under each research objective and question, a number of dominant themes that emerged were adopted as a basis for analysing the data. Once the themes were identified, the researcher engaged the data on a constant basis to reflect on the interview transcripts and the documents collected to identify responses that supported each theme. The dominant themes that had emerged as a result of iterating and reflexing with the data repeatedly were either maintained or slightly altered to suit the objectives and research questions of the thesis.

The third stage of the data analysis involved coding the interview transcripts under three main themes – based on the three key research objectives. The three research objectives were then matched to the key research questions. This first level coding identified responses that related to and matched the three research questions. These were coded as R2, R3 and R4 to match research questions two to four respectively. The second level coding was developed within the established broader codes and built around the main themes developed earlier. The number of codes per research objective was not determined until after closure was reached for each research objective. Closure was determined after numerous reading and listening of the data which did not indicate any new insights for a new theme (saturation point).

The data analysis therefore adopted the integrated approach (Bradley et al., 2007), using Catherine et al. (2000) approach which outlined five stages of data analysis comprising familiarization and emersion into the data, identification of the thematic framework, indexing

the data based upon the themes, charting and rearranging data through abstraction and synthesis and mapping and interpretation (Catherine et al. 2000:116). Thus, the data was ‘systematically gathered, organized, interpreted, analysed, and communicated so as to address real world concerns’ (Tracy, 2013: 4). However, before this rather inductive process was adopted, a flexible deductive frame had been formulated from the literature on the research objectives/questions (Bradley et al. 2007). Following these approaches, themes and taxonomies have been developed to represent the conceptual domains of the phenomena of unethical behaviours and the role of spirituality in overcoming these behaviours in the public service (Bradley et al. 2007). This served as a rich resource in examining, categorizing and tabulating evidence to assess whether the evidence supports the initial propositions of the study or otherwise. It is important to note that reflexivity – the act of continuous and iterative reading and listening to the data with a reflective consideration for self, subjects and context to provide transparency in the data analysis process – was extensively used (Emanuel et al., 2004). Reflexivity is consistent with the interpretive paradigm as it takes into account the reflections of the researcher (including his/her biases, values and assumptions) in the process of analysing and interpreting his/her research outputs and results.

### **3.1.7 Computer-Aided Analysis**

Despite having some basic training on the use of Nvivo (computer-based qualitative analysis software), no computer-based software was employed in the data analyses. While the researcher acknowledges the usefulness of this software in facilitating data analysis, such as being relatively easier to use and ability to import documents directly onto the screen (Welsh, 2002), it equally had a number of pitfalls that discouraged its use. First, the software is considered too structured to be able to analyse the unstructured data elicited in this research. Second, it probably will require the investment of too much time which the researcher was constrained with. The third being that Nvivo only aids in organising the data in patterns that makes the analyses and interpretation easier but does not do the analyses and interpretation, hence, using Nvivo to do the later will be difficult (Welsh, 2002; Zamawe, 2015). Thus, the researcher considered the potential benefits to be accrued from using Nvivo to be far less than the time and cost involved. In consonance with some of the misgivings articulated by (Welsh, 2002), the researcher abandoned the qualitative analysis software and opted for the use of the manual analysis approach.

### **3.1.8 Pilot Study**

A pilot study refers to a mini version of a full-scale study that specifically aims at pre-testing a research instrument and helping to refine one or more aspects of the instrument (for example, its design, fieldwork procedures, data collection instruments, or analysis plans) of the final study (Yin 2010). Researchers use pilot studies to assess the suitability and appropriateness of data collection procedures (Perry, 2001) and self-evaluate personal eagerness, capability, and commitment to carry out the project (Beebe, 2007). Additionally, pilot studies serve as a training ground to enhance the credibility and quality of qualitative researchers (Padgett, 2016). For these reasons, incorporating pilot studies into final research studies, have become an important component of a good study design that provides rich insight into the research process. In this direction, a pilot study was conducted in (the University of Professional Studies, Accra) to identify practical issues that could potentially emerge during the research process. This allowed the researcher to pre-test his time management skills as well as recorded and compared the duration of each interview; checked the quality of tape recordings and modified some words and sequence of questions where appropriate. The pilot study provided the researcher the opportunity to practice his/her research instrument; it was observed that the pilot study was time-consuming, frustrating, and fraught with unanticipated problems. However, it was worth dealing with it before investing a great deal of time, money, and effort in the full study (Mason and Zuercher, 1995). Besides helping to check and cross-check the interview instruments and time duration of the interviews as well as modifying some questions, the difficulty encountered in dealing with potential respondents during the pilot study manifested itself during the actual fieldwork research. Thus, the pilot study enabled the researcher to anticipate the potential behaviour of respondents as they would consent to participate in interview sessions but would not be available on scheduled dates and venues and for the researcher to also adopt other strategies including unwavering, persistence and endurance as some potential respondents would eventually respond and take part in the interview sessions. This therefore reshaped the design of the methodology to include not only conducting the interviews in respondent's offices but other open places of convenience, introducing semi-focus group discussions as well as using 'gate-keepers' to informally introduce the researcher to the potential respondent.

### **3.1.9 Ethical Considerations of the Research**

In conducting any research, it is important to consider ethical issues that may arise during the course of the research and it is recommended that before any research commences, ethical clearance should be sought (APA., 2010; Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2010) because data collection involves human beings who are often required to share information that may put their lives at risk or expose ‘organisational secrets’. In this direction, ethical clearance was sought and obtained from the University of Manchester’s Research Risk and Ethics Committee (UREC) through the School of Environment Education and Development Ethics Advisory Group (SEAG). This process included a justification that this was a worthy piece of research and that the methods are appropriate and justified.

### **3.1.10 Quality Assurance**

Ensuring quality in research is a sine qua non in academia, but quality in qualitative research is quite contentious as it comes with multiple measures. To demonstrate that a research piece merits the attention of the academia requires a justification that it meets minimum quality standards. In that regard, efforts were made to comply with the elements of quality into this thesis. Arguments about what constitutes quality in qualitative research have been discussed under validity, espoused differently by qualitative researcher. Validity simply means credibility (Creswell and Miller, 2000). To ensure qualitative research meets quality standards, several elements have been proposed including: a) worthy topic, b) rich rigor, c) sincerity, d) credibility, e) resonance, f) significant contribution, g) ethics, and h) meaningful coherence (Tracy 2010:839). Quality assurance measures which rely on methodological approaches have been termed transactional validity by Cho and Trent (2006). They argue that credibility and for that matter quality can be achieved when certain “techniques, methods, and/or strategies” are adopted in the research process (Cho and Trent, 2006: 322). Validity could be *transactional* or *transformational* (Cho and Trent 2006:321); transactional when there is a continuous interface between the researcher, the research participants and the data to enhance the accuracy of findings; and transformational when a research piece exudes outcomes that change existing social systems.

### **3.1.11 Confidentiality and Anonymity of Research Participants**

As part of the ethical clearance prior to the commencement of fieldwork, the researcher was required to demonstrate due care for the confidentiality, anonymity and safety of all research

participants and organisations participating in the study. This was done through the anonymization of all participants and their organisations through the use of codes and identifiers. Data collected was also protected from external parties and stored in private and protected storage devices. During the course of the research, a number of respondents indicated that their identity could be disclosed but this was declined to conform to the principle of confidentiality and anonymity.

### **3.1.12 Informed Consent of Research Participants**

Before fieldwork, a participant consent form formed part of the documents for ethical approval/clearance from the University of Manchester. This provided adequate background information of the study to all participants and sought their informed consent before they participated. The consent form assured participants of their rights to participate and also withdraw at any point of the study without giving any reason. They could further request that the information they had provided be destroyed if they had a change of mind. Before the commencement of the fieldwork in Ghana, the researcher again sought and obtained clearance from the Public Services Commission (the supervisory body of public service organizations in Ghana). In addition, permission and clearance was sought and obtained from two public service organizations (GHS Ethics Committee and the GES HQ) before they got enlisted to participate in the study. In line with individual rights of informed consent, the permission and informed consent of all participants were individually sought and obtained and made to sign the consent forms to indicate their willingness to participate in the study.

### **3.1.13 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter presented the philosophical and methodological orientations for this research by adopting social reality as its ontology and social constructivism as its epistemology. This enabled the researcher to carry out the research by relying upon the interpretations and meanings provided by both the researcher and the subjects to generate knowledge. This was carried out through semi-structured interviews, documentary reviews and semi-focus group discussions. In line with the qualitative research evaluation criteria, the choice of appropriate methodology is considered important to ensuring the quality and robustness of any research.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH SETTING**

#### **4.0 Chapter Introduction**

This chapter presents an overview of the politico-economic and socio-cultural context of Ghana. It also sets the tone of this research by tracing the historical development of the public service from the Gold Coast to its present state in Ghana. Further, the chapter attempts to answer the first research objective by demonstrating the existence of rules and regulations in the public service of Ghana. However, there have been instances of unethical conducts, not only in contemporary times but traces it to the pre-independence era. In addition, the chapter traces the values of the traditional Ghanaian society to establish the fact that it could help to reduce these unethical behaviours, however, as a result of the economic decline and the negative impact of the same values of the Ghanaian society, the situation has not witnessed significant changes. The introduction of codes of conduct and other measures in the public service with the aim of ameliorating the situation in the 1990s was also reviewed to set the tone for this research on public service ethics values and spirituality in Ghana.

#### **4.1 The Country Context of Ghana**

Ghana is located in West Africa and shares its borders with Ivory Coast, Togo, Burkina Faso and Gulf of Guinea. Ghana is a former British colony which obtained its political independence in 1957, the first African country south of the Sahara to have obtained independence and became a republic in the British Commonwealth of Nations in 1960. Ghana's political history is stained with several military interventions after the first president Dr Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown in 1966. Ghana has subsequently made attempts at multi-party democracy but these again came under the subversion of the military in 1972, 1979 and 1981. Since 1993 however, Ghana's democracy has stabilised, holding seven general elections with successful changes in governments between two major political parties three consecutive times. Ghana is therefore considered as one of West Africa's most resilient democracies; "a stable country in a neighbourhood that has been characterized by violent conflicts, insecurity and instability" (APRM., 2010: xviii). Ghana operates a presidential democracy with an elected parliament and independent judiciary as well as a vibrant media. Ghana has been described as the beacon of hope for Africa's democratic journey. Ghana is

divided into ten administrative regions, with Accra as its administrative and political capital. Administratively, the ten regions are further subdivided into 216 districts to ensure equitable resource allocation and efficient, effective administration at the local level (GSS, 2013).

Economically, Ghana is West Africa's second largest economy after Nigeria, and Africa's twelve largest (ADB, 2012). She is also naturally endowed with a vast arable land that supports the cultivation of food crops and the rearing of livestock. Generally, Ghana is an agrarian economy depending largely on subsistence farming and also attracts foreign exchange through the export of cash crops such as cocoa, coffee, oil palm, pineapple, sheanuts and rubber (Aryeetey and Kanbur, 2008), yams, cashew nuts and bananas. Additionally, Ghana is also endowed with natural resources such as gold, diamond, bauxite and timber and until recently, oil and gas. In recent times, the structure of the Ghanaian economy has seen some changes. Previously, the agriculture sector was the largest contributor to the economy but was overtaken by the service sector in 2014 (GSS et al., 2015). Within this period, the service sector contributed 52 % to the gross domestic product (GDP), this was followed by the industry sector, contributing 27 %, and the agriculture sector contributing 22 % to GDP (GSS et al., 2015). In terms of employment, it is estimated that 45% of the economically active population are engaged in agriculture while 41% are engaged in the provision of services (GSS et al., 2015). According to the Bank of Ghana (2007), the tourism industry has also become another important contributor to Ghana's GDP, by being the third largest foreign exchange earner after exports and remittances from abroad. These notwithstanding, foreign exchange obtained from export commodities are severely declining due to low value addition and the depreciation of the country's currency (cedis).

Inflation has been quite high in recent times, in 2013, the annual inflation level was 11.75 and this has risen to 16.8% in 2015 (GSS, 2016). The GDP has also been falling of late. In 2011, the GDP was 14.0% and reduced to 7.3%, 4.0% and 3.9% respectively in 2013, 2014 and 2015 (GSS 2016). This has had dire impact on the economy and consequently compelled the Government of Ghana to constantly rely heavily on IMF and the World Bank to finance the national budget. These institutions have compelled the government (as conditionality) to down-size the public sector by freezing employment, retrenching public sector employees and reducing public expenditure. It is estimated that 65% of government expenditure goes into the payment of public sector employees (Government of Ghana, 2015). There is

however, a growing concern about graduate and youth unemployment in Ghana and this is attributed to the freeze in employment in the public sector.

Socio-culturally, Ghana could be termed a “multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural country” (Asante and Gyimah-Boadi, 2004: 1) with the major ethnic groups being Akan, Mole Dagbani, Ewe, Ga Adangbe, Guan, Gurma, Grusi and Mande-Busanga (GSS, 2013; GSS et al., 2015). The Ghanaian population is also multi-religious with 71.2% of the population professing Christianity, 17.6% professing Islam, 5.2% adhering to traditional African religion and the remaining 5.3% not affiliated to any religion. In total, 94.8% of the Ghanaian population are religious (GSS, 2012). Culturally, Ghana’s traditional values are built around the extended family system and communalism. The underpinning cherished traditional values include respect (especially for the elderly and those in authority), honesty and hard work, the pursuit of excellence, discipline and truthfulness.

Currently, Ghana’s population is estimated at 27 million and a land area of 238,537 km<sup>2</sup> (GSS et al., 2015). Over the last 30 years, Ghana’s population is believed to have grown at 2.5% per annum (GSS and UNFPA, 2014). The male population constitutes 48.8% while the female population is 51.2% (GSS, 2012). The 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC) also revealed that Ghana has a youthful population, comprising a large proportion of children under 15 years and a small proportion of elderly people above 65 years. This structure is attributed to high fertility and decreasing mortality rates (GSS, 2012). Out of this population, it is estimated that about 8.5% are employed in the public service of Ghana (GSS, 2013) while numerically the 2010 PHC puts it 740,000 (GSS, 2012).

Further, the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS, 2012) reports that, in terms of education, about 20% of the adult population (15 years and older) have never attended school. A higher proportion of females (24.3%) have never been to school compared to males (14.6%). More than half (56.3%) of the adult population is literate in English with a higher rate for males (67.3%) than for females (46.9%). Cumulatively therefore, about 48% of adult Ghanaians do not have any education (GSS, 2008). This situation is worsened when the 39% of those who attended only Middle School and Junior High School (GSS 2008) are added. This percentage is not very different from the 2010 PHC which indicated that about 31% of the adult population had never been to school and another 17% attempted going to school but never attained any basic certificate (GSS, 2012).



Notwithstanding the socio-cultural structure, economic advantage (though declining) and the political gains of unbroken democratic rule since 1993, governance challenges still remain (Aryeetey and Kanbur, 2008) coupled with systemic institutional failures, sporadic threat to the political and economic stability and corruption remain worrying (Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), 2014). The Public Service which is supposed to help with the formulation and implementation of government policies is also weak leading to the delivery of poor basic services in “education, health, water and sanitation” amongst others (ADB. et al., 2014: 112).

## **4.2 Evolution of the Public Service in Ghana**

Prior to independence, the civil service of Ghana followed the British civil service to maintain law and order, regulate the behaviour of individuals, collect tax and implement policies that benefited the colonial masters (Adu, 1968; Ohemeng and Anebo, 2012; Ohemeng et al., 2012). Almost all the senior positions went to the expatriates with the junior positions going to the indigenous people and no frantic efforts were made to develop the service to meet the needs of the colony and train the indigenous people to effectively formulate policies. The role of the indigenous people was to follow the rule of the thumb bureaucratic and routine procedures in the service. At independence, Kwame Nkrumah embarked upon the ‘Africanization of the service’ with the aim of replacing all expatriates with indigenous people to occupy the top-most positions and to also involve them in the accelerated growth of infrastructural facilities including health, education, electricity, transport and communications (Adei and Boachie-Danquah, 2002a). The service then metamorphosed into semi-autonomous administrative institutions made up of MDAs.

Around this era, the civil service was described as "the finest, most relevant and performance-oriented institution in Africa" (Nti, 1978; Ayee, 2001). It should be noted that the civil service had existed alongside the public service with the introduction of various administrative reforms (notably the Lidbury administrative reforms in the early 1950s and the Mills Odoi Commission in the 1960s). Prior to this period, an interim Public Services Commission was set up in 1948 to advise the Governor on appointments and promotions in the Public Service and for the first time in the history of the Public Service of the colony, vacant senior service positions were advertised locally. The Lidbury Committee made wide-range recommendations which redesigned the structure of the machinery of government leading to the establishment of the Public Services Commission, Statutory Corporations and

Departments to reciprocate the British style of public administration. Thus, most MDAs were created, restructured or re-aligned in the 1960s to suit the growing needs of the country. The MDAs were further strengthened with the passage of the Civil Service Act, 1960, which amongst other things documented the appointment and retirement of Civil Servants and their Conditions of Service, disciplinary proceedings and other matters relating to the Service. In furtherance to the Civil Service Act, the Civil Service (Interim) Regulations, 1960 (L1.47) commonly referred to as the *General Orders (GOs)* was also promulgated, which catalogued, amongst others, promotions, transfers and postings and the codes of conduct for the service. This was further enhanced with the setting up of the Mills Odoi Commission in 1967 to re-structure and organize the Public Services, their remuneration and conditions of service. The Commission made far reaching recommendations which amongst others included:

- a. the establishment of a permanent body called the Public Service Salary and Wages Commission (PSSWC), with the responsibility of advising government on the salaries and wages and other conditions of service in the public services;
- b. a new salary structure to take care of all the employees in the public sector thereby bridging the disparity in remunerations of the public sector employees; and
- c. personnel in the public services, including the civil service, would be governed by standard practices in appointment, recruitment, advancement and discipline as a means of introducing parity in remuneration and conditions of service (Republic of Ghana 1967: 6).

These recommendations were therefore an attempt to bring together the civil and public service under one umbrella, but the recommendations were not implemented to the later, necessitating the setting up of yet another Commission (the Okoh Commission) in the second half of the 1970s. The Okoh Commission re-echoed similar sentiments like that of the Mills Odoi's Commission to treat all public servants equally in all jurisdictions. Besides these, further recommendations were also given in the 1980s through the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and Economic Recovery Programme (ERP). Within this period, the public service and the civil service existed alongside each other up to the early 1990s. However, the Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana which came into effect in 1993 lists the public service of Ghana to include the civil service. The public service of Ghana is composed of centrally managed agencies, sub-vented agencies, district assemblies and state enterprises (IMF, 1999). Within this period, the public service had also witnessed a lot of constraints of efficiency and effectiveness and there was therefore the need to reform it. Overstaffing, lack of morale/motivation, lack of policy guidelines, poor working environment, excessive bureaucratization (Ayee, 2001), absenteeism, moonlighting, corruption, rent-seeking

behaviours (Owusu, 2006), poor customer care and negative work ethics (Adei and Boachie-Danquah, 2002b) were commonplace. To further buttress this point, Woode (2005: 1) delineated the poor work culture of the public service into nine evils, namely; displaced sense of purpose; urban bias; elite mentality; nepotism; distrust; paternalism; centralization; disregard for time; and an absence of organizational loyalty. Woode (2005) goes further to emphasize that despite the persistence of these evils, they were accepted and often spoken of as the ‘*normal way of doing things*’ (1). Ohemeng et al., (2012:1) aptly summarizes the public service as “overly bloated, inefficient, and distortionary.” To ameliorate the situation, the National Institutional Renewal Programme (NIRP) was established in 1994 with the aim of crafting a new vision for the Ghanaian Public Service which is:

- a. proactive, efficient, effective and innovative;
- b. citizen and client-focused, market sensitive and committed to national goals and aspirations;
- c. capable of partnering with civil society;
- d. a rallying point for good governance; and
- e. capable of creating, empowering, and facilitating an enabling environment for private sector development (Adei and Boachie-Danquah, 2002b; GoG, 1998; Corkery and Land, 1996; NIRP, 2003).

In Domfeh’s (2004) opinion, the NIRP was to amongst others “cover core areas of public sector functioning such as central government administrative machinery, public expenditure analysis and management, decentralisation, governance, judicial and legal system, public enterprise management, taxation and trade facilitation” (607-608). The NIRP was therefore to encourage all the institutions under the executive, judiciary and legislative arms of government and other autonomous bodies established by the 1992 Constitution to discharge their functions in a transparent, competent, accountable and cost-effective fashion, thereby contributing positively towards the creation of an enabling environment for democracy, investment and development (Domfeh, 2004).

### **4.3 The Public Service of Ghana**

According to Section (17) of the PSC Act, 1994 of the Republic of Ghana, the “public service” includes “service in any civil office of Government; the emoluments attached to which are paid directly from the Consolidated Fund or directly out of moneys provided by Parliament and service in a public corporation”. Article 190 of the 1992 Republican

Constitution of Ghana and the PSC Act of 1994 gives the composition of the Public Service as follows:

The Civil Service; the Judicial Service; the Audit Service; the Education Service; the Prison Service; the Parliamentary Service; the Health Service; the Statistical Service; the National Fire Service; the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service; the Internal Revenue Service; the Police Service; the Immigration Service; and the Legal Service. It also includes public corporations other than those set up as commercial ventures; Public services established by the constitution; and any other public services as Parliament may by law prescribe (Republic of Ghana, 1992; Republic of Ghana, 1994).

The Civil Service is therefore considered a “microcosm of the Public Service” (Abdul-Nasiru et al., 2014: 49) under the 1992 Constitution and undertakes diverse work, developing policies and delivering programmes and services to Ghanaians (PSC, 2015: 8). The public service among others is therefore expected to;

1. attract, recruit and retain talented and qualified individuals, and maximize the potentials of its workforce to meet both current and future organizational needs;
2. provide a workplace where workers have meaningful work in a fair, safe, supportive and ethical environment; and
3. as its foundation, a clear code of values and ethics fundamental to the ethical health of the service (PSC, 2015: 8-9).

#### **4.3.1 Classification and Traditional Notion of the Public Service of Ghana**

The public service of Ghana has been classified into various forms. For instance, Boachie-Danquah (2004) classified the Public Service into three forms namely:

1. Civil Service;
2. State Owned Enterprises (SOEs); and
3. The Hybrid Sector.

While (Ayee, 2008) has categorized the public service into four forms namely:

1. Public Services;
2. Regulatory Agencies;
3. Public Enterprises; and
4. Regional and Local Government Units (MMDAs).

### **4.3.2 The Traditional Notion of Public Service in Ghana**

The traditional notion of public service in Ghana is that it is often called “aban adwuma”, an Akan expression that means “Government work or public enterprise”. The perception in Ghana is that what belongs to the government or the general public literally belongs to no one, and so individuals do not care about the success or failure of “aban adwuma”. They merely see “aban adwuma” as distinct from a private enterprise which belongs to someone and must be taken care off. Thus, people perceive the public service as “being alien” to them and should not be taken seriously because it is associated with bureaucratic characteristics including; (a) a full-time salaried work; (b) formal relationships at the workplace; (c) a sort of mobility of labour; (d) and new social and economic class which are uncharacteristic of the Ghanaian society (Price, 1975a). People identify themselves with the public service because they have to keep their jobs and earn a living, beyond which there is little or no commitment and this lack of commitment leads to poor attitude to work, non-responsiveness, inefficiency, perversion of justice, and corruption. During the colonial era and even in recent years, it is considered a heinous crime to expose a fellow kinsman (a Ghanaian) whose actions or inactions in “aban adwuma” are seen to be unethical for two main reasons: in the first place, such a gesture is unsavoury and taken as disloyalty to a fellow compatriot. Secondly, the Ghanaian believes in protecting its own, and so exposing a colleague native to the law of an alien state. As such, people see unethical acts as normal way of conducting business in public organizations. This negative work attitude has therefore shown its ugly head in the public service since independence.

### **4.4 Historical Review of Public Service Ethics and Values in Ghana**

Prior to independence, the main source of rules and regulations for the public service emanated from the GOs which spelt out what a public officer could or could not do. At independence, the GOs were given further impetus with the introduction of the Criminal Code of 1960, which also documented the various behaviours that were punishable (applicable to all individuals domiciled in Ghana). Some of these behaviours included stealing, fraud, extortion, forgery, refusal to serve in the interest of the general public and corruption (Republic of Ghana, 1960). These regulations notwithstanding, traces of poor ethics, corruption and abuse of power in the public service existed in the colonial political era (van den Bersselaar and Decker, 2011). For instance, Colonial Governments in many countries including Africa did not develop the full capacity of the state and its machinery, but

only established the minimum bureaucratic capacity to help maintain law and order and also facilitate resource extraction (Kingsley, 1963; Gyimah-Boadi, 2004) and as a result, corruption and abuse of power were rife in British colonial West Africa. These unethical acts were perpetuated by both Africans and the colonial residents, using the confusing multiplicity of norms to their private gain (van den Bersselaar and Decker, 2011; LeVine, 1975). The colonial government while frustrated at the high rate of corruption and other unethical behaviours did nothing to curb it. Van den Bersselaar and Decker (2011) have recorded how the interpreter of Keta (Henry Malm) was suspended because he was alleged to have accepted a bribe of £1 to interpret falsely. Similarly, a constable in the Preventive Service (Amadu Issalla) was also fined £5 as he had accepted £1 from Korkor Gbada as reward for non-performance of his duty. These incidents occurred in 1892 and 1941 respectively. The native Africans who helped the colonial administration to enforce the system of indirect rule in British West Africa were also guilty of corruption, abuse or unethical behaviours as well as the colonial administrators themselves. For instance, the Watson Commission (1948) that looked into the disturbances in the Gold Coast indicated that there were great abuses and these encouraged bribery and excessive charges. In the early 1950s, there were also reports of irregularities in the Public Works Department, the Post Office, and the Health departments of the government. This was further compounded by the Ghanaians who took over the administrative and technical grades from the British and other commonwealth countries. They wanted to emulate the opulent life styles of the British officials and this ushered Ghana into the state of corruption and other unethical behaviours. Thus, at independence, many African countries inherited an ineffective and under-resourced public service.

This was followed by the era dubbed the “golden age” of the public service of Ghana encompassing the period shortly before independence to the mid-1970s (Ayee, 2001; Stevens and Teggemann, 2004). Conditions were very favourable, and the public servants were well-trained, adequately remunerated and resourced, coupled with the small size of the service and security of tenure (Ayee, 2001). Permanence, anonymity and neutrality were virtues enjoyed by public servants. This is not without saying that unethical behaviours were not present; the commissions of enquiries that were set-up after 1966 reported that there were widespread corruption and other unethical behaviours not only among politicians but governmental and quasi-governmental agencies and corporations, in municipal and urban councils, and in the country’s universities as well. Meredith (2006) citing Arthur Lewis indicated that there were “vast pickings in bribes, state contracts, diversion of public funds to private uses, and

commissions of various sorts”. Oduro (1966) also recorded the systematic and endemic nature of corruption when he asserted that corruption pervades every life in Ghana. It can be found in high and low places; it is practised by public and judicial officers, professional men, labourers and even children....Corruption exists in spite of all the laws that have been passed to deal with it (Oduro, 1966: 18-20). Similarly, Price (1975b) has asserted that corruption in the public sector of Ghana is “pervasive and highly detrimental to developmental goals”. This is compounded by the fact that the past predilections of the public service are laziness, apathy and embezzlement (Killick, 2010: 370). The Justice Anin’s led Commission of Inquiry into bribery and corruption in Ghana (Republic of Ghana, 1974) further identified one hundred and sixty-two (162) separate activities where corruption and other unethical activities were practiced as a testament to this fact. The report enumerated among others, the following activities;

*Priests extracted gifts from bereaved families of non-church goers in exchange for burying the dead. Churches encourage the possession of material things instead of fighting corruption. Their demand for money has become insatiable. Rich people are given prominent seats and recognition at churches and functions irrespective of how they get their money. Devout members of no substance are belittled. The churches condemnation of corruption, fraud and greed, and not dishonesty is at best accommodating. The rich are idolized and worshipped and the poor are tempted to emulate their nefarious activities, thus perpetuating corruption in society. Other corrupt practices include employment and posting of teachers, certificate of contract work, issue of import and export permits, waiving or exemption of custom duties by custom officers, collusion of police with offenders, improper closure of police dockets, allocation of market stalls, granting of privileges to prisoners, court judgments by magistrates and judges, staff appointments, promotion and transfers and even mortuary attendants demand payment before releasing dead bodies to relatives, match fixing and others (Republic of Ghana, 1974: 104-111).*

25 years later, the Chairman of the above Commission alluded to the assertion that the facts presented in 1974 were as relevant in 1999 as it was in 1974 and that there is no sign of the practice abating (Anin, 1999). This was further corroborated by (Appau, 2015: 6) when he asserted that “nothing has indeed changed within the forty-one (41) years that this report has been in existence”. This point is further buttressed by the establishment of the many commissions of enquiry, special tribunals, criminal prosecutions as well as exposures in the media. For instance, apart from the Anin Commission (1974), other commissions included the Jiagge Commission (1969), Taylor Commission (1976), the Azu Crabbe Commission (1982) and recently the Judgement Debt Commission (2015) and the Commission set up to Investigate the Ghana Black Stars Failure in the World Cup (2014). These notwithstanding,

measures put in place over the years to stamp out unethical behaviours were largely ineffective as “they were narrowly construed and lacked a sound appreciation of the socio-legal, political and economic bases of corrupt conduct” (Attafuah, 1999: 2).

In the late 1970s and beyond, pay, skills, moral and values of the public service further dwindled (Stevens and Teggemann, 2004) as Ghana witnessed military interventions leading to the era of patronage and corruption. This coincided with the era of economic decline, which was attributed to “overstaffed and inefficient state enterprises, poor infrastructure and low producer prices” among other challenges (Ayee, 2001:3). The economic decline according to Ayee (2001:4) had debilitating impact on the public service including the following;

- a. *Lack of morale/motivation-incentives problems;*
- b. *Inability of major institutions involved in civil service management to provide policy guidance, direction and supervision to sectoral/departmental units;*
- c. *Over-centralization and over-concentration of powers and functions at the national level;*
- d. *Poor physical work environment and poor facilities;*
- e. *Excessive bureaucratization and red tape (e.g., of promotions and appointments to key posts);*
- f. *Lack of political direction and commitment leading to apathy and inertia;*
- g. *Serious deficiencies in training institutions and programmes;*
- h. *Obsolete and rigid rules and regulations resulting from an outdated Civil Service Act;*
- i. *Uncontrolled recruitment, particularly in the non-critical occupational grades, into the civil service, leading to an undesirable expansion in its size;*
- j. *Grossly inadequate low wages and narrow increment differentials, leading to the migration of competent staff to employment zones paying convertible currency;*
- k. *Acute understaffing in the senior and professional grades caused by the brain-drain;*
- l. *Inadequate legislative framework to support operations and functions of the civil service;*
- m. *Declining resources and imbalance between salary and non-wage outlays;*
- n. *Questionable security of tenure, anonymity and neutrality (Ayee, 2001:4)*

Thus, by the early 1980s, the public service of Ghana had experienced a serious loss of capacity with the mass exodus of professionals in search of greener pastures elsewhere. Those who remained also witnessed a decline in training policies and institutions as well as



pay levels. In order to augment their incomes, certain unethical behaviours started to manifest in the public service, these included moonlighting, abuse of travel allowance, existence of ghost names on payrolls, employees seeking project work with donor salary supplements, parastatal board sitting allowances, and director's advances all the way to outright fraud, payroll fraud and corruption (Stevens and Teggemann, 2004) and bureaucratic mismanagement (Ayee, 2001). The massive bribery, corruption and other forms of unethical behaviours in the public service "became a way of life and was accepted as a means of getting by, earning a living, obtaining a service or avoiding hassle" (Atuobi, 2007: 8; Meredith, 2006).

This unethical situation prior to 1992 may have influenced the framers of the Fourth Republican Constitution of 1992 to take decisive steps in ameliorating these unethical and corrupt behaviours. Chapters 18 and 24 specifically on the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and Code of Conduct for Public Officers respectively were attempts meant to reduce unethical behaviours and corruption. The code for instance, prescribes the ethical guidelines for all public servants, including the avoidance of conflicts of interest, illicit enrichment, other improper conduct and the declaration of assets by public officials before and after the expiration of their tenure of office. Furthermore, the 1992 Constitution granted powers to the Auditor General (Article 187) and Parliament (Article 103) to play the "watch dog" role in protecting the public purse where a greater chunk of unethical behaviours occurred. In addition, the central management agencies (CMAs), including the PSC, Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS) and National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) whose responsibility was to provide leadership in the executive arm of government, were tasked to provide ethical guidance for all the other public service agencies. Thus, they were empowered to prepare their individual codes of conduct derived from the values of the 1992 constitution. This led the OHCS to come out with the Code of Conduct for the Ghana Civil Service in 1999. The PSC has also come out with a code of conduct for the employees of the Commission (PSC, 2015) and a general code for all public service organizations is in the offing. Besides the codes, the public Service also operates according to rules, regulations, directives, guidelines, and administrative instructions which are provided in various forms including Parliamentary Acts, Administrative Manuals, policy documents and circular letters.

#### **4.5 Existence of Codes of Conduct in Ghana's Public Service Organization**

Ethical behaviour is deemed very crucial in the public service of Ghana because the actions of public servants directly affect the lives of the general public and consequently the confidence that the general public reposes on the Government. Thus, the Ghanaian public, “demands high standards of behaviour and ethical conduct from the people entrusted with this responsibility” (PSC, 2015: 18). Under the 1992 Republican Constitution, attempts were made to inculcate ethics not only to public service organizations but all those in public service. The OHCS was the first institution to champion this in 1999. Subsequently, all public service organizations followed suit. The civil service code of conduct encouraged members to pursue the values of leadership, selflessness, competence, integrity, impartiality, fairness and honesty in matters affecting their work and status in society (Republic of Ghana, 1999: 6) in line with The Nolan Committee Report of 1995 in the United Kingdom. They were admonished to avoid acts which contravened any enactment of the civil service, prejudicial to the efficient conduct of the service, failure to perform their mandatory duties and any other act/omission or commission that brought the service to disrepute (Republic of Ghana, 1999). As an additional measure, all public servants in the performance of their duties are expected to obey the laws of Ghana, and failure to do so, make them liable to constitutional, criminal and civil prosecutions.

Survey of the public service organizations revealed that employees were aware of the existence of codes of conduct. For instance, all employees interviewed in GES categorically indicated that GES has “Conditions and Scheme of Service and Code of Professional Conduct with the core values of “leadership, selflessness, comporment, integrity, impartiality, fairness and honesty in matters affecting work and status of the profession” (GES, 2000: 65). Most employees of GHS were also aware of the existence of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures which came into effect in 2003 with the core values of client-centeredness, staff-centeredness, professionalism, team-work, innovation and discipline, excellence and integrity (GHS 2003). These codes were carved out of the civil service code of conduct to meet the specific objectives of the concerned public service organization. Despite the existence of these codes, employees of the two organizations had mixed reactions on how they got to know about their existence. For instance, employees of GES indicated that they knew about the existence of the code of professional conduct on appointment to the service, while others were of the view that it has been part of their training curriculum in college. They went on to say that employees are given copies of the Scheme of

Service and Codes of Professional Conduct and the content is again reiterated in meetings, workshops, in-service training and orientations organized by the administrative hierarchy and the various unions (GNAT, NAGRAT, CCT-Ghana and TEWU) but the main challenge is that some employees do not painstakingly read the Scheme of Service to know its contents and as such frequently fall foul to the law. The Code of Professional Conduct, according to the framers, is not a catalogue of offences to curtail employees' freedoms but to "ensure that the conditions for effective teaching and learning are created and maintained" as well as shoring public confidence in teachers as professionals entrusted with the over-all upbringing of children (GES, 2000: 63). On the part of GHS, despite most employees being aware of the existence of the code of conduct and disciplinary procedures through induction, in-service training and other refresher courses, some respondents said they had never seen copies of the code, while others complained the codes were in existence, but you will only get copies when you go to the head office. One respondent quipped that though he had worked with GHS for close to 20 years, he only got to see a copy when he was transferred to the head office. This was corroborated by two other respondents who admitted that they had never seen a copy of the codes, though they have been working with GHS over the last five years. This may be as a result of the over 18 professions working under GHS, some professions may be unintentionally overlooked. To the framers of the code of conduct and disciplinary procedures, the code serves as a guide to all managers and employees at the respective levels of the service in their relations and dealings with patients, clients, fellow employees and the general public. It also addresses pertinent issues relating to general administrative rules and regulations (GHS, 2003: 12).

#### **4.6 The Role and Values of the Public Service**

The public service over the years has played a significant role in the socio-economic growth as well as progress and stability in Ghana. It has formulated and implemented national and international policies of successive governments and served as the administrative machinery of the state. Further, it also supported societal equity by providing certain essential services to satisfy the needs of the citizenry. It has also facilitated the growth of the private sector by providing an enabling environment for development. In addition, the public service has brought the state closer to the citizenry by forming tangible links between the government and the people. It again ensures continuity and stability during political and administrative change of governments by holding the nation together before the incoming government. The

public service helps to fulfil the mandate of the ruling government by serving and providing the requisite developmental needs of the country in areas such as health, water, shelter, revenue generation, law and order, regulatory services, education, social welfare, transportation, environment and physical infrastructure (Kannae 2015; Katstriku, 2016). Besides, the public service is supposed to ensure the equitable distribution of national resources to enhance the quality of life of its citizenry (PSC, 2015). The public service is also responsible for the proper custody, safety and integrity of government records, properties and stores until they are of no use to the state; serving as a repertoire of the country's history and legacy.

In the performance of these functions, public servants are enjoined to abide by the ethics of their respective professions and these include:

- a. *servicing with competence, excellence, efficiency, objectivity and impartiality;*
- b. *acting at all times in such a manner as to uphold the public trust;*
- c. *demonstrating respect, fairness and courtesy in dealing with both citizens and fellow public servants;*
- d. *striving to ensure that the value of transparency is upheld, while respecting the duties and requirements of confidentiality;*
- e. *performing duties and arranging his/her private affairs so that public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of government are conserved and enhanced;*
- f. *being politically impartial and neutral in his/her activities and in the discharge of his/her duties;*
- g. *treating property and other resources entrusted to him/her economically, expeditiously and prudently;*
- h. *using information which becomes known to him or her, through official duties, solely in the public interest;*
- i. *being polite and helpful when communicating with people;*
- j. *being respectful, responsive and conscientious; and*
- k. *having the courage to oppose injustice (Katsriku, 2016: PSC 2015).*

Following from these, it could be seen that the public service ensues the values of permanence, continuity, loyalty, impartiality, apolitical, non-discriminatory, integrity, anonymity, meritocracy, professionalism, customer sensitivity, integrity and accountability (PSC, 2015; Kumasey et al., 2017a), which constitute the '*spirit de corps*' of the Service's performance. Thus, the public servant is required to display honesty and integrity, diligence,

respect and courtesy, obedience to the laws of Ghana and other directives, confidentiality, avoiding conflict of interest, judicious use of resources and truthfulness (PSC, 2015: 104).

Despite the existence of these professional ethics and values, the negative dents that triggered the earlier reforms in the public service of Ghana still exist. For instance, the attitudes of most public servants are appalling, disrespectful, irritating, frustrating and desperate (Ohemeng, 2010; Kumasey et al., 2017a) as they are perceived as corrupt, not commitment to their duties, lazy and largely exhibiting unprofessional conduct in their dealings with clients (Aryee, 2001; Owusu, 2006; OHSC, 2005).

#### **4.7 Historical Review of Workplace Spirituality in Ghana**

Ghana is considered a 'religious country' and this is reflected in 96% of the population professing to be religious (GSS, 2012). Ghanaians practice religion from cradle to grave (Sarpong, 1994) as is reflected in their daily life styles, whether rural or urban dwellers as well as those in private and public organizations. Public events begin and end with prayers and it is not uncommon to see meetings in public organizations begin and end with prayers (Atiemo, 2010). This has earned Ghana the titled 'a spiritual nation'. Religion forms the core of spirituality in Ghana, but there is a distinction between spirituality and religion as discussed in section 2.4.3 in chapter two. Spirituality connotes a non-religious meaning which is inherent in human beings and links them to a higher being. Spirituality is about interconnectedness, partnership, feeling of belongingness to a community/group. The Ghanaian belief in spirituality is manifested in the traditional beliefs, customs and practices; the extended family system, communalism and the emergence of Christianity, Islam and other religions. Traditionally, adhering to accepted customs, beliefs and practices determined acceptable behaviour or morality. The traditional beliefs and practices have a strong link with the extended family system, which is seen as the building block of any organization in Ghana and African as a whole. The extended family socializes the individual by providing him with a sense of security, belonging, aspirations, and mental stability. The family therefore regulates the individual's behavioural system and orientation, which includes a strong belief in relation to nature and supernatural beings and important connections between the individual and his ancestors. Further, Ghanaians are noted to be communal beings, a reflection of the extended family system and therefore shun individualism. It is not uncommon to see Ghanaians treating strangers with care and compassion, as if they were part of them. Thus, this belief in communalism is likened to the concept of 'ubuntu' which means

a person is a person as a result of others or simply put I am because we are (Iwowo, 2015). A shared value of relationship, reconciliation, conformity, unity, empathy, compassion, respect, and collective responsibility is built as a result (Iwowo, 2015: 413). Further, solidarity, mutuality, generosity and commitment to the community wellbeing are cherished and upheld (Wambura Ngunjiri, 2010: 764).. These portray some traits of spirituality which are part and parcel of the communal spirit of the Ghanaian. Again, the African, and for that matter the Ghanaian, is believed to be made up of both physical and non-physical components which link him to spiritual entities such as God, the deities and the ancestors (Atiemo, 2010). The belief in these spiritual beings required some form of responsibility on the part of man. Caring for each other, respecting the elderly, generosity and protecting the environment (sacred places) were some of the responsibilities. Failure to adhere to these rules or responsibilities was met with grave sanctions not only to the individual but the family as a whole which could include ostracism. Spirituality and religion were held in high esteem before the advent of Islam, Christianity, independence and the public service organizations in Ghana. Ghanaians as a people were spiritual “concerned with the meaning of life and what they find meaningful” (Mamman and Zakaria, 2016: 7).

With the introduction of public administration in Ghana, Ghanaians were recruited to serve in various capacities and they went into public service with these beliefs. Though the public service was a bureaucratic organization with impersonality, red tapes, rationality, rules and regulations among other characteristics, the Ghanaian belief in traditionalism and communalism became part and parcel of the service. Though this believe has declined as a result of colonialism, Islam, Christianity, modernity, urbanization, education, science and technology which contested some aspects of the Ghanaian culture as lacking scientific bases. It does not mean that all the spiritual and religious beliefs were contested, some still hold central place in public behaviour and has been described as the “resilience of traditional conception of well-being” (Assimeng, 1995: 33). The Ghanaian public servant therefore beliefs in transcendence, interconnectedness or a sense of belonging/community and also finds meaning and purpose in work as discussed under the dimensions of work in chapter two.

#### **4.8 Management of Conduct in the Public Service**

Each public service organization has the responsibility to manage the conduct of its employees. Thus, MDAs and MMDAs have the responsibility to either institute preventive measures or provide oversight mechanisms to combat unethical behaviour. In reality most of the MDAs and MMDAs have developed policies/strategies to combat unethical behaviours which are accompanied with sanctions for offenders. The sanctions vary from verbal warning, query or reprimand (recorded in the personal file of the offender), to suspension, demotion (in-grade and seniority) and outright dismissal from the service. In addition, financial management controls, regular external audits and disclosure of assets by officials at specified intervals have been put in place to reduce unethical behaviours. Ethical behaviour is very critical in the public service of Ghana. Chapter 24 of the 1992 constitution enjoins public officials to avoid unethical behaviour and conduct such as conflict of interest, illicit enrichment and other improper conduct. Public servants exercise authority on behalf of the employer and manage significant financial and other resources on behalf of the employer. However, the main problem in the management of conduct in the public service is inadequate information of organizational policies including codes of conduct, lack of adequate supervision of subordinates and the effective implementation of these policies by the respective MDAs and MMDAs.

#### **4.9 Establishment of Ministries and Departments**

Section 11 of the PNDC Law 327 (1993) provides for the creation of ministries and departments within the public service of Ghana. Any ministry established under this law for a specific sector shall be the highest organization for the sector (PNDCL 327:8). The ministry consists of departments and divisions charged with policy making functions. Accordingly, Section 13 of the PNDL law 327 specifies the functions of a ministry as to: initiate and formulate policies taking into account the needs and aspirations of the people; undertake development planning in consultation with the NDPC; and co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the performance of the sector and decentralized departments (PNDCL. 327:9).

To accelerate national development, ministries set the guiding principles for organizations to follow. Each ministry has its own mandate but follows uniformity in the bureaucratic structure provided under Section 12(1) of the Law. This establishes the following directorates or divisions in each Ministry:

- i. General Administration and Finance Division (Directorate);
- ii. Planning, Budgeting, Co-ordination, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (Directorate);
- iii. Training and Human Resources Development Division (Directorate); and
- iv. Research, Statistics, Public Relations and Information Division (Directorate).

These directorates have the responsibilities of providing administrative support for the political head of the Ministry and also coordinating and monitoring programmes of the Ministry (PNDCL 327, Section 13 (2)). Below the Ministries are Departments which are created under this Act with the responsibility of performing the functions for which it was created.

#### **4.10 Ghana Health Service (GHS)**

The Ghana Health Service (GHS) is a Public Service body established under Act 525 of 1996 as required by the 1992 Constitution. It is an autonomous Executive Agency responsible for the implementation of national policies under the control of the Minister for Health through the Ghana Health Service Council. The GHS continues to receive public funds and thus remains within the public sector. However, its employees will no longer be part of the civil service, and GHS managers will no longer be required to follow all civil service rules and procedures. The independence of the GHS is designed primarily to ensure that staffs have a greater degree of managerial flexibility to carry out their responsibilities, than would be possible if they remained wholly within the civil service. Ghana Health Service does not include Teaching Hospitals, Private and Mission Hospitals.

The GHS has 3 main objectives and these are to:

1. Implement approved national policies for health delivery in the country;
2. Increase access to good quality health services; and
3. Manage prudently resources available for the provision of the health services (GHS, 2003).

The mandate of GHS is to provide and prudently manage comprehensive and accessible health service directly or contracting out to other agencies with special emphasis on primary health care at regional, district and sub-district levels in accordance with approved national policies. In this direction, the GHS performs the following functions:



1. Develop appropriate strategies and set technical guidelines to achieve national policy goals/objectives;
2. Undertake management and administration of the overall health resources within the service;
3. Promote healthy mode of living and good health habits by people;
4. Establish effective mechanism for disease surveillance, prevention and control;
5. Determine charges for health services with the approval of the Minister of Health;
6. Provide in-service training and continuing education; and
7. Perform any other functions relevant to the promotion, protection and restoration of health (GHS, 2003).

#### **4.10.1 Guiding Principles of Ghana Health Service**

The GHS as a public service organization has the vision of providing quality and humane health service to all Ghanaians in order to reduce the health/disease burdens of the country. In line with this, it has set out its own core values and guiding principles and this include the following:

1. Delivering quality health service in a humane and equitable manner within the resources of the country;
2. Upholding the dignity and interest of clients at all times;
3. Upholding the dignity and welfare of all staff and service providers;
4. Adhering strictly to the provisions of the Patient's Charter;
5. Exhibiting high levels of professionalism;
6. Promoting the corporate image of the service;
7. Demonstrating high sense of efficiency, integrity, transparency and dedication to duty;
8. Ensuring high degree of justice, fairness and accountability within the laws of the land;
9. Exhibiting competent and effective leadership at all times;
10. Avoiding discrimination against patients, clients and employees on the grounds of the nature of illness, political affiliation, occupation, disability, culture, ethnicity, language, race, age, gender, religion etc. in the performance of duties (GHS, 2003: 15).

#### **4.11 Ghana Education Service (GES)**

The Ghana Education Service was established in 1974 and it is currently viewed as one of the public service organizations in Ghana (Republic of Ghana, 1992; 1995). The Service according to GES Act 506 comprises of personnel of GES existing immediately before the coming into force of the Act; teachers and non-teaching supporting personnel in pre-tertiary educational institutions in the public system; managers of educational units and their supporting staff; persons holding posts created as Ghana Education Service posts by or under any enactment; and other persons that may be employed for the Service (Republic of Ghana, 1995: 2). The GES is expected to perform the following functions:

1. Responsible for the implementation of approved national policies and programmes relating to pre-tertiary education and this include:
  - a. to provide and oversee basic education, senior secondary education, technical education and special education;
  - b. to register, supervise and inspect private pre-tertiary educational institutions;
  - c. to submit to the Minister recommendations for educational policies and programmes;
  - d. to promote the efficiency and the full development of talent among its members;
  - e. to register teachers and keep an up-to-date register of all teachers in the public system;
  - f. to carry out such other functions as are incidental to the attainment of the functions specified above; and
  - g. to maintain professional standards and the conduct of its personnel (Republic of Ghana, 1995: 2-3).

The coming into existence of GES Act 778 (Republic of Ghana, 2008) brought some changes to the Structure of GES but maintaining its core mandate.

As indicated in chapter one, the two organizations were chosen because of their size. In total, the two organizations employ about half the total number of public servants in Ghana. Besides, they are organizations that have the largest client base in Ghana because of the essential services they provide. In view of the nature of the services they provide, they are always the organizations where there are large perceptions of ethical challenges in their operations. This study therefore chose them as the sampled population to explore the

challenges confronting public service ethics and values in Ghana and whether spirituality has a role in reducing the perceived unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana.

#### **4.12 Chapter Conclusion**

The chapter set the tone for the study by first delving into the socio-cultural and economic context of Ghana and went further to trace unethical behaviours in the public service prior to Ghana obtaining independence. In addition, the chapter traces the values of the traditional Ghanaian society (including spirituality) to establish the fact that it could help to reduce unethical behaviours, however, as a result of the economic decline, the negative impact of the same traditional values coupled with the negative connotation of the Ghanaian Public Service; the situation has not witnessed any significant change. The chapter answered the first research objective by iterating the presences of rules and regulations, nonetheless, unethical conducts have persisted in the Service to date. Getting employment in the public service is a means of getting by, earning a living, obtaining a service or avoiding hassle. This implies the cherished values of permanence, continuity, loyalty, impartiality, apolitical, integrity, anonymity, meritocracy, professionalism, customer sensitivity, integrity and accountability have often times been thrown to the doldrums.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DEVIATIONS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF GHANA**

*“Human nature is disposed to acquire public money for private gain” (Kautilya cited in Ma and Ni, 2008: 121)*

#### **5.0 Chapter Introduction**

This chapter addresses the results of the study relating to the second research objective which sought to explore whether there are deviations from the ethical standards and values of Ghana’s public service, and if there are, what kind(s) of deviations are there. Specifically, the chapter focuses on the causes, forms and impacts of these unethical/deviant behaviours. The chapter begins by examining the causes of these deviations as distilled from the field research and identified low remuneration, poor leadership, extended family system, organizational culture, working environment, age, sex and gender of employees and the Ghanaian attitude of get-rich-quick as the main causes of unethical behaviours. In addition, the chapter presents the forms in which these deviations take. In this regard, the following were identified; fraud and abuse of resources, moonlighting, destroying, altering or falsification of records, waste and misuse of official time, not obliged to report organizational wrong-doing, entering into amorous relationships, sexual harassment, payroll irregularities, cash and procurement irregularities, pilfering and other subtle abuses. The third subsection looks at the consequences of these deviations not only on the individual organization but the entire public service (Government) and identified lateness, absenteeism and presenteeism, their negative impact on the organization’s reputation, employees’ unwillingness to report unethical behaviours which affects efficiency and effectiveness leading to low level of employee commitment, recruitment and performance and retention of competent human resources. The overall impact is the huge cost to the organization. The subsequent sections explore these deviations in-depth.

#### **5.1 Causes of Unethical Behaviour in the Public Service of Ghana**

Literature on unethical behaviours has indicated many factors responsible for this state of affairs (Treviño et al., 2014; Christian and Ellis, 2011; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe, 2008; Harvey, 2006; Treviño et al., 2006; Appelbaum et al., 2005), the ensuing paragraphs elicited responses of employees of the public service of Ghana,

notably GES, GHS, PSC, CHRAJ and Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII). Many factors were identified as contributing to unethical behaviours among employees and the following are some of the reasons why public servants in Ghana indulge in such behaviours.

### **5.1.1 Poor Remuneration**

Poor remuneration was identified by the respondents as a major cause of unethical behaviour in Ghana. In response to the question on some of the causes of unethical behaviours facing employees of the public service, most respondents said low salaries/remuneration was the main cause of unethical behaviours. According to a respondent with GES, teachers are often told ‘their rewards are in heaven’, but they live on earth and face the harsh economic conditions like any other public servant. Their ‘take home’ pay is actually ‘unable to take them home’ due to its scanty nature and other allowances that are due them are either denied them or delayed, yet they have to survive, meet other responsibilities as well as take care of their families. The salaries and conditions of service in GHS are not far from the above. One respondent averred that:

*“the salaries and conditions of service in GHS is very poor and this is one of the demotivating factors for employees to give off their best and consequently leading to the many infractions being confronted by the service”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript, 018).

In recent months, the soaring prices of petroleum products coupled with increases in the prices of utilities in Ghana, have virtually affected all aspects of the economy resulting in increased prices of goods and services. The respondents said this makes it very difficult to meet their basic needs without resorting to ‘other ways’ of making money to supplement their incomes. This led some respondents in GES to suggest that the teaching profession is no longer financially rewarding thereby deterring prospective individuals into it and those who finally enter into the teaching profession, see it as a ‘stepping stone’ to eventually achieve their cherished dreams elsewhere (Agezo, 2010). This is equally true of GHS and all the Public Service organizations and accounting for why employees in the public service are moving to private organisations and NGO’s where the remuneration is far better. Another respondent opined that:

*“the poor remuneration has the negative impact of demotivating employees, reducing their level of commitment, increasing turn over, affecting work performance and serving as a catalyst to engage in deviant behaviours”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 036).

### 5.1.2 Poor Leadership

The type of leadership in an organization determines the ethicality of the organization. In every organization, it is the responsibility of leadership to set the moral tone by communicating issues of integrity, fairness and trustworthiness, emphasizing ethical standards, rewarding and supporting employees' ethical behaviour as well as serving as ethical role models for their subordinates. This however, is lacking in the public service of Ghana. There appears to be poor leadership according to most of the respondents. In recent times, Kastriku (2015: 4) has opined that "as leaders, we are failing our country in many ways". She went on to bemoan that as leaders, we are not committed to making sure that the various mandates of our agencies are achieved in an effective and efficient manner (Katsriku, 2015). This view was corroborated by most of the respondents in the in-depth interviews. For instance, one respondent reiterated that the onus of ethics rest on the leadership of the organization which he likened to a fish; 'when a fish is getting rotten, it starts from the head' implying 'leadership is the cause of unethical behaviours and all other effects are as a result of leadership'. What leaders say should reflect in what they do and not say one thing and do a different thing. Leaders who prescribe hard-work must themselves be seen to be hard-working and those who want to reduce corruption must also set examples by being incorruptible. Unfortunately, this is not the case; the fall in the standards of ethical behaviour in the public service is partly due to bad examples, and leadership which has been less honest and sincere. According to another respondent, most leaders believe in the proverbial saying that '*do what I say and not what I do*' implying they expect their subordinates to behave ethically while they are not. Some, it is believed, also condone and connive with subordinates to commit unethical behaviours and so when they see subordinates in similar acts, they are unable to bring them to order. One respondent quipped; "how can a male supervisor have amorous relationship with a female subordinate in the office and expect to bring her to order, if she persistently flouts organizational rules?" Other respondents also mentioned disclosures by committees of enquiries which have revealed the fallen standards of ethics because those expected to uphold them have themselves been guilty of such misconducts. One respondent asked a critical question:

*"How can a person in leadership position (say, Head of Department or Chief Director) enforce rules regarding the use of organizational resources like telephone, photocopying or vehicles, when he is himself is guilty of misusing the same facility?"* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 024).

He goes further to say that subordinate officers who are ordered by their superiors to use organizational resources to repair their private property need not fear diverting some of these resources for their personal use. Another respondent also remarked “how can a superior officer ask an accounts clerk to give him money from the vault without any approval or signing for that amount and expecting the account clerk not to do same when he/she is financially handicapped”? In another instance, one respondent remarked that “management have become dictators because they do not consult employees before taking decisions that go a long way to affect employees”. For instance, they issue queries to subordinates and have them entered into their files without giving them the opportunities to explain themselves.

### **5.1.3 Extended Family System**

Another identified cause of unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana is the demands from the extended family where everybody is ‘each other’s keeper’. This has been recognized as forming part of the ecology of public administration in Africa. The Ghanaian traditional community believes and thrives on the extended family system and this is closely knit with the system of inheritance whether it is patrilineal or matrilineal (both forms of inheritance are practised in Ghana). The extended family system goes beyond the nucleus family of father, mother and children to include cousins, nieces, nephews, uncles, aunts, grandparents, grandchildren and at times the entire community or even people who belong to the same ethnic group. Traditionally, the extended family and lineage group operated as a social welfare system in which each member has the obligation to help others and the right to receive assistance from it. The rich, educated and more successful family members were expected to share their wealth with poorer relatives and in return gained solidarity, security, protection and services that poor relatives could offer (a form of social capital). Individuals in recent times still rely highly on family members and relatives for help to pay for health services, education, to find jobs and/or raise capital for business, to take care of the aged, donate towards community improvement projects amongst others. This has been compounded by the high cost of discharging some social obligations like performing marriage and funeral rites in order to gain social recognition within their respective communities. Thus family members, who are opportune to secure jobs in the public service, have the responsibility of not only taking care of their nucleus family but the extended ones as well. They believe that the public service belongs to “no one” and as it behoves on successful family members to take care of their kin and kindred, they use the benevolent standards of the traditional ethical code (which is particularistic) to indulge in unethical

behaviours by breaking the rules, embezzling funds, disregarding the merit system and rather adopting nepotism and favouritism in order to satisfy the needs of the extended family. In some instances, the public official tries to create jobs that are non-existent for family members just to relieve themselves from these family pressures with the rationale that, by empowering them (through employment), they will also reduce their responsibility/burden.

On the other hand, it is considered hard-hearted, wicked, ungrateful or inconsiderate if public servants (especially those in higher positions) are unable to meet the needs of the extended family. People who are seen as not helping to provide the needs of their kin are despised and those who are able to provide for their kindred are seen as heroes (and deserving recognition). This therefore puts pressure on public officials to use either fair or foul means to shoulder these responsibilities as they would one day retire and go back to live with the same people they have not helped during their active days in the service. According to some respondents, a public servant with his meagre income is expected to pay fees of his nieces and nephews, contribute to projects in his/her village, and donate at funerals, weddings, harvests and out-dooring ceremonies. If he/she refuses, he/she is accused of being insensitive to the plight of his/her people. The notion is that public servants/officials are well paid and any excuse given is unacceptable. Other respondents further alluded to the fact that reports of committees show that not many people have been able to resist this and has led some staff members to indulge in unethical behaviours to satisfy the whims and caprices of their family members in terms of employment and the award of contracts or even admissions to schools. According to one respondent, some senior officers go beyond the extended family system to surround themselves with subordinates hailing from the same community. So, upon assuming office, they make the conscious effort of transferring employees who hail from their towns or regions to themselves as a sign of solidarity and protection in their new office (a form of social capital). Another respondent who happened to be the HR officer of one of the organizations said in replacing separated staff for instance, people who are recommended for employment, are not those who eventually get it based on merit but “those who have affiliations with the boss and in most cases a kinsman”.

#### **5.1.4 Working Environment**

Closely related to the organizational culture is the work environment, i.e., the surrounding conditions within which public servants operate. Respondents identified the working environment as another cause of unethical behaviour in public organizations. Some respondents were of the view that in departments/units where employees have no tools or



machines such as computers, photocopying, telephone facilities, poor ventilation and no air conditioners to work with, where the furniture is too outmoded, and there is poor maintenance culture, where employees do not have offices, then they would not be content with their working environment and this would be a recipe for unethical behaviours. For instance, one respondent bemoans how:

*“as a lawyer for the entire organization [name omitted], I don’t have a computer to work with...everything that I do, memos, letters and communications are from my own resources”*(Fieldwork Interview Transcript, 019).

Another respondent did remark:

*“why should someone working with Ghana Health Service and still buy his own medication but while doing locum at Nyaho (a private hospital in Accra, Ghana), Nyaho takes care of my medical bills...In situations where there are unclear organizational responsibilities, low organizational loyalty, no recognition for excellent job performance, perceived organizational inequities, autocratic management styles and no appropriate reward for ethical behaviour then employees are not likely to give off their best but would work haphazardly including committing unacceptable acts”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript, 023).

In these situations, employees do not feel motivated to go to work and even if they do, they work half-heartedly, thinking of somewhere else to go. This is echoed by Osei (2006) that a percentage of teachers (and all public servants) in Ghana are unhappy because of unfavourable working conditions. Other respondents said in situations where there is fear, intimidation, sabotage and disrespect, then employees are not encouraged to give off their best. They mentioned instances that they were intimidated and sabotaged especially in relation to promotion. To one respondent in this situation, they feel demoralized and this makes them resort to some unethical practices as a form of retaliation. The condition under which employees work therefore determines how ethical the employees would be. The extent to which employees can operate effectively and efficiently is greatly influenced by the structures within which they operate. Further, another respondent remarked that “...*there are no systems*” in the public service of Ghana that is why people do not conform to rules, “...*if there are systems, people will conform*” [Fieldwork Interview Transcript, 019].

### **5.1.5 Age, Sex and Gender of Employees**

In addition to the aforementioned factors, one of the causes of unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana as identified by the survey is the age, sex and gender of the employee. The age factor is of immense importance because it is believed by some

respondents that younger employees tend to indulge in unethical practices more than their older counterparts. One Director remarks:

*“younger employees indulged more in unethical practices than their older colleagues. This is so because they are seen to be more adventurous, trying to ‘out do’ people and be seen as ‘smart’ and acquire as much wealth as early as possible”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 021).

The aged or elderly on the other hand according to one respondent, are more ethical because of the fact that they will soon be on retirement:

*“they behave ethically in order not to taint their hard earned reputation and also enjoy their end of service gratuities (pension)”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript, 011).

There were however, some divergent views as well. Some respondents were of the opinion that it is rather the elderly; who were about to go on retirement, who indulged most in unethical behaviours because in one’s remark:

*“they want to grab everything by hook or crook, so they can enjoy their booty after retiring from the service”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript, 018).

An instance was identified where a senior public servant who six months to retirement with the collusion of the HR officers, used the ‘window of replacement’ to recruit ‘more than necessary people’ into the organization. In this situation, the newly recruited employees were made to pay various sums of money before they received their appointment letters. The sex/gender of the employee also determines how ethical the employee is. According to some respondents, women are seen to be more ethical than their male counterparts. This is so because women are always careful, care about what people say about them, do not always want their hard-earned reputation to be dented, they are less adventurous and always want to play the motherly role by being fair. Their male counterparts are on the contrary adventurous and do find themselves committing unethical acts. This point is further corroborated by the findings of the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII, 2014).

### **5.1.6 Get-Rich-Quick Attitude of Ghanaians**

The Ghanaian attitude of get-rich-quick was also cited as one of the causes of unethical behaviour in the public service of Ghana. In the view of one respondent, Ghanaians are perceived as being materialistic and acquisitive and as such when they enter into politics, business or public service; all avenues are explored to acquire these materialistic items. He continues that:

*“it is the view of many Ghanaians to live a life style far beyond that of their parents or grandparents and this is manifested in their extravagant and opulent dressings, display of wealth during traditional ceremonies like out-dooring/naming, weddings, funerals and birthday parties as well as the number of buildings and/or cars one has acquired to raise not only the status of the individual public servant but that of his/her family as well”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 37).

According to another respondent, most people feel the public service is a “money making machine” where employees easily become rich. All avenues are therefore explored to gain wealth through fair or foul means by grasping all that comes ones way. Some respondents attributed this attitude to the inability of parents, family members and religious leaders to question the sudden source of wealth of their children and wards but hold them in high esteem coupled with a fall in morals and values, which have negatively influenced behaviours in public organizations and negated established moral and ethical standards of hard work, sacrifice, dedication to work, commitment and honesty in these organizations. Pressure from friends and relatives to get rich quickly through whatever means is another contributing factor. Greed, indiscipline, disrespect have all become the order of the day, opening avenues for bribery, fraud, stealing and other deviant acts. The ideologies which therefore set the acceptable principles of bureaucratic organizations in the past have been thrown into the doldrums’ resulting in the inability of ethical decision-making in the public service.

## **5.2 Forms of Unethical Behaviours in the Public Service of Ghana**

This section presents the forms of unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana. The analysis of the data relating to this objective and research question followed several themes identified in the course of this research. These themes include fraud and abuse of organizational resources, moonlighting, destroying and falsification of records, accepting and giving of gifts, waste and misuse of official time, not duty-bound to report organizational wrong doing, entering into amorous relationships, sexual harassment, payroll, cash, procurement and rent irregularities as well as pilfering. Although these were the dominant themes, there were traces of other themes not considered significant enough to stand alone. The predominant themes representing the general situation in the Public service of Ghana are discussed successively.

### 5.2.1 Fraud and Abuse of Organizational Resources

The issue of fraud and abuse of organizational property came up in the course of the interviews. This form of unethical behaviour is being committed by all categories of employees in the public service in diverse ways. One of the directors reiterates this as follows:

*“As we are talking now, we have tonnes of accountants and account clerks who are just collecting Ghana Health Service money and putting in their pocket”*  
(Fieldwork Interview Transcript, 019).

Again, the issue of fraud could be seen in the embezzlement of funds of unions in the public service. Some respondents were quick to mention the embezzlement of ninety-two-thousand, three-hundred and fifty-two cedis, sixty-seven pesewas (GHS 92,352.67, about 27,000 US dollars) belonging to Ghana Health Service Workers Union by its executives and this later became headlines in the media (*May 18, 2016; Ghana News*). In another development, it was revealed that two employees of GHS embezzled up to five hundred million cedis meant for logistics. Further, it was revealed that most of the “maintenance employees” when asked to repair a fault, request for more materials than what is actually required for the job. This practice is also not uncommon among some clerical staff especially with the use of stationery.

Another form of abuse and fraud identified by the survey was the issue of overtime. Some of the respondents interviewed said that many employees do not turn up for overtime and yet make claims for overtime payment. Others make claims far in excess of what is due them. The explanation given is that should they refuse to endorse it, they are seen as ‘devils’ before their subordinates. There is also the abuse of organizational property for personal/private gain. Respondents identified the use of facilities and resources such as vehicles, stationery, telephone and photocopying for personal gain. One respondent for instance said it was common to see employees of public service organizations use official vehicles to pick and drop-off (alight) their children and wards at schools or wives to the market as well as the hairdressing salon. Another respondent also claimed that official vehicles are sent home after the close of work instead of being parked within the premises of the organization. Some other respondents observed that it was very common to see government vehicles being driven in villages during weekends. These practices are fraudulent and waste of hard earned resources of the state.

### 5.2.2 Moonlighting

Moonlighting is a situation where an employee takes on another job besides his/her main employment (Betts 2006). This canker is very prominent in the public service of Ghana and it cuts across all categories of employees. Teachers are engaged in organizing ‘extra classes’, medical practitioners especially doctors and senior nurses are engaged in ‘locum’ or petty trading. One of the directors confirmed this when he averred thus:

*“It is an open secret in Ghana that employees of GHS embark on locum. Like I told you even though salaries appear on paper to be high, but the value in terms of market is low, that is true, so people are sometimes compelled to do one or two things to supplement their incomes”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No.014).

Engaging in moonlighting is quite exhausting, making public servants have divided attention and being physically burnout leading to their inability to perform their respective roles effectively. The tiredness leads to inefficiency, ineffectiveness and low quality of service to clients. Moonlighting according to respondents is mainly caused by the low remuneration as well as lack of motivation in the public service of Ghana. One of the respondents did say that “the main reason why they engage in locum is to supplement their income”. In an informal interaction, an employee of the public service in one of the districts indicated that due to the low salaries she receives, she is not motivated in any way to give off her best when she is attending to clients and that most of them have resorted to borrowing or employing ‘ways and means tactics’ to take monies from their clients. Another respondent quipped:

*“It is shameful that private organizations pay for the medical bills of their workers who we (health service personnel) take care of. But in health institutions, we pay our own medical bills. This goes contrary to the motto of GHS which states “your health our concern”. So, the question I always ask is ‘our health whose concern?’ Thus, the many infractions including stealing and finding alternative ways of generating extra income are as a result of the lack of concern for health service personnel”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 12).

Moonlighting can lead to situations of conflict of interest, especially when these employees are appointed to serve on boards and committees which take decisions affecting these organizations. Again, employees engaged in moonlighting would not always be available for consultation or counselling leading to absenteeism. However, this is contestable because absenteeism can result due to other justifiable reasons such as being stuck in traffic, dealing with an emergency situation or attending an obligatory social event. In addition to these, the employees would have to reschedule their services and in situations where it is a matter involving life and death, then your guess is as good as mine; precious lives would be lost. In

some situations, health workers, in particular, are unwilling to accept some shifts in their regular place of works (especially during weekends and public holidays) because when they go to where they do the locum, they will be paid double the amount expected. Thus, because of this financial reward, they decline doing their official work, thereby compromising the work ethics of their main employment as well as service delivery. Where it involves students, the inability to complete the syllabus or hurriedly going through it without the students grasping what is taught will be the order of the day leading to the delivery of poor and inefficient service quality.

### **5.2.3 Destroying, Altering or Falsification of Records**

The practice of forgery or falsification of documents in the public service is a common phenomenon and includes identity theft, forged certificates, falsification of age, forged cheques, ‘data theft’ amongst others. It is a common practice for individuals to present fake/falsified certificates to seek employment and admission into educational institutions in Ghana. In an interview with the PRO of GES, he did admit that GES is currently ‘fishing out’ individuals who have presented fake certificates and are working with the service. He reiterated that GES has started scrutinizing and validating the certificates of its employees and so far 186 teachers in two out of the ten regions of Ghana have fallen foul to the exercise by either using fake certificates or impersonation (*Daily Graphic, March 16, 2016*). The practice of age falsification in order to postpone the day of retirement is also wide-spread in the public service of Ghana according to one respondent. This enables public service employees to work more than the stipulated period of retirement thereby enjoying the perks and privileges of public service beyond the retirement age. There are also other instances where employees (in the teaching fraternity) have connived with fellow colleagues, students and parents of students to falsify records. This is confirmed by a speech delivered during Ghana’s Fiftieth (50<sup>th</sup>) Independence Celebration. In the speech, Professor Ivan Addae-Mensah (a former Vice Chancellor of University of Ghana) enumerated some forms of unethical behaviours in educational institutions as follows:

- *Teachers encouraging students to cheat in examinations, to the extent of even altering grades for students for payment either in cash or in kind;*
- *Teachers and administrators altering grades for students for considerations in cash or in kind; and*

- *Parents compromising educational authorities by tempting them with material considerations to favour their wards in various endeavours including admissions, examinations and even disobeying of school regulations with impunity” (Daily Graphic, November 17, 2007).*

Closely related to this is the perennial examination leakage in the various levels of educational institutions in Ghana. Furthermore, the practice of using a family member’s certificate to seek for jobs was also identified under forgery in the public service. ‘Beating the system’ has been a partial reason for one to engage in these behaviours. The overall impact of this act is ‘putting square pegs in round holes’ leading to inefficiency, ineffectiveness and low productivity.

#### **5.2.4 Gift Giving**

The issue of gift giving and acceptance according to some respondents can also lead to situations of conflict of interest depending on how one perceives the motive and subsequently unethical behaviour. In the African culture and Ghana for that matter, gifts are revered and viewed as sacred which portrays the giver as kind and appreciative (Yeboah-Assiamah et al., 2016). It presents a kind of goodwill on the part of the individual and failure to offer or accept gifts for service offered/rendered tend to cause many relationship challenges. Gift-giving is part of social solidarity in order to maintain peace and harmony. In most Ghanaian societies, it is customarily understood that when one is visiting an elderly person, a chief or a shrine, he/she goes with a gift as a sign of goodwill. Similarly, it is customarily upheld that gifts are not refused or rejected because that will be regarded an offence. Gifts could therefore be given or accepted provided there is no ulterior motive behind it, for instance, accepting gifts from one’s family members or close relations. This practice found its way into the public service of Ghana and became a fashion for public organizations to give gifts at the end-of-year in the form of hampers to sister organizations and other important stakeholders including employees as goodwill gesture and also receive gifts. However, this was banned by the government in 2013 because it was grossly abused, increased the government’s financial costs which were mostly unaccounted and encouraged bribery and corruption in the system. According to a respondent, despite the ban, gifts are given in subtle ways by prospective service providers. It is a common practice that when an influential person assumes office, service providers visit him/her with gifts to congratulate him/her and also announce their presence in the supply chain. During important traditional rites like naming, marriage, funerals/bereavement amongst others these service providers make sure they are present to give gifts which have the impact of influencing the judgement of the public official. The

respondent continued “in contemporary Ghana, there is nothing like ‘free gift’, it comes with some conditionality either knowingly or unknowingly to the recipient”. To other respondents, it serves as a basis for one to be able to make a request on a later date (investive corruption). People give gifts to public service employees initially without any condition, but later make their intentions known which is very difficult for the recipient of the gift to refuse. Some respondents said that this has made some employees in the public service indulge in unethical practices to see to it that this request is granted through fair or foul means. Many instances were cited including appointments, promotions, transfers and the award of contracts or procurements. There is therefore the general belief that employees accept gifts and this has the effect of influencing their decisions in one way or the other.

#### **5.2.5 Waste and Misuse of Official Time**

Another form of unethical behaviour confronting the public service of Ghana is the waste and misuse of official time. Time is not seen as a scarce commodity among employees which should be revered. Most employees in the public service report to work very late and close earlier than the time stipulated. This disregard for time means that activities would be conducted inefficiently and haphazardly. In response to the question whether employees of public service misuse official time, almost all the people interviewed responded in the affirmative, and when asked which categories of employees were the worst culprits, the response was broad based indicating all categories of staff were involved. This disrespect for time is usually explained as “African punctuality”, implying it is African to be late for meetings, work or even events. This implies the quality of service and subsequently productivity would be greatly affected as most of the employees do not work up to the stipulated eight hours of work per day. Some respondents reiterated that it is not uncommon to visit some offices between the hours of 12 noon and 2:30 pm only to realize that the office is locked under the pretext that workers were still on break. Some of the employees, according to one respondent, do not even turn up for work after the lunch break. However, the official break period for most public service organizations especially the MDAs and MMDAs is between the hours of 12:30 and 1:30 pm. This led one of the respondents to conclude that, “getting service from the public service of Ghana is now seen as a training ground for acquiring the virtue of patience”. The waste and misuse of official time is amply summed up in the President of the Republic of Ghana’s May Day Speech to commemorate the ‘the World Labour Day’, he remarked:



*“... we arrive at work late and then spend the first hour in prayer; we are clock watchers and leave in the middle of critical work, because it is the official closing time. We have no respect for the hours set aside for work... we pray, we eat, and we visit during working hours. We spend hours chatting on the telephone when customers are waiting to be served...everything comes to a stop when it rains”* (Myjoyonline, May 1, 2017).

Another area of waste and misuse of official time is the number of public servants enrolling for further education without permission. As a policy in the public service, employees have the opportunity to further their education with or without pay after serving for a specified period of time. However, it is now a fashion that employees enrol to further their education without the knowledge of the organization. In such situations, the employees misuse official time for their personal benefit in many ways. They absent themselves from work to go to school, they use office hours and resources to do their assignments and in some instances refuse official assignment to other locations or doing overtime or even working during the weekend. Yet upon completion, would want their certificates to be recognised and subsequently promoted. This has devastating impact on the organization as intimated by one of the directors interviewed;

*“One of the impacts is that it is a waste of organizational time, because once the staff is in school, he or she is not available to offer service, some of them say we do it over the weekend, if you do that it means that you will never be on weekend duties. This distorts the human resource management planning for the facility. Again, if you have so many people going to school from a particular facility it affects the service delivery and therefore the facility has to now look for somebody to come and replace or work while this person is in school. Thirdly, it affects the morale of the employees in two main ways; those who have enrolled feel they have worked so hard and the organization is unwilling to allow them to go to school and those around working also feel the organization is not being fair to them because they are working and others are in school without permission. So, the impact on the service is that it affects the distribution, it affects the smooth running of the day to day activities of the facility (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 25).*

### **5.2.6 Not Duty Bound to Report Wrong Doing**

Another issue that respondents identified as a form of unethical behaviour is apathy among public service employees. Some respondents bemoaned the unethical practices going on in their organizations but are unable to muster courage and criticize it. A number of reasons were attributed to this apathetic behaviour, which included fear of losing one's friend, fear of being called names, fear of being intimidated or victimized. Other respondents were also of the opinion that their public-spiritedness to expose these behaviours would be interpreted as

being motivated by malice, envy or vindictiveness. Yet, others also quipped that there was the lack of opportunity to air out their grievances or voice (culture of silence). For instance, those who feel strongly about the unethical behaviour and report it to their superiors are either ostracized or called names such as Judas (in the Bible who betrayed Jesus Christ) or “konkosa” in the local parlance meaning betrayer. In some instances, the culprits later victimized those who reported them either directly or in subtle ways. Therefore, in the name of preserving cordial relationship with colleagues, most of the wrongdoings are overlooked and culprits go unpunished. This sentiment was re-echoed by one of the respondents thus:

*“The Ghanaian has a penchant for maintaining good relations with close friends and relatives and this has been responsible for the perverse practice of compromise in this country. Every effort is made to avoid unpleasantness and no one wants to be cited as having taken part in getting someone punished for fear of being branded as wicked. In the name of preserving good social relations and harmony among his/her kinsmen and colleagues, a great deal of wrong doing is often overlooked and offenders go unpunished”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 37).

There are also instances that individuals who condone with these illegal acts, out rightly defend it. For instance, one nursing trainee student who apparently bribed an official of the CAGD to have his allowance paid after months of failed attempts had this to tell the *Daily Graphic*:

*“We, on our own decided to show appreciation ...our contacts only helped us to get our arrears to pay our school bills... no matter what, I will not tell you his name. I was desperate to get money to pay my fees and he helped me out”* (*Daily Graphic*, March 4, 2016: 3, 59).

This is only the tip of the ice berg, new entrants into the public service of Ghana often experience delays in the payment of their salaries and according to some respondents in an informal interaction, said they had to bribe somebody in the CAGD either directly or indirectly in order to have their salaries paid. These individuals are however unwilling to mention name(s) of persons bribed. The Ghanaian (and for that matter the public servant) therefore does not see it as duty bound to report such behaviours, which is one of the duties of a responsible citizen as enshrined in Article 41 of the Constitution (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

### **5.2.7 Entering into Amorous Relationship**

In addition to the above, entering into amorous relationships with colleagues, subordinates and students/pupils was also identified as a form of unethical behaviour in the public service

of Ghana. Personal interviews granted to some respondents revealed that senior public servants entered into amorous relationships with female subordinates, and in instances that these subordinates turned down their advances; they were either intimidated or harassed or transferred to 'harsher work environments'. In situations that it involved the 'vulnerable students', they are abused or even raped. There are instances that this has led to impregnating students and thereby either temporarily discontinuing their education or abandoning it altogether. In other instances, it is the female subordinate who 'tempts' the superior for favours such as promotion, transfer, employment or even better grades if she were a student. Within academic environments, Manuh et al. (2007) have succinctly argued that 'high levels of transactional sex seem to be endemic on all campuses at all levels, with students derisively referring to sexually "transmitted grades" where male academic staff take sexual advantage of female students in exchange for high marks'. This situation is not only limited to GES and GHS but the entire Ghanaian public service as they view women as being more vulnerable under pressure to grant sex in exchange for some favours such as jobs, promotion and grades. The obvious problems that this action will lead to in educational institutions and other public organizations according to one respondent include "indiscipline, disrespect, promotions not based on merit, favouritism, altering of grades and even leakage of examination questions among others" (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 26).

### **5.2.8 Sexual Harassment**

One other form of unethical behaviour that has crept into the public service of Ghana according to some respondents interviewed is sexual harassment. This refers to situations that persons in authority use their positions and powers to solicit sexual favours either by threats or promise of rewards like appointments, favouritism or promotion. Though practiced in subtly ways, it remains pervasive and underreported. One of the respondents indicated:

*"there is currently a case of sexual harassment that is being investigated"*

(Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 20).

He went on to reveal that "as it is usual for superiors to deny issues of this nature", the said boss denied it. However, the lady recorded the incident and has made it available to the committee. Victims of sexual harassment, he continued:

*"are mostly single young females, lower administrative staffs who are supervised by male superiors". Another respondent opined that "there are many instances that superiors have harassed female subordinates in the form of repeatedly proposing love, requesting for dates by constantly sending love letters, cards, telephone calls or text messages and at times demanding sexual favours"*  
(Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 37).

These advances are not made towards permanent female employees only but also to national service persons, who would want to be given permanent employment status upon the expiration of their contracts. The young ladies easily fall prey to these advances because of the freeze in employment only to realize belatedly that they have been sexually exploited. This confirms the plethora of researches in Ghana indicating the high incidence of sexual harassment not only in organizations but also in pre-tertiary and tertiary institutions (Agyepong, 2010; Akaab, 2011; Norman et al., 2013). Most cases of sexual harassment in the public service of Ghana go unreported because of the fear of stigmatisation, fear of retaliation which may include job loss, delayed promotion or transfer to “harsher places of work”, non-existence of formal complaints procedure and the trivialisation of sexual harassment issues. This makes victims of sexual harassment suffer silently the pain, anguish and cost of being sexually exploited, blackmailed, and disrespected. Further interrogations revealed that sexual harassment has dire consequences not only to the employee but the employer as well. According to the respondents, the impact on the employee can be categorized under physical, psychological and mental health problems. The physical consequences can include fatigue, headaches, teeth grinding and eating disorders while the psychological consequences can lead to emotional responses such as humiliation, embarrassment, fear, stress, loss of self-esteem and self-worth, feeling of alienation and isolation. Mentally, sexual harassment can lead to depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, which may lead to thoughts of committing suicide. The overall impact of sexual harassment on the individual will be absenteeism, requesting for unnecessary sick leave, drug and alcoholic abuse, not forgetting of the legal fees that will have a toll on her finances if she decides to report. As an end result, the employee will quit her job, change career, or take early retirement. At the organizational level, the impact of sexual harassment will include absenteeism, higher turnover of employees, tensed or “poisoned” work environment thereby affecting team work, leading to lack of focus, decrease in productivity, low morale and ultimately poor performance. The financial cost to the organization in the form of lawsuits and payments for fines and damages/compensations should employees decide to take legal actions should not also be overlooked. Further the reputation of the organization will be at stake.

### **5.2.9 Existence of Ghost Names on Payroll**

Another important unethical phenomenon in the public service of Ghana is the appearance of “ghost names” or “ghost workers” on payrolls of the public sector. Globally, many organizations have ghost/fake employees on their payrolls who do not actually work for them (Thurston, 2012). According to Tanzi (2013: 44), ghost workers “receive salary from an organization without showing up for work or who may not exist but their salaries are appropriated by someone else”. Thus, some show up briefly and disappear, others do not show up at all and yet their names are on the payroll (Tanzi, 2013; Nunberg and Nellis, 1995). Most of the people interviewed confirmed that this is a canker that has been difficult to resolve by successive governments. Unconfirmed statistics shows that ghost workers constitute between 5.8 to 10% of annual government expenditure (Amoako-Tuffour, 2002; Finance, 2012) and has become a major area of concern for developing countries including Ghana (Hossain, 2013). The factors accounting for the problem of ghost workers in developing countries including Ghana are; poor records management, weak internal controls, failure to follow administrative procedures, and collusion among public servants (International Records Management Trust, 2008:3), ineffective supervision of staff by administrative heads (Dovlo, 2005: Auditor General, 2014). The “ghost workers” are public service employees who have either died, retired, or left the service but are not recorded as such. These ghost workers are left on payrolls if pay masters delay in expunging their names from the payroll (Lekubu, 2013). In some instances, payroll clerks deliberately include names of fabricated “ghost” employees on the payroll, forge their signatures and collect the salaries on their behalf (Izedonmi and Ibadin, 2012). Additionally, this situation could occur if a single person is responsible for processing personnel data and payroll transactions from the beginning to the end.

The Auditor General has over the years highlighted in its reports on public funds to Parliament, payroll irregularities and ghost workers on the government payroll. In 2007, for example, the Auditor General reported that over 1,937 ghost employees were deleted from the payroll resulting in a monthly savings of GH¢781,585, which is equivalent to USD 390,792 per month (Ghana Audit Service, 2007). Another report by the Auditor General indicated that "deletion of names of deceased employees from the government payroll took long periods some ranging from one to seven years after the death of an employee in the public service" (Ghana Audit Service, 2011). In 2011, the Auditor General again reported that unauthorized salaries were paid to over 1,800 non-existing employees causing

government to lose substantial amount of public funds (Ghana Audit Service, 2011). These audit findings by the Auditor General points to the prevalence of ghost workers on the government payroll in Ghana. In 2012, the Auditor General's Report indicated that payroll irregularities in the Public Service of Ghana amounted to GH¢1,161,315.24, out of this amount GES was responsible for GH¢344,851.86 while GHS was responsible for GH¢115,347.89.00. The 2014 Report also indicated that payroll irregularities amounted to GH¢941,675.00. Almost a third of this amount (GHS 369,416) emanated from GHS. These amounts, if properly regulated could be used in the development of other sectors of the country.

### **5.2.10 Cash Irregularities**

Related to the payroll fraud is the existence of cash irregularities in the public service of Ghana. The Auditor-General's reports covering the years 2009 to 2014 have always been full of cases where paymasters have either misappropriated or embezzled public funds. The cash irregularities according to the reports include:

1. *Failure by Accounting Officers to properly acquit payment vouchers or produce them for inspection and validation;*
2. *Failure to recover funds from dishonoured cheques issued by businesses/organizations and individuals in settlement of their tax and other obligations;*
3. *Unauthorized expenditure;*
4. *Non-availability of records on revenue collected and failure to present value books for inspection;*
5. *Ineffective supervisory control over revenue collection;*
6. *Intransigent nature of imprest holders to promptly account for imprests;*
7. *Misappropriation and theft of revenue/other receipts;*
8. *Mis-application of funds; and*
9. *Lack of supporting document for funds that have been disbursed (A-Gs Reports, 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2014).*

Treasurers of MMDAs, MDAs and registrars of courts have all been guilty of embezzlement of public funds. It would be wrong to imagine that embezzlement is engaged in by people working on accounting schedules only. The attraction of money is such that almost all who have access to it stand the danger of yielding to its power. According to the reports, many factors make it possible for embezzlement of funds to occur. In some cases, theft has occurred as a result of not following rules regulating the recording, depositing and safeguarding of monies received. Sometimes theft has occurred because the same person has control over receiving, maintaining, issuing, and accounting for the use of money. For

instance, the Auditor-General's Report (2011:4-5) indicated that the incidence of cash irregularities amounted to GH¢33,972,751.25 (about 146,082,830.29 USD)<sup>1</sup> in 2011 and out of this amount, the two public service organizations understudy accounted for GH¢14,710,942.26 (about 63,257,051.72USD) representing 42% of the total amount. The cash irregularity of the various MDAs in 2011 is presented in Table 5.1 below:

**Table 5. 1: Cash Irregularity in MDAs in 2011 in Ghana Cedis**

<b>Name of Public Service Organization</b>	<b>Cash Irregularity</b>
Justice and Attorney General	GH¢ 16,375,045.05
<i>Health</i>	<i>GH¢ 12,089,459.63</i>
<i>Education</i>	<i>GH¢ 2,621,482.63</i>
MoFEP	GH¢ 2,004,238.00
Employment and Social Welfare	GH¢ 276,723.53
Youth and Sports	GH¢ 237,864.70
Defence	GH¢ 81,039.61
Other Agencies	GH¢ 84,758.12

Source: Auditor General's Report, 2011

### **5.2.11 Procurement Irregularities**

Further, another form of unethical behaviour undertaken by the public service organizations in Ghana falls under procurement irregularities. Public procurement plays an important role in the development of a country because it aids in the procurement of goods, works and services. In Ghana for instance, it is estimated that public procurement represents about 50-70% of the national budget and about 14% of GDP (Adjei, 2006; Bank, 2003). The bulk of this expenditure is consumed by MDAs and MMDAs as well as government in the implementation of their respective programmes. This shows that a greater chunk of government expenditure goes into public procurement and if this is efficiently and effectively managed, could promote innovation (Rolfstam, Phillips, and Bakker, 2011) leading to national development (OECD, 2007). On the contrary, a poorly managed public procurement system could result in the abuse and waste of public resources, coupled with inefficient and effective delivery of public services (Ren, Kwaw, and Yang, 2012; OECD, 2007). Public Procurement as a profession worldwide including Ghana has suffered and continues to suffer from incidences of high immoral and unethical conduct (Ntayi et al., 2010) as a result of the many schemes that is employed including bribery, bid rigging, money laundering, embezzlement, and false claims. Ghana, like any other developing nation, is confronted with public procurement irregularities which are viewed as "any act of commission or omission

<sup>1</sup> 1 USD is equivalent to 4.3 GH¢

which violates the laws and regulations governing public procurement or any action/inaction which has the potential of negatively impacting on value for money, transparency, accountability, fair competition, and the overall integrity of the procurement process (Asenso-Boakye and Etse 2014: 1-2). Over the years, reports of the Auditor-General have brought to the limelight a number of public procurement irregularities, and in some instances the same irregularities keep occurring annually in the same public entity and at times in the same department (Ofori-Mensah and Rutherford, 2011; Asenso-Boakye and Etse 2014). These irregularities affect the efficient and effective utilization of the procurement practices and are therefore seen as recipes for embezzlement and misappropriation of funds, and other corrupt procurement practices. The ultimate effect of these irregularities is lack of required resources for national development, eradication of poverty, provision of economic and social infrastructure, and improvement in the standard of living of Ghanaians. For instance, the Auditor Generals reports for 2009 to 2014 have identified the following procurement/stores irregularities in the public service of Ghana:

- i. Payments for uncompleted works/items not supplied;*
- ii. Purchases not taken on ledger charge;*
- iii. Procurement without alternative price quotations/ unauthorised sole sourcing of suppliers;*
- iv. Contract variations;*
- v. Fuel coupons not properly accounted for;*
- vi. Failure to adhere to the Public Procurement Act, and Store Regulations in terms of obtaining minimum quotations, exceeding authorised threshold limits;*
- vii. Poor supervision of subordinate officers; and*
- viii. Non-application of sanctions (A-Gs Reports, 2009; 2010; 2011, 2012; 2014).*

The reasons adduced for these irregularities over the years according to the A-Gs Reports include; failure to prepare annual procurement plan, poor record keeping; improper stores and warehouse practices, unauthorised transactions; failure to comply with tendering/procurement procedure; and payment/misapplication of funds. These are further compounded by management's failure to effectively supervise the process; failure to enforce accountability measures; negligence and lack of due diligence; systemic failure and; weak internal control coupled with the ignorance and complicity of officers in procurement departments. These irregularities have led Ghana to lose billions of cedis to both individuals and organizations for varied goods and services which are either never delivered or partly delivered. This is coupled with the fact that these irregularities are characterized by inflated and exorbitant prices, sometimes, the result of collusion between the supplier and the procurement officer. A



clear case of procurement fraud and collusion was mentioned during the course of the fieldwork interviews involving Global Unilink, (an Accra based company) contracted to procure “be safe” condoms for GHS to the tune of US\$ 3.84 million. In the opinion of the respondent, the choice of Global Unilink was fictitious as two other bidders were eliminated through ‘cruel tactics’. Shortly after the contract was awarded, a 35 percent increase in the price of the contract was requested and subsequently approved. This became public outcry as the procured condoms were malfunctioning. However, an investigative team later set by the Ministry of Health found serious procurement lapses contrary to PPA Act (2003) and Food and Drug Authority safety standards, as basic procurement rules and procedures were ignored thereby allowing the supplier to supply sub-standard condoms. It was further realized fraudulent and fictitious documents were presented to win the contract but this process went undetected indicating collusion between employees of GHS and the supplier as the former did not provide adequate oversight for excellence or value for money. This was collaborated by an investigative report by Global Fund Grants to Ghana in 2014.

#### **5.2.12 Pilfering**

Pilfering by employees is a common practice in most organizations including public service organizations. Storekeepers plunder and loot stores of their employers regularly; for instance, hospitals lose drugs through pilfering and the stolen property is sold for private profit or put to private use. Pilfering, plunder and looting can be subtle and sophisticated. On the pretext of sales promotion for instance, sales managers give out to friends and family relations commercial quantities of products which are in turn sold and the proceeds shared with the sales manager. There are also instances of stealing or drug pilferage in GHS and this is in tandem with Ferrinho et al., (2004) findings in the African continent. This pilferage takes the form of diversion in the supply chain, stealing from the main warehouse on delivering, stealing in the course of transporting to the health facilities or stealing from the pharmacies (the United States President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI), 2012). According to the PMI (2012), drug pilferage occurs as a result of poor system of inventory, weak internal controls, poor management of information systems and inadequate enforcement system as well as low salaries of both transporters and health service workers. There have been cases where drug administrators transfer drugs bit by bit from the workplace to their private drug stores in town. For instance, the *Daily Graphic* of August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1998 reported a situation where eight employees of Ghana’s biggest hospital stole medical supplies and equipment valued at more than 20 million cedis. The most recent case is the widespread theft, fraud and procurement

irregularities at the Central Medical Store (CMS) of the GHS and subsequently setting the CMS ablaze. The CMS stores and distributes most of the drugs and other consumables of GHS. Upon investigations, it was concluded that "the fire was set to destroy evidence of theft, massive fraud and widespread irregularities in the procurement and distribution of medical supplies involving some senior members and junior staff," (*Daily Graphic*, 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2016). The National Security operatives' in their preliminary investigations identified the following irregularities and fraudulent activities;

- a. *Malaria Control Programme managers diverted large quantities of anti-malarial drugs meant for public health institutions;*
- b. *The systems software for recording stock levels of medical supplies and keeping track of allocations was manipulated, rendering it ineffectual and facilitating massive diversion of medical items;*
- c. *Large quantities of Artemether Lumefantrine, an anti-malarial drug, were stolen or diverted and sold to entities in Nigeria and La Cote d'Ivoire;*
- d. *Anti-malarial drugs were routinely diverted to non-existent NGOs;*
- e. *Some drugs were falsely declared to be close to their date of expiration so that permission would be given for them to be taken out for destruction; these were then sold to private pharmacy shops after permission had been granted for them to be destroyed;*
- f. *Expired drugs, mostly anti-malarial medicines, from a private pharmacy shop were sometimes swapped for good drugs supplied to the CMS by the company;*
- g. *Fifty (50) boxes of assorted anti-malarial drugs were hoarded by two officers of the CMS who claimed that the CMS had completely ran out of those drugs;*
- h. *Following the discovery of widespread corruption in the sale of anti-malarial drugs, an embargo was placed on the sale of the drugs to private health institutions; however, an officer of the CMS evaded the directive and continued to make deliveries to private health institutions, false recording that those deliveries had been made to the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital;*
- i. *Large quantities of pethidine, a highly-controlled narcotic drug, were stolen from the CMS and sold mostly to a pharmacist at the 37 Military Hospitals in Accra.*
- j. *Expired medical non-consumables items, including face masks and disinfectants, were regularly sold to private entities and the monies shared among the staff that facilitated the transaction; and*
- k. *Supplies of medical commodities to the CMS were based on the issuance of acceptance certificates prepared by the Ghana Health Service (GHS) for payment; however, procurements were made and certificates of payment issued without any effort at cross-checking at CMS to establish whether the right drugs have been supplied and in the requested and allocations to health institutions (*Daily Graphic*, 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2016).*

The motive for this incident was to conceal evidence of theft, fraud and procurement irregularities. Prior to the conflagration, the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) was tasked to investigate circumstances surrounding the expiration of large quantities of drugs and medical items at the CMS. Thus, an extensive audit of supplies to the CMS as well

as distribution of allocations to other health institution for 2014 was slated for 13th January, 2015 and it was the same day that the facility was engulfed by the fire. It is believed the fear of bringing these irregularities to public knowledge was the main motive for setting the CMS ablaze.

Besides pilfering of drugs, there are also instances where catering staffs of both GES and GHS take their daily ration of food (for personal or family use) from their respective institutions, store keepers pilfering store wares like stationery and other logistics and drivers pilfering fuel. This led one of the directors to intimate that:

*“There are serious non-prioritization of spending, pilfering and diversion of resources and gross abuse of vehicles in public health facilities and employees are brave to ask “is the hospital for your family” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No.39).*

Almost all categories of staff are engaged in pilfering one thing or the other and these are symptomatic of the entire public service of Ghana and not only the two organizations under study. These situations arise as a result of poor record-keeping, falsification of records, ineffective monitoring and supervision and poorly managed systems. The overall impact is the leakage of scarce public resources.

### **5.2.13 Rent Irregularities and Outstanding Loans Recovery**

Another form of abuse and waste of public resources by public servants falls in the areas of rent irregularities and failure to recover outstanding loans. The reasons for poor loan recovery as reported by the Auditor-General have at various times been:

- 1. The inability of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning to conclude with beneficiaries formal loan agreements embodying repayment terms;*
- 2. The ineffective monitoring of loan payment on the part of loan granting agencies;*
- 3. The indifference of individual debtors to their liabilities;*
- 4. The lethargic and lukewarm attitude of those responsible for debt and loan recovery;*
- 5. Managements' failure to deduct rent at source from staff members' salaries;*
- 6. Failure to convey appropriate information to the Controller and Accountant General Department (CAGD) and other problems in payroll administration;*
- 7. Defaulted and uncollected rents; and*
- 8. Failure to issue official receipts for rent paid (A-Gs Report, 2009; 2010; 2011; 2013; 2014).*

It is against this background that all types of organizations and individuals have found it easy to default on loan repayment schedules. Public organizations which owe government have been irregular in meeting their loan obligation, while asking for more loans from the

government. It is also a practice in public organizations for workers in financial distress to apply for 'salary advance'. Once in a year, a worker may apply for a month's salary in advance to enable him/her meet some urgent personal/family issue, a reason which elicits sympathy and compassion. The grant of such advances has proved to be a source of waste and abuse. The recovery rate has been poor partly as a result of loss of contact with beneficiaries through retirements, resignations and vacation of post. Those in debt move on without settling their debts. Default in the payment of rent by public officials living in government bungalows is also a matter of concern when it comes to abuse and waste of government resources. Finance officers' failure to convey appropriate information to CAGD in lieu of deductions has been the bane of waste in this category.

On the whole, the various irregularities discussed above amounting to billions of Ghanaian cedis, year-in-year-out, have militated against developmental projects that could have been embarked upon by government, all being wasted. Table 5.2 below tabulates the various financial irregularities and the amount involved yearly from 2009 to 2014 as reported by the A-G.

**Table 5. 2: Financial Irregularities in the Public Service of Ghana from 2009-2014 in Ghana Cedis**

Type of Irregularity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Tax Irregularities	7,392,358	72,414,244	52,838,612.21	340,146,161.75	57,215,082.84	217,186,533.45
Cash Irregularities	226,277,124	94,545,872	33,972,751.25	6,776,364.99	268,676,045.81	5,089,352.06
Stores/Procurement Irregularities	1,270,295	684,375	780,027.67	866,451.98	2,740,788.67	2,373,354.81
Payroll/Over payment	2,485,697,863	498,259	1,021,062.77	1,161,315.24	1,658,054.06	11,426,144.03
Contract Irregularities	229,685	283,578	24,946,637.32	1,620,641.51	127,856,539.47	2,784,226.72
Staff Arrears	-	82,838	220,388.66	-	-	-
Outstanding Loans	28,984,710	4,665,375	5,709,276.16	45,147,616.54	18,385,019.87	13,755,902.31
Rent Irregularities	45,083	-			299,002.85	171,073.85
Total Irregularities	2,749,897,118	173,174,541	119,488,756.04	395,718,552.01	476,830,533.57	252,786,587.43

Source: Adopted from the Auditor General's Report from 2009-2014

#### **5.2.14 Indulging in Politics**

Public servants, by their nature, are expected to be a-political and serve in the interest of the general public in whatever capacity they find themselves. They are not supposed to openly declare their political affiliations but remain politically neutral. However, in contemporary times, public servants have become political at both the community and national levels. This does not auger well for a service that thrives on impartiality, neutrality and professionalism. For instance, a news report carried on by Joyfm (a Ghanaian Radio Station) indicates an aspiring Member of Parliament has been asked by his superior to consider “quitting the nursing job or apply for leave” but he says: “he will not resign nor apply for a leave of absence because his work does not conflict with his political activities” [myjoyonline.com, 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2016]. This is in gross contravention of the public service code and only a ‘tip of the iceberg’ in the public service of Ghana. Other public servants who have contravened this rule to contest in the 2016 elections include Dr Kpessa White (Acting Executive Director of the National Service Scheme), Ras Mubarak (National Youth Coordinator, National Youth Authority), Edward Abambire Bawa (Public Relations Officer of the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum), Alhaji Ibrahim Seidu (Chief Engineer at the Department of Feeder Roads) and Sam Kwesi Fletcher (Head of Corporate Communication, Volta River Authority). This probably led Asare (2012:35) to note the lack of neutrality in the public service as this has been “compromised right after independence”. Right from the inception of the 1992 Constitution, various categories of public servants have openly indulged in political party activities and used party affiliations to either acquire some favours or issued threats, transfers and other negativity to colleagues touted as political opponents. They have therefore used their party affiliations to conduct unethical acts. This does not auger well for a public service dubbed as neutral and impartial.

These irregularities notwithstanding, the annual reports of CHRAJ over the years have also recounted various subtle infractions perpetuated by public servants under administrative justice infringements. For instance, the reports for 2013 and 2014 deemed these actions as “unreasonable and contrary to law”. These infringements include failure to pay legitimate entitlements, failure to give adequate opportunity to be heard, delay in justice, failure to investigate or act promptly, improper attention and oppressive conducts including intimidation, harassment and excessive use of power of arrest (CHRAJ, 2013; 2014). The organizations mostly culpable included Ministries of Education, Finance, Health and Interior. Within the two years, out of 103 and 99 cases brought against the Ministry of Education, 87

and 89 respectively were against GES. GHS on the other hand, recorded 34 and 4 respectively out of 37 and 24. These indicate that besides the forms of unethical/deviant behaviours discussed above, there are administrative justice related issues that are not reported in the public service of Ghana.

From the preceding paragraphs, it would be realised that some employees in the public service are engaged in behaviours that put their personal interest far above that of the general public (conflict of interest). These behaviours are linked up with corruption and its associated acts of nepotism, favouritism and clientelism which are abhorred by the constitution and the various codes of conduct as it grants favours to the self (public servants) and acquaintances, relatives and friends in the form of awards of contracts, appointment to public positions, job recruitment and promotion, exempting relatives and friends from punitive sanctions in case of breach of regulations by offering them “preferential treatment”. Further to these, there are other malpractices that do not involve monetary exchange, but which frontline service providers of public organizations indulge in and which the World Bank (2010) terms subtly as ‘quiet corruption’ and include absenteeism and presenteeism. These situations ignore the principles of equity, fairness, merit, esprit de corps and trust but rather breed inefficiency by putting “square pegs in round holes”. According to the annual reports of the A-G’s Office, these situations arise as a result of:

- i. *management failure to effectively supervise;*
- ii. *failure to enforce accountability;*
- iii. *negligence and lack of due diligence;*
- iv. *systemic failure; and*
- v. *weak internal control, officers’ complicity, and ignorance* (Auditor-General, 2009; 2010; 2011; 2014).

The perennial occurrence of these irregularities have made the A-G to constantly lament by remarking that “the cataloguing of financial irregularities in my Report on MDAs and other agencies has become an annual ritual that seems to have no effect because affected MDAs are not seen to be taking any effective action to address the basic problems of lack of monitoring and supervision and non-adherence to legislation put in place to provide effective financial management of public resources” (Ghana Audit Service, 2011: 9; Ghana Audit Service, 2014).

### **5.3 Effects of Unethical Behaviours in the Public Service**

The last section of this chapter deals with the impact of unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana. This relates to the second research objective on the causes, forms and impact of unethical behaviours. The findings have identified negative impacts which have debilitating effects on the public service of Ghana. These include the perpetual lateness, absenteeism and presenteeism in the service, the dent on the service's reputation, the impact on efficiency and effectiveness, the unwillingness of employees to report unethical behaviours leading to low organizational commitment which affects both organizational performance and the ability to recruit and retain talented skills.

#### **5.3.1 Lateness, Absenteeism and Presenteeism**

Unethical behaviour has the tendency of leading to lateness, absenteeism and presenteeism and consequently the breakdown of law and order in public service organizations. One negative impact of unethical behaviour is that it worsens lateness and absenteeism as employees know that they would not be sanctioned if they are late or absent themselves from work. In the public service of Ghana, lateness and absenteeism for some number of days is permissible and not usually sanctioned. This has served as an incentive for employees to continuously be late or absent from work. Respondents in both the GES and GHS alluded to the fact that lateness and absenteeism is very rampant in the service (this is also applicable to the entire public service). Anecdotal evidence exists to support employee absenteeism in GHS (Dovlo, 2005; Ministry of Health, 2002; Lievens et al., 2011; Asabir et al., 2013), though not on a large scale evidence suggest that employees absent themselves to engage in moonlighting. For instance, Lievens et al., (2011) have observed that doctors are more absent than senior nurses and the latter are also more absent than auxiliary nurses. In an interview with one of the respondents, he attributed his absence from work to the lack of tools to work with, he thus remarked;

*“...I don't know whether because am a professional (actual profession has been anonymized), they don't talk about me, they talk about me in whispers, he is always not at work, I hear it but when I hear it I laugh. It is very difficult to find me. Yes, it is difficult to find me, you find me where? Am I supposed to stand at Makola (the central business district) for you to come and find me? No... And I have said that I will not go and beg somebody that I feel superior to, to give me tools to go and work, I won't. There is something that you are supposed to do, give me tools to work for you. If you give me a job description without a tool, I wouldn't be able to produce any good output” [Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 19].*



In corroborating this in GES, Mensah (2011) estimated that 27 percent of teachers in the pre-tertiary division usually absent themselves from school annually while the World Bank (2010) and Abadzi (2007) peg it at 43 days per a teacher in a year. In an earlier research, Fobih et al. (1999) found out that 85% of teachers in Ghana arrive to school very late and this lateness could be anything between five minutes and one and half hours. Teacher absenteeism and lateness are therefore ‘symptomatic’ of the educational system (Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007; Ampiah and Adu-Yeboah, 2009). The factors accounting for such absenteeism are varied ranging from health issues (including malaria and pregnancy), difficulty of securing accommodation closer to one’s place of work, poor road infrastructure coupled with heavy traffic, lack of motivation coupled with persistent delay in paying the salaries of newly trained and posted teachers, cultural and religious responsibilities, e.g. attending funerals and weddings or going to mosque on Fridays. Lack of adequate supervision is another concern, teachers engaging in other economic activities to supplement their incomes. The working environment cannot also be over ruled, as some lack basic facilities like toilets and portable drinking water. It is believed that employee absenteeism is a common phenomenon in the rural areas and is linked with poor working environment as well as poor employee morale. Lack of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Gosselin, et al., 2013: 77), generous sick pay entitlement, job security and less demanding performance standards (cited in Ohemeng et al. 2013: 10) have been the bane of absenteeism in the public service.

Closely related to lateness and absenteeism is “presenteeism,” a situation where the employee is bodily present at work but does nothing to contribute to productivity. The tendencies of this attitude include loitering, sleeping during office hours, playing games, gambling, and watching movies, chatting endlessly either on phone or with colleagues. Thus, infecting others, performing ineffectively and reducing productivity because they know that whether they do what is expected of them or not, they will not be sanctioned. Some would therefore report to work but will do nothing till the close of work. This situation is more profound in the public service of Ghana and goes a long way to affect productivity. The implications are obvious; productive working hours are lost, work is hurriedly done without being meticulous and the overall consequence is poor performance leading to the inability to meet organizational targets. It has been speculated that lateness, absenteeism and presenteeism are symptomatic to lack of commitment and the desire to quit should the opportunity avail itself, thus a manifestation of discontent by the employee.

### **5.3.2 The Dent on the Organization's Reputation**

One of the effects of unethical behaviours is that it causes indelible stain on the organization concerned. Once the public views an organization as unethical, the stain can be permanent, while it takes years to build a good reputation, one false move can destroy this hard-earned reputation overnight. The Auditor-General's Annual Report to Parliament over the years as well as other findings have tainted the image of Ghana's public service. For Instance, the A-G has woefully decried the perennial financial irregularities of MDAs and MMDAs as being an "annual ritual that seems to have no effect because affected organizations are not taking any effective action to address the basic problems of lack of monitoring and supervision, and non-adherence to legislation, due to outright disregard for established order in the conduct of public financial business" (Auditor-General Report 2012: 11). Besides these, one respondent identified other negative activities of the service to include:

*"not following instructions, intentionally slowing down the work cycle with the intention of being 'tipped' or bribed, drunkenness, arriving late or absenteeism, leaving work before the closing time, committing petty theft, embezzlement, sabotage, not treating colleagues and subordinates with respect and at times acting rudely towards subordinates as well as potential service users. This portrays a bad image of the service"* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 36).

This poor state of affairs probably led Ohemeng (2010:124) and Kumasey et al., (2017:3) to opine that clients coming into contact with public servants, witness attitudes and conducts that are considered "contemptuous, disrespectful, irritating, frustrating and desperate".

### **5.3.3 Efficiency and Effectiveness**

Another negative impact of unethical behaviours in public organizations is that it leads to the inefficient and ineffective functioning of organizations. Efficiency and effectiveness looks at the relationship between the inputs, outputs and their outcomes in relation to time, value addition, accountability and cost. In this regard, unethical behaviour tends to worsen the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization. For instance, it increases misconduct because if employees see that honesty is rarely applied in the organization, and all employees are engaged in unethical behaviours through siphoning of organizational resources, lateness and absenteeism amongst others, then the tendency to indulge in unethical behaviours (misconduct) would be rife. This will eventually lead to a decline in the level of efficiency. This probably led Asare (2012:36) to associate the Ghanaian public service with "inefficiency, ineffectiveness and corruption". According to one of the respondents "inefficiencies and ineffectiveness are common in the public service considering the various

Reports and commissions of Enquiries because those who are supposed to supervise, fail to discharge their responsibilities either because they are beneficiaries of the system or are generally irresponsible” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 37). These Inefficiencies and ineffectiveness have huge cost to both the organization and the nation because it is the individual tax payer who shoulders the cost of running these organizations at the end of the day.

#### **5.3.4 Unwillingness to Report Unethical Behaviours**

Furthermore, one important impact of unethical behaviours in the public service according to respondents is the reduced rate of reporting these behaviours. When the prevalence rate is high, employees will merely see these behaviours as being the order of the day and will therefore not view it as duty bound to report any misconduct. In an informal focus group discussion, respondents gave various opinions why employees in the public service do not report unethical behaviours. One of the respondents opined that “reporting misconduct in the past had not been effective, and so no corrective, preventive or punitive action will be taken now if I decide to report any misconduct”. Another respondent also remarked that “the fear of repercussion or retaliation is very high should one decide to report any act deemed to be inappropriate”. This retaliation could come from senior management, supervisors and even colleagues in the form of harassment, ostracism, incivility, dismissal, being blacklisted or given ‘nickname’. Some even perceive the reporter as a betrayer to colleagues, superiors and the organization as a whole. Further to these, another respondent also remarked that “employees who report unethical behaviours in organizations are not taken seriously”. Besides these, the other reasons that came up in the course of the discussion included lack of knowledge of the existing policies and procedures, inability to give evidential proofs of such behaviours and employees who report wrong-doing are not seen as team-players. As a result of these reasons, employees in public service organizations, though obliged to bring these unethical behaviours to the fore, see others committing them but are unwilling to report. However, these behaviours have devastating consequences to the organization and the public service as a whole.

#### **5.3.5 Low Level of Commitment**

In addition to the above, the level of commitment of employees will also be affected negatively. Kumasey et al. (2017a) have drawn attention to the fact that employee

commitment in public service organizations is linked to positive organizational outcomes such as lower turnover intentions, punctuality, in-role job performance, organizational citizenship behaviours, job satisfaction and work motivation. However, when committed employees compare their level of commitment and output to that of their colleagues who are less committed and find out that less committed colleagues are nonetheless receiving the same rewards, then, their level of commitment will certainly reduce as a result of inequity in the service. On the other hand, employees who are not loyal and passionate about their work are most likely to engage in unethical practices as a form of compensation to the inequity. Low levels of employee commitment have been identified as one of the problems of the public service (Asiedu, 2010). During the course of the interviews, a director quipped that:

*Lack of commitment could occur when people do not live up to the calling of their profession. Sometimes people come into that profession because they want to just get a livelihood so the core mandate that is humanity is out. So, if you have such people in your midst they could create problems for you. You could have one or two in all institutions, who are not committed. They are always looking at what they would get in terms of rewards, in terms of financial or other things. Such people can cause problems (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No.14).*

Another respondent re-echoed that:

*“Because employees are not committed to their jobs and systems put in place are not effective, they do not work hard; they always want ‘shortcuts’ to become successful and this allows other employees to behave in similar manner. They tend to frustrate the system with the attitude that any new system that is introduced to their disadvantage should not work. They simply do that because they are not committed to their jobs” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 38).*

The ripple effect would then set in causing other employees to also start looking for what they can get from the organization through un[fair] means. The low level of commitment in the public service is driven by the perception of corruption, lack of perceived fairness and transparency in terms of promotion, inadequate remuneration, and lack of clear career path, growth and advancement as well as the lack of basic tools to work with. These factors in turn lead to low morale, low productivity and the lack of a sense of belonging to the service. Thus, employees will resort to the various forms of unethical behaviours identified earlier.

### **5.3.6 Performance**

Again, unethical behaviour turns to worsen the performance of the employees especially the highly skilled. The environment has an effect on the performance of employees, once they see their colleagues engaging in unethical behaviours, they are tempted to behave as such and this leads to a drop in productivity. It is said that one bad nut spoils the apple, this is what really happens. The highly skilled either stay and are corrupted by reducing their level of performance or easily switch job. A director in GES asserted that:

*“it affects productivity which goes a long way to affect academic performance”*  
(Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 04).

Another director reiterated that:

*“...embezzling money meant to develop a particular infrastructure will go a long way to negatively affect children. When you also absent yourself from school, it will also negatively affect students’ performance, your lateness can also affect performance. Putting a female student in the “family way” can cut short her education”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 008).

Yet another interview respondent succinctly puts it this way:

*“Unethical behaviours lead to the “loss of productivity, people will always be pretending to be working, the state will also be pretending to be paying them. And at the end of the day, pay people for no work done, and so it is the state that suffers”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 20).

### **5.3.7 Recruiting and Retention of Personnel**

Not all, unethical behaviour decreases the morale of employees. This has the tendency to worsen retention and recruiting of competent human resources into the organization. Many employees tend to remain in organizations because of the organization’s concern for ethics. Ethical firms have lower turnover, as they tend to hold onto important skills and waste less time and resources training new employees. Thus, ethical organizations attract top-flight talents or high-fliers more easily than unethical organizations because highly experienced employees would not want to be associated with unethical organizations. According to one respondent:

*“ethical organizations are able to poach essential human resources more easily than unethical ones”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 19).

This accounts for why private organizations including NGOs attract employees from public organizations. He went on to recount how a senior officer had worked in the service for close to twenty-five years and had served in an acting position for more than five years, but when it got to the time to confirm him as the substantive head, he was over-looked and the position eventually went to his subordinate. The said officer has now taken indefinite leave and there is no indication that he would return to the service. The crux of the matter is that, the service is going to lose the calibre of this scarce human resource with almost thirty years of post-qualification experience as a result of unethical behaviour. Besides unethical behaviours, widespread turnover indicates the organization is in turmoil and sends signals to top management that the organization needs improvements. Though high employee turnover has positive aspects including reducing interpersonal conflicts and subsequently removing dissident behaviours, which eventually leads to higher performance as well as strengthening organizational cohesiveness (Kovan, 2015). This cohesiveness can also encourage negative groupthink with its accompanying dangers in the organization (Kovan, 2015).

### **5.3.8 Cost to the Organization**

Further, unethical behaviours have cost components to the public service in terms of financial loss and other non-accounted cost. The various theft, pilfering, embezzlement, financial irregularities and fraudulent acts as well as abuse of organizational time and resources evidenced in the previous subsection have revealed that public service organizations and the government as a whole do incur huge financial losses. Annually, the Auditor General's report portrays a damning picture of how public funds are misapplied by MDAs in Ghana. For instance, in 2014 the financial irregularities totalled GH¢1,803,646,727. 00., while it was GH¢363,957,174.99, GH¢ 119,488,756.04 in 2012 and 2011 respectively. These amounts represent what is captured in the public domain. However, there are some irregularities that are hardly captured. One of the respondents was quick to say that;

*“...when you take something like financial malpractices, it drains the coffers. We are already financially handicap and if the little resources we have in our coffers are taken away as a result of financial malpractices, then it means the organization will suffer delivering adequate service and this can end up killing people because of the nature of our service” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 22).*

Closely related to the above is the gloomy picture painted by the World Bank (2010) on the cost of teacher absenteeism in Ghana. The World Bank suggests that since 28.2 % of

government's annual budget is allocated to teacher salaries and between 20-27% of teachers are often absent from school, then it could safely be concluded that about 7.6% of government's total budget is lost annually due to teacher absenteeism. If this figure is emanating from one public service, what will be the consequences on government expenditure when all absenteeism in the public service is calculated and quantified in relation to government's total expenditure?

There are also financial implications if the organization decides to employ new members as a result of the high turnover in unethical organizations. The additional cost incurred in recruitment, interviewing and training adds to the total financial burden of the organization. Besides there are also cost incurred as a result of administrative injustice and subsequent compensation imposed on the organization. For instance, during fieldwork it was reported that an employee was unjustifiably dismissed without due process and when he took the organization to CHRAJ for administrative justice, he was reinstated and all arrears due him was paid and additionally, he was promoted to the next rank. Further, there are non-monetary costs as well which include absenteeism and decreased productivity. For instance, the World Bank (2010) has noted that as a result of teacher absenteeism, students are denied quality education which goes to affect their cognitive skills and the absence of drugs and health professionals leads to unwanted deaths from preventable diseases. There is therefore the need, both financial and otherwise, for public organizations to prevent and or discourage unethical behaviours in the organization.

#### **5.4 Chapter Conclusion**

The overall impact of unethical behaviours in public service organizations is the associated cost to the government, which can be looked at from the political, economic and social perspectives. Politically, this can lead to the erosion of public confidence by the citizenry on the government thereby destabilizing the peace and security of the country. Economically, unethical behaviours such as unfair regulations and the lack of predictability on part of public service organizations can deter potential investors into the country thereby thwarting trade and investment. Additionally, the diversification of funds and other resources meant for development into individual homes or pockets implies lack of development. Socially, this situation could lead to the deterioration of trust amongst the citizenry leading to general unrest. This led President Mahama in delivering his State of the Nations address to the

Parliament of Ghana to remark that “Ghana is bleeding from these acts of mismanagement and malfeasance” (Republic of Ghana, 2015: 33). Also, in lamenting on the reoccurrence of these acts, the A-G has indicated that “I am not satisfied with the litany of financial irregularities which are exhibited yearly by MDAs. I therefore strongly recommend that the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning develops a code of ethics for the Public Service to ensure proper, effective and efficient use of the funds” (Auditor-General’s Report, 2010: 8). In a nutshell, this chapter explored the second objective of the research by addressing the results obtained from fieldwork on the causes, forms and impacts of the identified unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

# **ENFORCEMENT OF ETHICAL STANDARDS IN THE GHANAIAN PUBLIC SERVICE**

*“If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary” (The Federalist No. 51, 1788)*

### **6.0 Chapter Introduction**

This chapter explores and analyses the current measures put in place to enforce ethical standards in the Ghanaian public service through the lens of in-depth interviews and documentary reviews with some selected employees of the public service. The chapter attempts to answer the thesis’ third objective which examines the ethical standards and values in the public service and how they are enforced. The chapter delves into both the individual organizational mechanisms put in place to enhance ethics and values as well as the constitutional measures. This is followed by the challenges confronting the effective implementation of these mechanisms (both internal and external).

### **6.1 Misconduct in the Public Service of Ghana**

The two public service organizations under-study like any public service organization in Ghana have rules and regulations as well as codes of conduct that guide their daily organizational activities. As discussed in chapter four, these regulations emanate from the GOs, the Civil Service Act (1993) and the Civil Service Codes of Conduct (1999). Thus, all public servants upon the assumption of duty are expected to go through a period of orientation, where they are taken through the statutes, rules and regulations, codes of conduct, organizational policies and procedures, work schedule amongst others. Besides this, refresher courses and in-service training are occasionally organized for employees to acquaint themselves with modern trends, techniques and expectations at work. Consequently, public servants are expected to be abreast with the statutes and SOPs which guide their daily activities and subsequently abide by them. However, because the public service is a human institution, and human beings are bound to flout rules and regulations, it is not uncommon to find employees going contrary to these rules and regulations. Each public service organization specifies what constitutes misconduct with its accompanying disciplinary

sanctions and measures in its code of conduct. Misconduct according to the Civil Service Act (1993) and the respective organizational codes is “any act done by a civil/public servant without reasonable cause: which amounts to failure to perform in a proper manner any duty imposed on him; or which contravenes any enactment relating to the civil service; or which is otherwise pre-judicial to the efficient conduct of the civil service; or which tends to bring the civil service into disrepute; constitutes misconduct. For the avoidance of doubt, the conviction of a civil servant for any offence involving fraud, dishonesty or moral turpitude, tends to bring the ‘service’ (referring to each public service organization) into disrepute (Civil Service Act (Act 327), 1993; Civil Service Code of Conduct, 1999: GES 2003; GHS 2005). The above definition reveals that what constitutes misconduct is broad and varies from one organization to the other and therefore disciplinary actions also vary and as a result, the penalties meted out to employees differ depending on the gravity of the offence. The offences according to the various organizational codes including the Civil Service Code of Conduct (1999) and Act (1993) are categorized into minor and major offences. The minor offences include; reporting late to work and closing earlier, absenteeism, insubordination, inappropriate and unauthorized use of organizational resources, unauthorized collection of money, engaging in another gainful occupation, impersonation, providing false information, disclosure of official information, sexual harassment, drunkenness, involving in politics, loafing, use of abusive language and engaging in activities likely to result in conflict of interest amongst others (Civil Service Code of Conduct, 1999: GES 2003; GHS 2005). The major offences in the public service include but not limited to theft, embezzlement, fraud, and any situation of negligence leading to financial loss to the service, rape and sexual harassment, assault and battery, habitual intoxication, trafficking in and use of narcotic drugs, demand and collection of unauthorized fees, falsification of official records, criminal conviction by a court of competent jurisdiction, misuse of organizational resources/property, gross insubordination, impersonation, breaching financial policies and procedures or divulging confidential information, receiving and giving bribes as well as involving in public examination malpractices (Civil Service Code of Conduct, 1999; GES, 2000; GHS, 2005). The essence of these disciplinary actions or procedures is to ensure that fair and humane organizational standards, principles and performance are strictly adhered to thereby providing a serene work environment for all employees.

## 6.2 The Nature of Sanctions in the Public Service

The various forms of penalties as identified by all the respondents for committing misconduct was consistent with those listed in the Civil Service Code of Conduct (1999), Section 77 of the Civil Service Act (1993) and the individual organizational codes of conduct (GES 2003; GHS 2005). The possible penalties meted out to employees who commit minor offences include warning. This is the first and most common form of penalty and it could be verbal or written warning. This is a hint indicating a possible severe sanction could follow if the same/similar misconduct persists. Another form of penalty is the issuance of query letter(s) for the said individual to justify his/her conduct and why disciplinary action(s) should not be taken against him/her. Suspension from work, delayed promotion, half salary, demotion to a lower rank, interdiction, disciplinary transfer, refund of illegal/unauthorised money collected from clients and outright dismissal or termination of appointment are the other forms of sanctions that could be imposed for minor offences. These misconducts according to a respondent:

*“are considered minor because the action though unacceptable, is less serious and does not pose danger to the organization. The offender might also be a ‘first timer’ who may have committed the act unintentionally or that the action is not considered criminal”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0019).

On the other hand, the penalties imposed for committing a major offence include suspension of salary immediately the disciplinary report is received, deferment of due promotion and salary increment for 1 to 3 years, dismissal and subsequent forfeiture of end of service benefits with exception of social security contributions, removal from office (without loss of end of service benefits); reduction in rank and salary, suspension from duty without salary for not less than two weeks, change of work schedule or place, forced resignation, postponement or cancellation of training and awards (GHS, 2005; GES, 2000; Civil Service Act 327: ACT 1993; Civil Service Code of Conduct, 1999).

These measures notwithstanding, respondents to the in-depth interviews had varied opinions on how all the penalties are been enforced. For instance, one respondent remarked:

*“sometimes we terminate one’s appointment for wrongdoing but it is rarely done”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0004).

To most of the respondents, warning and disciplinary transfers were the most common form of sanctions for misconduct. One respondent puts it succinctly:

*“If you are in one government hospital and you apply for transfer, your request will not be granted. However, if you do something wrong, you are transferred to another government hospital immediately. So, I have always said that if I am at a place and I don’t like the place, all I need to do is misbehave and I will be transferred to a different place”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 0019).

Disciplinary transfers are seen as a form of punishment for unyielding employees and at times transfers to another office or region is equated to ‘incarceration in Sobibor’ (making reference to the historical German execution camp). Another respondent opined that:

*“there are sanctions but we hardly apply them because the systems are not working... if you query a subordinate for misconduct, s/he will simply say “the man doesn’t like me without saying why s/he is being queried”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 0004).

### **6.3 Disciplinary Proceedings in the Public Service of Ghana**

The Civil Service Act (1993) and Code of Conduct (1999) recommend the establishment of Disciplinary Committees (DCs) in the various organizations/institutions with the responsibility for the promotion of discipline and disciplinary proceedings within the Service. The President of the Republic is the ultimate disciplinarian. However, he/she delegates responsibilities to the PSC, OHSC and the various Councils of the organizations under the Public Service of Ghana. For expeditious action to be taken, the Councils further delegate disciplinary responsibilities in accordance with the organizational structure, i.e. National (Headquarters), Regional, District and Institutional/facility or sub-district levels to discipline employees at their administrative levels and report accordingly to the Council through its hierarchical structure. Thus, DCs are established to handle cases that attract formal disciplinary proceedings at all levels of the administrative structure and this could be permanent or *ad hoc* depending on the circumstances. Before disciplinary proceedings are initiated against an employee, there should first be a written complaint of misconduct, followed by a call to appropriate witness(es) to provide evidence. For instance, in GHS when misconduct is noticed or reported, the officer in-charge documents the incident, and makes a formal report within 3 working days to his immediate supervisor for his/her attention and then formally initiate further action by instituting a preliminary investigation to establish its authenticity or otherwise of the report. This investigation may take the form of interview(s), inspection of document and premises and letter of enquiry to person(s) concerned to respond accordingly. The officer in-charge then takes the appropriate action based on the findings. If the findings point to minor offence, then the appropriate sanctions as spelt out in the code of

conduct are applied within three working days (Civil Service Code of Conduct 1999; Civil Service Act 1993; GES 2003; GHS 2005). However, if the findings point to a major offence, then the officer in-charge proceeds with formal disciplinary proceedings by taking one or all of the following additional actions; interdiction, issuance of a query or setting up a Committee of Inquiry (GHS 2005). According to the GHS code of conduct (2005), interdiction is the suspension or exclusion from duty of an employee who is alleged to be involved in a case of major misconduct. When this happens, the issuing authority is expected to submit a written report to a higher disciplinary authority within five working days. Interdictions are mostly instituted under the following three circumstances:

- a. Where the employee concerned is likely to interfere with the formal investigation process;
- b. Where criminal proceedings are being instituted against an employee; and
- c. Where the employee is being investigated on grounds of professional incompetence or malpractice (GHS 2005).

The interdiction sets the tone for the formal disciplinary proceeding to commence and when the charges are proven, “may result in the imposition of a major penalty” (GHS 2005). The process entails;

- a. The presentation of written charges against the employee accused of the offence;
- b. The accused being given the opportunity to inspect or study any documentary evidence against him including the report of preliminary investigations;
- c. The accused being given the opportunity to submit his response to the charges in writing;
- d. The accused being given the opportunity to appear before a DC;
- e. A letter inviting an accused to appear before a DC;
- f. The accused being given the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses or call his witness, if any;
- g. The accused having the right to make fresh written statement if he so desires; and
- h. Adequate written documentation in order to facilitate the work of the relevant Appellate Body (GHS, 2005: 30-31).

These notwithstanding, the accused has the opportunity to be represented by a legal counsel, no witness is supposed to be present while another witness is testifying (for the sake of anonymity) and the accused has the opportunity to say whether he/she is satisfied with the process or not. This process is also applicable to all public service organizations (Civil Service Code of Conduct 1999; Civil Service Act 1993; GES 2000).

## **6.4 Effectiveness of the Internal Organizational Measures to Promote Ethics**

Consistent with the general practice in Ghana, the GES and the GHS like all Public Service organizations are very good in carving out excellent rules and regulations but are woefully weak when it comes to strictly enforcing these rules or codes. In response to how effective these disciplinary measures were, one of the respondents quipped:

*“in the public service, nobody seems to be supervising and implementing rules of engagements and ethical codes and this creates the laxity for people to take things in their own hands and misbehave (Fieldwork interview Transcript No. 0021).*

Another respondent re-echoed similar sentiment by alluding to the fact that:

*“some of the enforcements are not encouraging even though we have all the guidelines, well laid down rules and regulations as well as structures and procedures; the difficulty has been with the enforcement of these rules, they are relaxed” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0022).*

This laxity has led to the loss of billions of Ghana cedis. One respondent remarked:

*“... you can't work in the private sector and not adhere to their goals. You realize that when issues about financial embezzlement come up, the culprit is quickly arrested; even if s/he refunds the money, the law takes its due cause. But in the public service, once a similar offence is committed, the culprit will be told s/he would be put on interdiction and or half salary even before the disciplinary letter is sent and by which time the culprit would be nowhere to be found; getting the person to face the disciplinary proceedings becomes difficult. People have taken over seven billion, ten billion cedis of facility money and the service has not been able to apprehend them (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0020).*

The factors accounting for the laxity in rules and regulations are further explained below:

### **6.4.1 Ineffective Implementation of Rules**

When it comes to written or codified rules, the Ghana public service has one of the best laws, however, the main challenge with these rules are how effective they are implemented. The rules are mostly selectively enforced which lacks equity and fairness. Disciplinary procedures are applied unfairly leading to employees closely associated with supervisors/ managers easily getting away with unethical behaviours without sanctions or where sanctions are applied, they are applied with ‘human face’. The response below justifies this assertion:

*“Punishments must be equitable and non-discriminatory. However, because some employees have informal and dysfunctional relationships within the organizational setup, and people adopt the ‘whom you know’ attitude and consequently when one commits an offence and knows big people, s/he either goes unpunished or is given a minor punishment but if you don’t know anybody, then you are given a raw deal. This form of selective justice is not good; it undermines the sanctity of punishment as a way of preventing others from committing the same offence and also correcting people when they are wrong”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0021).

These ineffective and unfair procedures according to respondents in a FGD have led to unreliable contract enforcement, unpredictable organizational policies, inefficient and ineffective policies and thereby making the public service a weak institution (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 0011). For instance, one of the respondents remarked:

*“ineffective recruitment and selection process leads to bad appointment and subsequently poor performance”. Another opined that: “this undermines the basic principles of the rule of law and encourages clientelism, nepotism, favouritism, tribalism and corruption”. Yet another respondent reiterated that: “the lack of effective implementation of institutional policies breeds ambiguous roles and functions for employees leading to people reporting to work without roles to perform and consequently waste of government financial resources”.*

#### **6.4.2 Untimely Release of Resource to Function**

Further to these, most public service organizations do not have adequate resources to implement the organization’s mandate. As they rely on the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MOFEP) for their budgetary allocations and releases, but these releases are infrequent and when they do come, they are either released in piece-meals or slashed drastically. In other instances, these releases are in arrears for more than a year. One of the Directors bemoaned this state of affairs during the course of the interview by remarking that:

*“The whole of last year the Government of Ghana did not give us a pesewa and there is also no subvention for this year. Go through our offices, you will see we don’t have computers, look at this mosquito net (pointing towards the windows), we don’t do preventive maintenance... we have the needed capacity but we don’t have the resources to implement our policies”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 022).

In these situations, the public organization is financially handicapped to prosecute its institutional mandate. This is compounded by the lack of adequate human resources, public visibility and impartiality in the execution of their mandates.

### 6.4.3 Weak Administrative and Legal Regimes

Another challenge to the effective implementation of rules in the public service is the weak administrative and legal regimes in swiftly responding to unethical behaviours. According to one respondent:

*“the Public service has not been able to prosecute its mandate because of inherent institutional and administrative weaknesses in the compliance and enforcement of basic regulations and SOPs. This has emanated from the failure of government and some public officials (both present and past) to effectively discharge their duties. Subventions to public organizations are not released on time, and in most cases slashed before they are released. Internally, there is no effective pre-audit before payments are made; at times too, there is no coordination between HR departments and Accounts/Finance departments, not to talk of poor supervision and ineffective internal control system. Some employees have also been able to use their inventiveness to manipulate the weak system to their personal advantage (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 036).*

The weak administrative system was traced to the declining fortunes of the public service. A former Chief Director opined that:

*“The ERP, SAP and economic decline in the 1980s and 1990s was the beginning of the declining fortunes of the public service. The basic HR and infrastructural facilities were drastically reduced; salaries were also stagnant despite the high inflation. Employees could not make ends meet and so resorted to other vices. The cherished values of respect, loyalty, honesty and responsibility were therefore lost. This I think paved the way for the institutional weakness in the public service” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 037).*

This state of affairs was further compounded by the slow administrative and judicial procedures in responding to these behaviours and in some instances; it could take years in arriving at a conclusion. The slow and ineffective administrative and legal system therefore presented another challenge in that, when malpractices were detected and perpetrators went unpunished or the process delayed unnecessarily, other officials felt they could also commit similar practices and go free, leading to further malpractices. For instance, one Director remarked that:

*“there are several instances of accounts clerks/revenue collectors of GHS who have embezzled millions of cedis collected on behalf of their facilities and are roaming freely in town” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 023).*

It further came to light that, though there are internal auditors in each public service organization, evidence of financial malfeasances abounds annually in the public service. When the Auditor General’s Office detects it, and reports same to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament, the latter only ‘names and shames’ the perpetrators without



further sanctions because they have no prosecutorial powers. On the other hand, when they muster courage and refer the case to the judiciary, the latter unnecessarily delays and frustrates clients seeking justice. The implication of this weak and slow administrative and legal procedure is that it can be exploited by other unscrupulous public servants to enrich themselves as well as sending a signal that “it does not really matter even if one is caught doing the wrong thing.

#### **6.4.4 Poor Record Keeping**

Poor record keeping has been one of the banes of inefficiency in the Public Service. Most public service organizations fail to take proper inventory of documents coming into or leaving their organizations. In situations where proper records are kept, retrieval becomes problematic. Plethora of researches has established this poor state of affairs (CDD 2010; Records Management 2009; A-Gs Annual Reports 2008-2014; Commission on Judgment Debt 2015). The researcher had the unpleasant situation where his letters requesting for permission to conduct fieldwork interviews with two public service organizations could not be traced though they were documented as having been received. One respondent who professed his stout reservation about the poor nature of record-keeping in MDAs and MMDAs noted:

*“record-keeping here (referring to the public service) is not that good, officers are not able to provide every document as soon as it is demanded. It is either those who were in-charge when the transactions occurred have been transferred or are dead. It therefore takes a very long-time to either retrieve it or it simply cannot be found”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 020).

Another respondent averred that:

*“some employees deliberately let written agreements covering transactions to ‘get missing’ (cannot be traced) so that no wrong-act committed by them would live to hunt them in the future, especially if they perceive that act would have future consequences”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 009).

Records in the public Service therefore get lost, misplaced or deliberately destroyed. Failure to keep proper records on public transactions makes it difficult to keep clear audit trails leading to loss or misapplication of resources procured with public funds. The A-Gs reports have annually decried this poor state of affairs.

## **6.5 Constitutional Measures to Enforce Ethical Behaviours in the Public Service**

The Constitution of Ghana (1992) has enumerated some measures aimed at curbing unethical practices. In this direction, Article 35 (8) of the Constitution states that “the State shall take steps to eradicate corrupt practices and the abuse of power” (Republic of Ghana, 1992). This declaration is re-echoed with more emphasis and urgency in sections 179C (a) and (b) of Act 458 (1993) which amended the Criminal Code of 1960 as follows “Any person who:

- (a) While holding a public office corruptly or dishonestly abuses the office for private profit or benefits; or
- (b) Not being a holder of a public office acts or is found to have acted in collaboration with a person holding public office for that latter to corruptly or dishonestly abuse the office for private profit or benefit commits an offence”.

This Act is all-encompassing to include the President, Ministers, Chief Directors, Departmental Heads, District Assembly Members as well as all categories of public servants and their clients. Thus, this section surpasses the GOs, regulations, codes of conduct and other organizational SOPs in the public service. Some of the measures enumerated in the Constitution and subsequently other Acts are discussed below:

### **6.5.1 Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)**

CHRAJ is one of the agencies established under the 1992 Constitution with a tripartite responsibility of ensuring human rights, administrative justice as well as fight corruption. The functions and powers of the Commission are mainly derived from Article 218 of the Constitution (Republic of Ghana, 1992) and the Commission’s Act (Act 456) of 1993. Article 218(a) and (e) of the constitution for instance empowers the Commission to:

- a. Investigate complaints of violation of fundamental human rights and freedoms, injustice, corruption, abuse of power and unfair treatment of any person by a public officer in the exercise of his official duties;
- b. To investigate all instances of alleged or suspected corruption and misappropriation of public moneys by officials and to take appropriate steps, including reports to the Attorney-General and A-G resulting from investigations.

Since the establishment of CHRAJ in 1992, several cases have been investigated and notable ones include; Col. (Rtd) E.M Osei-Owusu (former Interior Minister), Mr. P.V Obeng (former

Presidential Staffer), Ibrahim Adam (former Minister of Agriculture), Dr. Richard Anane (former Transport Minister), Dr Sipa Yankey, Mr. Kwame Peprah and Dr Ato Quarshie. Others include J. A Kuffour (former President) and in recent times President J.D. Mahama. According to Bossman (2007: 10), the fact that CHRAJ went ahead to investigate the allegations against sitting Presidents of Ghana underscores the role of CHRAJ as an independent anti-corruption institution. Besides, CHRAJ has developed ‘*Guidelines on Conflict of Interest*’ which assist public officials to identify, manage and resolve issues of conflict of interest. Additionally, in collaboration with other state institutions, CHRAJ has also come out with a generic *Code of Conduct for Public Officers* to promote integrity, probity, accountability and transparency in Ghana.

### **6.5.2 Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest**

Another important mechanism is the inclusion of code of conduct and conflict of interest for public officials in the 1992 Constitution. This details what is expected of public officials. For instance, Article 284 states that “a public officer shall not put himself in a position where his personal interest conflicts or is likely to conflict with the performance of the function of his office”. Again, Article 285 states that “no person shall be appointed or act as the chairman of a governing body of a public corporation or authority while he holds a position in the service of that corporation or authority”.

### **6.5.3 Asset Declaration**

In addition to the above, Article 286 of the 1992 Constitution requires certain categories of public officials to declare their assets and liabilities to the A-Gs Office. This Article is further strengthened by the Public Office Holders (Declaration of Assets and Disqualification) Act, Act 550 (Republic of Ghana, 1998) under the following provisions:

- a. Within three (3) months after coming into force of the constitution or before taking office as the case may be;
- b. At the end of every four (4) years;
- c. At the end of his term of office;
- d. Shall be submitted not later than 6 months of the occurrence of any of the events specified in this subsection (Republic of Ghana, 1998; Republic of Ghana, 1992).

The act also provides avenues for disqualification from holding public office. For instance, if a Commission of Inquiry has established that whilst holding public office, he/ she:

- a. acquired any assets unlawfully;
- b. defrauded the State;
- c. willfully and dishonestly or corruptly acted in a manner prejudicial to the interest of the State; and
- d. knowingly made a false declaration of his assets, properties or liabilities (Republic of Ghana, 1998).

The aim of the '*Declaration of Assets and Disqualification Act*' is to prevent the illegal acquisition of assets by public officials. Thus, section 5 of the Act requires all assets to be declared by public officers and any asset(s) acquired after the initial declaration and which is not reasonably attributable to legally earned income, gift, loan, inheritance or any other reasonable source shall be regarded as illegally acquired (Republic of Ghana, 1998).

#### **6.5.4 Parliament**

The 1992 Constitution also gives Parliament the power to hold public officials accountable for their actions or inactions through its oversight functions. For instance, Article 103 (3) of the Constitution spells out the various forms of oversight roles parliament can play and these include question time in Parliament, the role of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament (PAC) and vetting of public officials. The PAC is the most visible oversight committee established by order 151 (2) of the standing orders of Parliament (Parliamentary Centre, 2009:1). The primary function of the PAC is to examine the A-G's Reports to minimize financial losses to the state. The other oversight roles of Parliament to check unethical behaviours including corruption and make the latter "a high risk, low-gain activity" are in phases two, three and four of the Budget Cycle (Kan-Dapaah, 2015: 17). In these phases, Parliament has the duty to receive, examine, debate and approve the President's Budget proposals in the first instance. However, Parliament's performance is woefully unsatisfactory as most parliamentarians do not understand the requisites of the budget but vote for its approval based on partisanship. Another oversight role of Parliament is to ensure that monies released to the MDAs are judiciously utilised by monitoring and evaluating the financial activities of the MDAs and also ensuring that projects and programmes executed by these MDAs are done with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness. However, this supervisory function of Parliament is unfortunately ignored. Parliament hardly undertakes

any site visits and also no reliable financial data is made available to Parliament for the purposes of monitoring and evaluation (Kan-Dapaah, 2015). In the last phase mentioned above, Parliament, through the PAC is supposed to scrutinize the A-G's Report and invite witnesses from the MDAs to meet the committee for a Public Hearing which is normally televised live essentially. Here again, Parliament is handicapped because it has no prosecutorial powers but only 'names and shames' persons cited for financial malfeasance in the audit reports.

#### **6.5.5 Auditor-General's Office (A-G's Office)**

Article 187 of the 1992 Republican Constitution mandates the Auditor-General to "audit the public accounts of Ghana and of all public offices..." the A-G is also required to "present his report to Parliament within six months after the end of each financial year, drawing attention not only to irregularities, but also to any other matter in his opinion that needs to be brought to the attention of parliament. This forms the basis for the work of the PAC and through this article, the A-G has brought to light several cases of corruption, embezzlement and misapplication of public funds. The findings and recommendations of the A-G have resulted in the prosecution of some individuals and public organizations. These include; the Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA), the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP), Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (GYEEDA), the National Service Scheme (NSS) and a private businessman (Mr. Alfred Agbesi Woyome) (Duah, 2016).

#### **6.5.6 Setting up Commissions of Inquiry**

Article 278 of the 1992 Constitution gives the President, Cabinet and Parliament the ability to set up a commission of inquiry when they feel it is in the best interest of the nation. The Article states that "the President shall by Constitutional Instrument, appoint a Commission of Inquiry into any matter of public interest where:

- a. The President is satisfied that a commission of inquiry should be appointed, or
- b. The Council of State advises that it is in the public interest to do so; or
- c. Parliament, by a resolution request that a commission of inquiry to be appointed to inquire into any matter, specified in the resolution as being a matter of public interest.

Many Commissions of Inquiries have been set up in the country to handle cases that are considered important to the interest of the public including the Ghana @ 50 Commission (2008), Judgement Debt Commission (2014), the Commission setup to investigate the Ghana Black Stars failure in the World Cup (2014) and the Georgina Wood Commission of Inquiry.

#### **6.5.7 Internal Audit Agency (IAA)**

The Internal Audit Agency (IAA) was established through the enactment of Act 658, (IAA Act, 2003). The agency is charged to coordinate, facilitate, monitor and supervise internal audit activities within MDAs and MMDAs in order to secure quality assurance of internal audit within these state institutions (Act 658). By the Act, the IAA is mandated to ensure the following standards are upheld:

- a. Financial, managerial and operating information reported internally and externally is accurate, reliable and timely;
- b. The financial activities of MDAs and MMDAs are in compliance with laws, policies, plans, standards and procedures;
- c. National resources are adequately safeguarded;
- d. National resources are used economically, effectively and efficiently;
- e. Plans, goals and objectives of MDAs and MMDAs are achieved; and
- f. Risks are adequately managed in the MDAs and MMDAs (Republic of Ghana 2003: 3)

These functions are aimed at facilitating the prevention and easy detection of fraud as well as promptly informing the MDAs and MMDAs about deficiencies relating to their programmes, operations and how to immediately correct them. Further, the IAA is expected to monitor, inspect and evaluate the internal auditing of the MDAs and MMDAs (Republic of Ghana 2003). In addition, the Act mandated the establishment of Internal Audit Departments in every MDA and MMDA to provide the needed support for them in performing their administrative duties. Thus, Act 658 was enacted to check the abuse of public resources, control spending, disbursement and procurement of goods and services. Prior to the enactment of Act 658, the onus of internal auditing rested on the shoulders of the Auditor-General (Act 584) who played a dual role as both the internal and external auditor in the public sector.

#### **6.5.8 Serious Fraud Office (SFO)/Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO)**

The SFO is a specialised agency of government established to monitor, investigate and on the authority of the Attorney-General, prosecute any offence involving serious financial or economic loss to the state (Act 466 of 1993). This Act grants the SFO the power to investigate any suspected offence provided for by law which appears to the Executive Director on reasonable grounds to involve serious financial or economic loss to the state or to any state organisation or institution in which the state has financial interest. However, the SFO Act has been replaced with the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) Act, Act 804 (2010). The mandate of EOCO has been broadened beyond that of SFO. Unlike the previous SFO which was only mandated to investigate matters which cause financial or economic loss to the state, EOCO is however mandated to investigate, prosecute and recover proceeds of crimes including money laundering, drugs and human trafficking, bribery, forgery, extortion, smuggling, tax fraud among others (Republic of Ghana, 2010). In recent years EOCO has handled many cases including that of Mr. Alfred Agbesi Wayome and the conflagration at the Central Medical Store (CMS) of the GHS in Tema.

#### **6.5.9 Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663)**

Prior to the enactment of this Act, public procurement was inundated with unclear legal framework, lack of harmonized procedures and weak institutional processes. This led to the enactment of the Public Procurement Act 663 (Republic of Ghana, 2003). The Act established the Public Procurement Authority (PPA) which deals with the administrative and institutional arrangements for procurement and tendering procedures as well as engaging the services of Consultants. The functions of PPA are spelt out in Section 3 of the Act as follows:

- a. makes proposals for the formulation of policies of procurement;
- b. ensure policy implementation and human resource development for public procurement;
- c. develops draft rules, instructions, other regulatory documentation on public procurement and formats for public procurement documentation;
- d. monitor and supervise public procurement and ensure compliance with statutory requirements;
- e. have the right to obtain information concerning public procurement from contracting authorities;
- f. establish and implement an information system relating to public procurement; and

- g. publish a monthly Public Procurement Bulletin which contains information germane to public procurement, including proposed procurement notices, notices of invitation to tender and contract award information (Republic of Ghana, 2003).

Thus, the passage of Act 663 has harmonised the public procurement process to ensure judicious, economic, and efficient deployment of public funds in a fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory manner (Public Procurement Authority Webpage, 2017). This is amply demonstrated in the regular newspaper publications of tender/procurement notices. Some achievements of the PPA include “harmonised set of procurement rules to guide the procurement process at all levels of government, empowerment of citizens and other stakeholders to hold government accountable, improvement in transparency and fair competition” (Asenso-Boakye and Etse, 2014:5).

#### **6.5.10 Public Disclosure Act/ Whistle-blower Act (2006), Act 720**

In addition to the above, another external measure to encourage ethics and reduce unethical conduct is the “*Protected Public Interest Disclosure Act*” referred to as the “Whistle-Blower” Act (2006), Act 720. The Act spells out six different improprieties that individuals can blow the whistle on and these include economic crimes, breaking or failing to obey the law, unfair administration of justice, waste, or mismanagement of public resources, and degrading the environment and endangering the health and safety of individuals (Republic of Ghana, 2006). The Act further provides protection against victimisation of persons who make these disclosures as well as rewarding individuals who make these disclosures leading to the retrieval of state funds. These rewards are provided under the following conditions:

- i. A whistle-blower who makes a disclosure that leads to the arrest and conviction of an accused person shall be rewarded with money from the Fund (Republic of Ghana, 2006: 11).
- ii. A whistle-blower whose disclosure results in the recovery of an amount of money shall be rewarded from the Fund with either ten per cent of the amount of money recovered, or the amount of money that the Attorney-General shall, in consultation with the Inspector-General of Police, determine (Republic of Ghana, 2006: 11).

Thus, the Act does not only provide individuals with the avenue to report unethical conducts but rewards them through the establishment of the fund.



### **6.5.11 Financial Administration Act, Act 654 (2003)**

The Financial Administration Act (FAA) was enacted to regulate the financial management of the public sector, prescribe the responsibilities of persons entrusted with financial management in the government, ensure the effective and efficient management of state revenue, expenditure, assets, and liabilities, resources of the government, the Consolidated Fund and other public funds and to provide for matters related to these (Republic of Ghana, 2003: 4). The FAA therefore covers a wide range of issues bordering on financial management in the public sector. Some of these include the appointment and duties of the Controller and Accountant-General, modalities for making payments out of the Consolidated Funds and the establishment of Financial Administration Tribunal (FAT) (Republic of Ghana, 2003). The Tribunal has the jurisdiction to:

- a. to hear and determine matters that fall for determination under this Act;
- b. to enforce recommendations of the PAC on the Auditor-General's reports as approved by Parliament;
- c. to enforce contracts and bonds entered into in pursuance of this Act;
- d. to make such orders, as it considers appropriate, for the recovery of monies, assets or other property due to the State;
- e. to prohibit any individual (whether a public officer or not) from managing public accounts or funds if the individual is unqualified professionally or has been persistently negligent in the management of public funds; and
- f. to prohibit any person from participating as a bidder in any government procurement or contract where the person has a record of defrauding the State (Republic of Ghana, 2003: 29-30).

The FAA could be seen as a piece of legislation with wide coverage and the provision for the FAT will go a long way to ensure that the Act and other Acts (e.g. Act 663) are strictly enforced.

### **6.5.12 Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2007 (Act 749)**

The Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2007 (Act 749) is also one of the measures put in place to reduce corruption and enhance ethics. Sections 1 and 2 of the Act criminalizes money laundering activities in Ghana. The elements of money laundering include conversion disguise, acquisition, and use of transfer of property knowing that the property is or forms part of the proceeds of unlawful activity. One of the measures taken under the Act to prevent

money-laundering is the creation of the Financial Intelligence with the mandate of identifying proceeds of unlawful activity and subsequently making information available to investigating authorities.

### **6.5.13 Attorney-General's Department**

Article 88 of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana vests the exclusive power to initiate and prosecute all criminal offences to the Attorney General. Additionally, The Attorney-General is the principal legal adviser to the Government. The Attorney-General is expected to perform the following functions:

1. The Attorney-General shall discharge such other duties of a legal nature as may be referred or assigned to him by the President, or imposed on him by this Constitution or any other law;
2. The Attorney-General shall be responsible for the initiation and conduct of all prosecutions of criminal offences;
3. All offences prosecuted in the name of the Republic of Ghana shall be at the suit of the Attorney-General or any other person authorised by him in accordance with any law; and
4. The Attorney-General shall be responsible for the institution and conduct of all civil cases on behalf of the State; and all civil proceedings against the State shall be instituted against the Attorney-General as defendant (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

### **6.5.14 Media and Civil Society**

The media and civil society have also played a significant role in curbing unethical behaviours. Article 162(1) of the 1992 Constitution guarantees the freedom and independence of the media which is equivocally stated that “freedom and independence of the media are hereby guaranteed”. A free, independent and unbiased media have contributed immensely in reducing unethical behaviours through creating awareness on the causes and damning consequences of administrative malpractices and also exposing unethical practices through investigative journalism and reportage. In this direction, the media has exposed numerous unethical practices not only in the public sector but the entire country. Notable examples in recent years include Anas Aremeyaw Anas’ exposure of CEPS, the Police and the Judiciary and Manasseh Azure’s exposure of GYEDA. The Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) is also one of the members of the Ghana Anti-corruption Coalition (GACC) that seeks to nib

this canker in the bud. The numbers of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the form of NGOs, Pressure Groups and think tanks have also increased tremendously in recent years. These CSOs are mostly engaged in advocacy and community development programmes and in recent times have added anti-corruption dimensions to their responsibilities. They either intervene directly or through monitoring, advocating and lobbying for the passage of effective legislations. Some CSOs are involved in exposing acts of corruption as well as naming and shaming public officials found to have engaged in corrupt activities (Kututwa, 2005; Bossman 2010). For instance, the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) the Local Chapter of Transparency International, Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) and Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA) have all brought issues of corruption to public attention and advocated for the strengthening of accountability and transparency in public office. The GII for instance is noted for its annual corruption perception index (CPI) in Ghana.

## **6.6 Effectiveness of these Constitutional Measures to Enhance Ethical Behaviour**

### **6.6.1 Auditor-General's Office**

Notwithstanding the role of the A-Gs Office in ensuring the judicious use of the public purse and reporting accordingly to Parliament its findings, the Office is constrained in several ways. One of the constraints is in relationship with the overall governance structure of the public service (Dua, 2016). The executive arm of government controls the A-G in many ways. For instance, by the powers vested on the President in Articles 71 and 72 of the Constitution, the president appoints, determines the salaries and conditions of service as well as terminates the appointment of all senior officials in the Public Service and other key government functionaries who are to ensure prudence and accountability in the use of public finance (Republic of Ghana, 1992). For fear of falling out of the Executive's favour and subsequently losing their appointment, they are weak when it comes to demanding accountability, probity, transparency and ethical behaviour from the Executive arm of Government. Also, A-G's Department is understaffed, underfunded and under-resourced and is unable to recruit highly skilled employees into the department (Dua, 2016). Furthermore, the A-Gs department also lacks the necessary equipment to effectively and efficiently monitor electronic transactions throughout the country. Not all, the A-G only makes recommendations based on her findings but has no authority to sanction offenders. Another militating factor is the frequent slash in the budget of the A-Gs Office by MOFEP thereby

inhibiting the A-Gs effectiveness in carrying out her constitutional mandate. This is coupled with delays in the release of funds. Moreover, in terms of recruitment, the A-G is required to seek financial clearance before recruiting new employees which undermines efficiency. In an interview with one of the officials of the A-Gs Office, he reiterated that “the A-G has not been able to fully and adequately discharge her responsibilities in the areas of ‘disallowance and surcharge’ and the ‘administration of Public Officers Assets Declaration Forms” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 18). He went on to explain that the A-G has not been able to surcharge public officials who have misappropriated public funds or who through acts of negligence, have made the state lose substantial sums of money. With regards to the public assets declaration, he opined that the main challenge is “the A-Gs inability to verify and monitor the forms, leading to non-declaration or incomplete declaration of all assets”. He further remarks, “the Financial Administration Act, 2003 (Act 654) makes provision for the establishment of the Financial Administration Tribunal with the mandate to among others enforce recommendations of the PAC on the Auditor-General’s reports as approved by Parliament, but unfortunately, till date the Financial Administration Tribunal is yet to be established (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 18). Another respondent bemoaned the inability of the A-Gs Office to discharge its responsibilities in two areas which has become the source of public outcry especially by Occupy Ghana (a pressure Group), these according to him are “disallowance and surcharge by the A-G and the administration of public officers’ assets declaration forms (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 38).

### **6.6.2 Parliament**

The effectiveness of Parliament as the legislative arm of the government has been challenged variedly. One of the criticisms levelled against Parliament is the lack of independence because the President has effective control over it and can virtually obtain all that he wants because Parliament is at his beck and call. This is so because the President appoints the Speaker and the first Deputy Speaker (though by the terms of article 95(1) of the Constitution, the Speaker is supposed to be elected by the members of Parliament), the Majority Leader and his First Deputy, the Majority Chief Whip and his Deputy as well as the Parliamentary Service Board and the Clerk of Parliament. Through these appointments, coupled with the fact that the President always has overwhelming majority of his Party in Parliament, demanding accountability from the Executive becomes problematic making Parliament not able to effectively play its oversight role. Again, Parliamentarians are too partisan and this makes the interests of political parties supersede the interests of the state. In

situations where the interests of one's party conflict with that of the State, the interest of the political party reigns supreme. This is because of the political sycophancy in Parliament where parliamentarians want the largesse from the President (ministerial appointments and appointments to statutory boards and corporations) and so will go all out to defend/support the policies of the president regardless of its impact on the citizenry.

Article 108 of the 1992 Constitution further cripples the functions of Parliament by the inability of Parliamentarians to initiative bills or motions or amendments which, if passed, would impose fiscal obligation on the state, unless that bill is introduced by or on behalf of the President (CDD, 2010; Republic of Ghana, 1992), making the President of Ghana the sole policy initiator and proponent of any legislative reform. In this regard, CDD (2010: 18) argues that "not a single bill has been originated or introduced by a member (or group of members) of Parliament in his or her own name since the Fourth Republic came into being in 1993.

Further, Parliament is challenged because it lacks financial independence. Though the constitution provides Parliament financial independence, this is not the case in reality because MOFEP determines when and how much resource to be released to Parliament and these impacts negatively on the timeliness, adequacy and sufficiency of funds to effectively plan its activities. This has therefore confined Parliament in playing the role of "dutifully doing the bidding of the President" (CDD, 2010: 8). Not all, in an interview with a former parliamentarian, one of the major challenges he identified as confronting Parliament was "the unwillingness of the House leadership to lay reports of the Committee which are perceived to be damning to the government of the day in the house for debate. The result is that some reports do not come before the floor of Parliament until the end of the four-year term of Parliament and per the Standing Orders of Parliament, such reports can no longer be laid" (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 24). Finally, Parliament is ill-resourced and poorly remunerated to do its work effectively (Kan-Dapaah, 2015). The PAC, one of the standing committees of Parliament which is responsible for the investigation of the A-Gs annual reports is also handicapped. The first handicap is that it has no mechanism to conduct pre-emptive investigations to prevent the abuse of public funds as its mandate is limited to examining the A-Gs report (Parliamentary Centre, 2009). Secondly, the PAC has no prosecutorial powers to prosecute officials who are found culpable and so not much has been done to public officials and organizations in terms of prosecution.

Though the Constitution grants Parliament the power to set up commissions or committees of inquiries and to also summon before the floor of Parliament public officials to answer issues bordering the nation. There have been reported scandals and various other crises in public organizations including state enterprises, but no committee of Parliament has initiated or held inquiries into these issues.

### **6.6.3 CHRAJ**

CHRAJ though granted constitutional mandate to prevent the abuse of power and promote ethics is confronted with many challenges. In the first instance, CHRAJ combines the traditional functions of a human rights commission, an ombudsman and an anti-corruption agency. This triple mandate is overly broad and imposes enormous strain on its ability to discharge its multiple functions effectively (Shorte 2015; CDD 2010). CHRAJ has no power to prosecute persons against whom it makes adverse findings of corruption, including the embezzlement of public funds; it can only recommend prosecution of such persons to the Attorney General who has the exclusive and plenary authority under the Constitution to prosecute. In this regard, CDD (2010: 62) has astutely observed that:

*“The total absence of clear legal standards to regulate how the Attorney-General generally exercises its prosecutorial discretion, especially in cases involving alleged political corruption or abuse of office, is unhelpful to CHRAJ's work and arguably also violates the spirit of Article 296 (a & b) of the Constitution. At a minimum, where the Attorney General rejects a CHRAJ request for prosecution, the Attorney General must be required to provide written reasons that shall be made public.”*

In addition to the above, CHRAJ has no powers of arrest, search and seizure, as well as the power to freeze bank accounts of individuals under its investigations. This is further compounded by the fact that the decisions of the CHRAJ are not binding as they are, by law, required to be delivered in the form of recommendations rather than binding orders. Section 18 of *Act 456* (Republic of Ghana, 1993) establishing CHRAJ provides that after an investigation “the Commission shall report its decision and the reasons for it to the appropriate person, Minister, department or authority concerned and shall make the recommendation that it thinks fit” without the ability of enforcing it. This in the opinion of one of the respondents “has rendered CHRAJ as a *‘toothless bulldog’* in the eyes of the public” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 25). Again, like all other State institutions, CHRAJ is chronically under-resourced as government after government routinely provides it

only a fraction of its required annual budgets. The inadequate budgetary provision stifles the ability of the Commission to discharge its triple mandates effectively. Moreover, CHRAJ is severely understaffed, lacking the requisite human resources to prosecute its mandate. According to one of the Directors “the lack of resources is also making it impossible for the presence of CHRAJ to be felt across the 120 districts of Ghana as required by Act 456. This is coupled with our inability to retain qualified human resources. I think low salaries and unattractive service conditions has resulted in this state of affairs” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 21).

#### **6.6.4 The Assets Declaration Act, Act 550**

Though in theory the assets declaration Act is laudable because it is aimed at preventing illegal acquisition of wealth, however, in practice, the Act is merely seen as a cosmetic dressing because it is beset with several implementation challenges. For instance, the A-G is constitutionally mandated to receive and keep the declaration forms, the A-G has no access to the content. The content can only be disclosed as evidence under the following circumstances:

- a. before a court of competent jurisdiction;
- b. before a commission of inquiry appointed under Article 278 of the Constitution; and
- c. before an investigator appointed by the Commissioner for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (Republic of Ghana, 1998).

The custodian of the assets declaration form (the A-G) has no access to the submitted form and cannot therefore verify the genuineness of the form and thereby rendering the Act as a cosmetic dressing. According to a respondent, “Act 550 represents the single most inconsistent and ineffective pieces of legislation in Ghana as it opens avenues for public officials to corruptly acquire assets” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 21). To ensure probity and accountability, the Act should be amended to allow its authentication by the A-G as well as public disclosure.

#### **6.6.5 Weaknesses in the Whistle-blower Act (2006)**

The Whistle-blower Act (Act 720) though plausible in reducing unethical behaviours, has its own inherent weaknesses. The Act does not protect individuals who refuse to obey unlawful orders from their superiors or top management. It does not also protect individuals perceived as whistle-blowers or assisting whistle-blowers. In addition, Act 720 does not address the

rights of individuals who are about to make disclosures. Further to these, aspects of Section Four of Act 720 requires individuals making a disclosure to provide their “name, address and occupation” (Republic of Ghana, 2006: 5). This does not provide anonymity for individuals making public disclosures because they are skeptical about their identities being disclosed and the reprisal consequences on them as individuals and their close family. Another weakness of the Act is the number of institutions and individuals the Act gives investigative power to. Section Three of the Act gives power to as many as 18 institutions and individuals to receive complaints and investigate before submitting a report to the Attorney-General. Besides, some of the institutions mentioned in Section Three of the Act are not considered trustworthy by sections of the Ghanaian community. More so, the Act is also silent on individuals, who must provide evidence as a proof of impropriety, is it the accused, the individual making the disclosure or the investigator?

#### **6.6.6 Internal Audit Agency (IAA)**

The idea of establishing the IAA under Act 658 was very laudable and this is supported by empirical evidence that IAA is the first to detect and prevent fraud (Richard, 2002; Abbott et al., 2012) and subsequently eliminating or reducing its commission entirely (Halbouni, 2015). This notwithstanding, the IAA both at the Central Head Office and the units in the MDAs and MMDAs are confronted with numerous challenges including inadequate staffing, ill-resourced audit departments, and lack of well-trained internal auditors (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 036). Further, despite its existence in MDAs and MMDAs, evidence abound to show that government still losses millions of cedis annually as a result of various irregularities (A-Gs Report, 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014). For instance, the Programme Manager of one of the organizations interviewed iterated that:

*“Internal auditors are sitting in some of these organizations, feeling very frustrated because they are side-lined...Most of them don’t even know what is happening in their respective departments. When the internal Auditors give their candid opinion on financial issues, they are seen as trying to thwart people’s opportunities to indulge in financial improprieties, and so they don’t even let them see it, before they realize, the act is already committed. Because they do not want to be labelled as bad persons, they keep quiet and allow it to go, till maybe the act is found out by the Auditor-General’s Office” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 029).*

The questions that are worth asking are “what is the role of the internal auditors in these public service organizations? Are they there as watchdogs to prevent financial irregularities



or they are there to assist in committing these irregularities? (What was the intention of establishing this agency and are they able to play their roles effectively?)

### **6.6.7 Commission of Inquiries**

Though Commissions of inquiries have been set over and over again, respondents were apathetic to their findings. One of such respondents intimated that:

*“In our part of the world, if you don’t want to take action against people who have fallen foul of the laws, you simply set up committees or commissions of inquiries, knowing very well that by the time their work is over, people would have forgotten about what happened and so when the commissions come up with their recommendations, there is no political will to have them implemented. The commissions of enquiries are just diversion tactics by political leaders/administrators who do not have the will to ensure that the right thing is done. Simply put, they are established to ‘throw dust’ in the eyes of people. In Ghana when there is an issue, people talk about it, maximum one or two weeks and it dies out. And so if you set up a commission of enquire or a committee to look in to any issue, by the time their report is out, the issue may have died. So, the attitude is to allow sleeping dogs lie without actually implementing any of their recommendations” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0021).*

Another respondent opined that:

*“A lot of public money has been used to setup these committees, they are paid sitting allowances and they rest in luxurious hotels and waste citizens’ money. Yet when they come up with recommendations, they are not implemented to the later. In some instances, the culprits are reassigned from one Ministry to the other or back to the Presidency (she quips, why other individuals would not commit similar acts?). But when people realize that, if they commit such acts, they will not only lose their positions but also asked to refund those monies and as well serve jail sentence, then people will realize that this country is not a country to joke with” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 029).*

Thus, setting up Commissions of Inquiries to investigate issues of national concern are strategies adopted to postpone the discussion of serious issues till the citizenry forgets about it. It is believed some of the recommendations are adulterated to suit the government/individual culprit.

### **6.6.8 Attorney General**

In recent times, there have been incessant calls to separate the Office of the Attorney General from the Ministry of Justice. The argument is that given the political culture, the fusion of the office of the Attorney General with that of the Minister for Justice theoretically places the

Attorney General in a difficult position when he or she has to prosecute his or her colleagues of the sitting government for corruption and other unethical behaviours. As Minister of State, the Attorney General is part of the executive branch of government and simultaneously, is responsible for prosecutions emanating from the investigations of parliament and its committees, the SFO, and the Auditor General. Some experts are of the view that the contribution of the Attorney General to parliamentary oversight is dampened by the perception that the office is not independent, and some cases that are likely to go against the ruling government will not be prosecuted because of political interference and influence. Besides, the Attorney General is appointed by the President. Further, the Attorney General's office is beset with allegations of incompetence and commitment deficits that undermine its ability to effectively combat corruption (Judgment Debt Commission, 2015).

#### **6.6.9 Public Procurement**

Challenges which have been created by the public procurement reform include; reduced decision making at the local government level, laborious procurement process which consumes a lot of time, lack of qualified and competent personnel to effectively carry out procurement functions, and in some cases, increase in cost of procurement (McDonald, 2008).

Despite the pejorative image portrayed in this chapter, all hope is not lost in Ghana's public service. There are public-sector employees who religiously abide by the ethical and administrative rules. Recently, following the Supreme Court's ruling, the A-Gs has commenced enforcing her constitutional powers of surcharge and disallowance by surcharging individuals purported to have mismanaged public resources (*Daily Guide*, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2017; *myjoynews*, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2017). A pilot Human Resource Management Information System has been set up to deal with system leakages associated with unbudgeted sector-wide recruitments. MMDAs must first justify the need to fill vacancies which should be approved by MOFED and payment effected by CAGD. These in-built multiple approval mechanisms are meant to restore control over public-sector expenditure. Other measures in the offing to ensure accountability and transparency in the public service include the setting-up of an Independent Commissioner to prosecute corrupt practices, amending and passing the numerous bills before Parliament such as the freedom of information bill, public office code of conduct, the witness protection bill and the whistle-blower act.

## **6.7 Chapter Conclusion**

The main problem with the public service in particular and Ghana as a whole is the ineffectiveness of her rules/laws. Ghana is believed to have excellent rules and regulations but when it comes to implementation or enforcement, she is weak and this is equally applicable to MDAs, and has been the bane of the many cases of financial indiscipline. As a result of this implementation weakness, unethical behaviours will continue to flourish if persons implicated are not prosecuted and even if they prosecuted and found guilty, are not imprisoned. The identified loopholes in the implementing agencies must be blocked to make unethical behaviour a high risk venture for potential culprits. Further, there should be a very high potential likelihood for the detection, investigation and subsequent prosecution of unethical behaviours to serve as deterrent for would-be culprits. In this direction, the Office of the Attorney-General should be up and doing to rid itself of all the allegations of inefficiency, incompetence and corruption to be able to nib unethical behaviour in the bud. It is believed corruption and other unethical behaviours thrive best in environments that are characterized by administrative caprice, weak institutional mechanisms for safeguarding citizen's rights and disregard for fundamental human rights, values, principles and norms.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF GHANA

*“Spirituality shapes our behaviour, decisions, actions and relationships at the workplace”  
(Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0033)*

#### **7.0 Chapter Introduction**

This chapter addresses the results of the fourth objective of the thesis which relates to the role of workplace spirituality in the Ghanaian Public Service. Spirituality and religion is used synonymously in this thesis. The chapter is divided into six parts. The first section establishes the tenacious belief in spirituality of Ghana's public servants. This belief is tied to their religious beliefs which make them attribute both good and bad occurrences in their private and organizational lives to spirituality. This is followed by the public servants understanding of the relationship between workplace spirituality and religion in Ghana. Also, the behaviour of spiritual individuals in the Public Service of Ghana forms the basis of the next section. The revelations show double standards for most spiritual individuals in Ghana's Public Service; while some religious individuals exhibit the tenets of workplace spirituality such as love, compassion, trust, reverences, wisdom, faith, sense of oneness, willingness to help others, forgiveness and creativity (Ajala, 2013), others only pay lip-service to it. Further, the chapter examines the link between workplace spirituality and ethical behaviour. The section establishes that spirituality has a positive link with ethical behaviour, but only to some extent in Ghana as some individuals purported to be spiritual, use it for their selfish desires. Next, the chapter delves into the impact of workplace spirituality on the Public Service of Ghana. While the section identifies the positive impact of workplace spirituality in Ghana, it also establishes that workplace spirituality has negative impact as well, which could be devastating to the overall well-being of the organization. The section further established a mixed impact. However, the pursuit of spirituality/religiosity at work leads to absenteeism and 'gentlemanly malingering' in public service organizations as most public servants instead of working are glued to their radio sets listening to religious programmes or watching these programmes on television sets. Others are busily moving from one religious programme to the other seeking spiritual solutions to their problems. This subsequently leads to huge cost to the Service.

## 7.1 Public Servants Belief in Spirituality

As noted in chapter four of this thesis, Ghana is a multi-religious nation with almost 95% of her population affiliated to one sort of religion or the other (GSS 2012). Others have also observed that Ghanaians are ‘highly religious’ (Sarpong, 1994; Atiemo, 2010). It is believed the freedom of religion embedded in the 1992 Constitution has catapulted the growing evidence of religiosity and spirituality in Ghana including workplaces. Besides, religion permeates every aspect of the Ghanaian life and people practise it from cradle to grave (Sarpong, 1994), supporting Mbiti’s (1990) assertions that the African is “notoriously” and “incurably” religious. Thus, there is intense manifestation of religion and spirituality in the daily lives of Ghanaians. Public and private events are either turned into religious ones or are accompanied by some form of religious activity. These religious activities are as a result of Ghanaians beliefs and practices; they believe in gods, ancestral spirits, witchcraft, sorcery, charms and amulets, magic and voodoo as well as myths about the ability of huge trees, cemeteries and unusual rock formations, rivers, and groves in shaping the destinies of local communities and individuals (in essence the spiritual world), and so tend to attribute successes/prosperity and failures/disasters to these forces. It is therefore not uncommon for some chronic, endemic and unexplained diseases, untimely deaths, fatal motor accidents, joblessness, alcoholism, crop failure, bareness and impotence to be attributed to witches, wizards and other unseen forces (Adinkra, 2008). This forms the basis of religious and spiritual discourse in Ghana and according to Atiemo (2010) this discourse revolves around the following themes:

*“material and physical well-being depends, to a large extent, on spiritual factors; good behaviour is positively rewarded by the spirit-world; Ghana is a God-fearing nation; and that evil spirits are real and are at work to destroy people, but they can be dealt with through the help of a stronger power, especially God”*  
(43).

Thus, there are several manifestations of spirituality in the public service of Ghana: there is the personal quest for spiritual nourishment/fulfilment, there is also the inculcation of spiritual values in the workplace by tying organizational practices to the service of God, the attempt to convert organizational members to a religious faith and there is also the influence of ‘bad spiritual power’ which people use for their clandestine motives. Spirituality is therefore inherent in Ghanaians and this links them to transcendence. It also makes them feel a sense of interconnectedness/belongingness to their community especially during happy and sad moments such as marriage, outdooing, divorce, illnesses, death and layoffs. Employees reach out to organizational members and community for support, guidance or help, making

the aspect of connectedness and sense of community in workplace spirituality more important. The Ghanaian traditional beliefs, customs and practices; the extended family system and communalism were held in high esteem before the emergence of Islam, Christianity and other religions. The emergence of these religions further increased the intense manifestation of religion and spirituality in Ghana prior to the era of western colonization and the attainment of political independence. When the Ghana Public Service was established and Ghanaians entered into the service, they went along with these beliefs making them spiritual “concerned with the meaning of life and what they find meaningful (Mamman and Zakaria, 2016: 7). Some also entered into the public service to fulfil a ‘call to duty’ to serve the public interest. They were of the view that their professions had been chosen for them by a higher power and as such their careers are linked to the greater good of society. They therefore want their ‘spiritual vacuum’ to be nourished in the workplace as well as experience a sense of meaning and purpose (Rego et al 2008:55; McConkie, 2008:340). Ghanaians therefore resorted to spiritual means to enhance not only their individual fortunes but deal with the uncertainties of life. Spirituality among Ghanaians according to Atiemo (2010) is the common denominator to turn to when one is seeking fortunes or dealing with any misfortune.

From the foregoing, it could be seen that spirituality has been an integral part of organizational practices and cultures in Ghana (including the public service). Staff and Board meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences as well as other events begin and end with prayers implicitly subjecting official processes to a supposed ‘powerful realm’ with the hope of attaining desired outcomes. The spur for the growing spirituality at workplaces in Ghana (as seen earlier) could be attributed to the religious freedom which allow believers to express their faith in ways they deem fit. Also, in reaffirming Garcia-Zamor (2003) assertion, more and more people in the public service are seeking answers to either workplace problems or problems that have bearings on their workplace behaviours. It is therefore very common to find employees of public service organizations reading either religious books such as the Bible and Quran or listening to religious preaching’s at the workplace. It is also a common phenomenon for religious groups to advocate their capacity to help individual workers unleash their promotion at work; prevent the devil from hindering their promotion amongst others being advertised. These groups advertise the power of God or gods to catapult individuals into higher positions at work. Additionally, the cherished values of the public service as espoused in the code of conduct encourage public servants to adhere to the tenets

of workplace spirituality. These values include respect, accountability, integrity, selflessness, equity and transparency embolden public servants to establish connectedness with superiors, colleagues, subordinates and clients and in doing so, prosecute the agenda of the public service. To buttress the point that Ghanaian public servants are both religious and spiritual through one of the mediums of religiosity, public servants pray as and when the occasion demanded. This is intimated by one of the Regional Directors during fieldwork interviews that:

*“I don’t know what people say but I believe we are more Christians than anything else in GHS. I know before we start work, meetings, antenatal and even surgery, we pray to God almighty through Jesus Christ for help and guidance. When we are starting a meeting, we start with an open prayer, when we are closing a meeting, we close with a closing prayer. So, it is something that we do as part of our system and then we believe that even for the people who come, it serves as a source of guidance, inspiration, hope and fulfilment for them that their problems will be solved. It is more of an odd thing to have a meeting and not pray (Fieldwork Interview Transcript, No. 0025).*

Another respondent also indicated the Ghanaian belief in and existence of spirituality in the public service by averring that:

*“Spirituality is there, in one way or the other we cannot eliminate spirituality in this organization, because we are individuals and we are humans, people have their own perceptions, their own beliefs and what they really want to do and they bring these into the organization. We cannot totally say that spirituality does not exist. However, we have to behave in consonance with the objectives of GHS, i.e. to provide HR services” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 020).*

These assertions emphasize the fact that public servants are strongly influenced by their respective religious beliefs and practices as well as the ethical norms that they have been taught as part of the doctrines of their religion, and consequently apply these beliefs and norms within their respective organizations (Velentzas and Broni, 2010). This is typically the religious spirituality as postulated by Worthington and Aten (2009).

Besides, several manifestations of religious spirituality at work was also seen as well as reported in the Public Service of Ghana. The common and overt ones included prayer sessions by individuals and in some cases, group or corporate prayer sessions. Corporate Muslim prayers sessions were the commonest which occurred at midday (*al-zuhr*) on Mondays to Thursdays and the Fridays (*jum'ah*) prayers. It was further revealed in one of the

organizations that, the Director organizes morning devotion for all staff under her supervision on Mondays before commencing activities for the week. The respondent remarked that:

*“We normally have meetings on Mondays and this is preceded by devotion, a quick devotion. The meeting is spearheaded by the director; she can call any of the officers to lead the devotion, but she eventually comes in to advise us. She reads a biblical text and advises us based on the text. For example, this morning she was talking about wisdom which Solomon demanded, when God asked him to ask for whatever he wanted, he demanded wisdom... We have this devotion every Monday; in fact, we start at 8:30 am and can end at 12:30pm (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0005).*

The respondent goes on to state that “we have Muslims among us and they also contribute. I remember on one occasion, towards the end of the devotion, she asked one Muslim to pray in the Muslim way” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0005). This shows the tolerant nature of religion and spirituality in Ghana as a whole and the public service in particular. This came out during the course of the interview by a respondent that:

*“Nobody stops one from praying; for instance, the Muslims come here (signalling to a particular direction) to pray. There is one, when it is time to pray, he goes to pull the mat, spreads it and starts praying; nobody stops him” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 009).*

To buttress the tolerant nature of religion in Ghana, it was observed that during public occasions such as Independence Day Celebrations, prayers are said by representatives of the three dominant religions in turns (Christianity, Islam and Traditional African Religion). Closely related to the above is the religious climate in the Ghanaian workplace that accommodates various religious celebrations especially for Muslims and Christians. Special occasions such as Christmas and Easter for Christians and Eid-Al Adha and Eid-Al Fitr for Muslims are often declared statutory public holidays in Ghana.

In addition, it was observed that there were designated prayer spaces and small mosques (not physical buildings) around the ministries in Accra and other regional offices where Muslims converged to pray. Although there were no churches around the ministries, it was reported that many Public Servants leave work to participate in prayer sessions. Leaving office for corporate or individual prayer sessions may have spiritual benefits for both employees and the organisations (Duerr, 2004; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010a), because these prayer sessions are not only religious in nature, but they are also social and serve the purposes of offering members the opportunity to share some communal pleasantries (Denton, 1999; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010b). However, the time taken for such activities could turn out



detrimental to the productivity of the organisation in the long term. Considering the revelation of the interview respondent above who intimated that “...we start at 8:30 am and can end at 12:30 pm”. This is complete waste of organizational time. Besides, it was also reported during the interviews that sometimes some of these individuals do not return to work after such prayer sessions. To buttress this point, the President of the Republic of Ghana in his speech to commemorate the International Labour Day reiterated that:

*“We (referring to public service employees) have no respect for the hours set aside for work... we pray, we eat, we visit during working hours. We spend hours chatting on the telephone when customers are waiting to be served, thereby increasing our labour costs”* (President’s Address, 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2017).

Further, the use of religious artefacts including charms, amulets, rosaries, holy water and anointing oil goes a long way to show the level of spirituality among public servants, though these objects are covertly held by their adherents in public organizations. Wearing the charms and amulets or sprinkling of the holy water or anointing oil on their desks and offices, it is believed would ward off any evil spirit/individual with evil intentions (serving as “disinfectants”). Others are meant to provide good luck and help those who wear them to attract the favour of ‘men’. Adherents are advised to apply some of these when attending promotion interviews or when confronted with a serious issue at work. Some people are also reported to perform some rituals and purification before occupying new offices or seats in the public service.

A respondent explains why some public servants resort to spirituality especially for protection, she avers:

*“Colleagues work against each other a lot in the service. Sometimes you get to an office and they have tied something like juju or whatever it is at the office, either it is to scare you or what, we don’t know. There was a time we saw something like that at the entrance of one of our offices (pointing to the office) in this very department. Some papers were put together with some cowries and tied with a red cloth, clearly, the outlook looks like juju or something like that. We also have spiritual forces which can fight against your promotion. Anytime I am due for promotion; I intensify my prayers to avert the work of these forces. This world is dark and there are many things in it. Colleagues can work against your promotion because it is not everybody who loves you. There are some people, no matter what you do, they will never be happy. As a result, some of us have to also protect ourselves from these spiritual things by constantly praying and using anointing oil”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 035).

To sum up the existence and belief in both religious and humanistic spirituality at work in the public service of Ghana, one of the Deputy Directors of HR in one of the organizations interviewed remarked:

*“our sense of spirit defines who we are, it determines our cherished values, is central to our ethical orientation, and directs our intimate and important choices and actions as human beings. Thus, spirituality shapes our behaviour, decisions, actions and relationships at the workplace”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 033).

## **7.2 Relationship between Spirituality and Religion in Ghana**

Although religion and spirituality are non-identical constructs because spirituality is not based on any specific religious belief or practice, but rather on personal values and philosophies (Rego et al, 2008:55), it is viewed as “non-denominational, non-hierarchical and non-ecclesiastical” (Graber et al., 2001: 40). Many individuals interviewed in Ghana perceived spirituality to be intrinsically linked to their religious beliefs to corroborate the perspectives of Kamoche and Pinnington (2012) that religion and spirituality “cannot be completely disconnected from each other” (449), the two do not exist in a vacuum but are intertwined. The boundary line between religion and spirituality are not clearly delineated and the two terms are treated synonymously within the context of Ghana’s public service. This supports the findings of Reid et al (2015:267) on spirituality and women entrepreneurs in Ghana that “although faith and spirituality are not identical constructs, many individuals perceive spirituality as intrinsically linked to their faith precepts”. These two findings corroborate Paris (1995) assertion that religion and spirituality are deeply ingrained in the African context. For instance, one Director intimates that:

*“There is a direct relation between spirituality and religion because people with very good spiritual background are very religious and they tend to, at least, rally people to exhibit good behaviours and values and that helps them. You know the environment in which we are working (GHS), apart from the physical illness; many people also need spiritual upliftment (some form of moral encouragement, support, physical needs and the rest). This support helps to heal them spiritually hence people are comfortable going to Mission Hospitals because they get not only physical healing but spiritual upliftment as well”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 022).

Another Director opines thus:

*“I mean if you are really spiritual, I think it should reflect in your doings. Let’s take Ghanaians for instance, on Fridays we are in the Mosque and on Sundays we are in church, yet when we go to the office from Mondays to Fridays, our*

*actions portray a different thing. Am sure they just pray because the religion says they should pray. They are just being religious to fulfil the doctrines of the faith, but I think that does not translate into spirituality; it is religiosity and not spirituality, because some of them just after praying, what they do will even nullify the prayers. I don't know whether they are mocking God; if you are prayerful, you should automatically do things which are good. If you are spiritual, you are expected not to be unethical but spirituality in Ghana's public service is just share pretence, if you are spiritual, I think it should translate in your work; you should be willing to help people and not necessarily expect returns from them. However, that is not what is happening in our public service"* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 033).

The above statements show a good link between religion and spirituality on one hand, and a marked difference in what the behaviours of some religious/spiritual individuals are and what it ought to be in reality. While religious individuals are expected to be spiritual and behave ethically, some portrayed a contrary behaviour. This observation shows that people who claimed to be religious were not necessarily people who sought spirituality in its true definition and strived for spiritual development in their daily life, both at home and at the workplace. They portray to the outside world that they are religious, yet do all the 'odd' things that a spiritual or religious person will not normally do. They accept bribes and cheat; they are rude, lazy, not-truthful and unnecessarily delay clients. This notwithstanding, one of the respondents sarcastically remarked that the cherished values of some public servants or prospective servants are:

*"To see themselves having a job, get paid, exploit the loopholes in the system, make as much money as one can, build estate for themselves, live a flamboyant life and keep milking the state"* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript, 0035).

### **7.3 The Behaviour of Spiritual Individuals in the Public Service of Ghana**

Just as individual behaviour differs, the behaviour of spiritual individuals especially in the public service of Ghana also differs. In the course of the interviews, respondents identified various forms of behaviours of public service employees who purported to be spiritual. On one hand, respondents claimed spirituality is about care, love, hope, kindness and optimism, corroborating Kamoche and Pinnington's (2012; 503) findings. One respondent reiterated that:

*"There are spiritual individuals in the public service. I know of a director, who always wants to help people, he wants to see people happy; I mean he is honest, faithful and selfless. We have flowers here (pointing outside); sometimes he gets up, fetches water and waters all the flowers. I mean he lives an exemplary life"*

*and I wish all officers will emulate him”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0034).

Another respondent reiterated this viewpoint by pointing out the behaviour of a spiritual individual in her organization. She avers:

*“Our Budget Officer is a good example of a spiritual individual; our Director mostly calls him to lead the Monday’s devotion. He is a devoted Christian and doesn’t joke with his work at all. He is honest, loving, dedicated to his job and cares about the welfare of other employees. Among employees here, he stands tall; his work is simply marvellous”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0005).

This is a clear demonstration of workplace spirituality evidenced by the desire to be of service not only to colleagues and clients at the workplace but to the environment as well. Workplace spirituality therefore provides employees a sense of ‘community and connectedness’ to oneself, others, nature and to a larger meaning or presence (Ajala, 2013). Thus, motivating employees to go the extra mile in contributing beyond what their organizations expect of them (OCB). Further, this connectedness is strongly associated with creativity, love, forgiveness, compassion, trust, reverences, wisdom, faith and sense of oneness (Ajala, 2013: 2). These categories of individuals see their profession as a calling, a vocation, a sacred duty (an opportunity to serve God, other deities, or transcendence) and not merely a means to an end. They are therefore dedicated to their work, demonstrating that individuals derive pleasure and fulfilment from the work they do. Failure to keep to this mantra means they are not fulfilling their God-given mandate on earth. This confirms the assertion that some public service employees are interested in finding a deeper sense of meaning, purpose and spirit in their work (McConkie, 2008:340), which therefore motivates them to behave ethically (McGhee and Grant 2008; McGhee and Grant 2015).

These findings notwithstanding, one respondent who held a contrary opinion had this to say:

*“Some spiritual individuals are just superficial human beings, they show it just for people to see that they are spiritual but it doesn’t reflect in their day to day activities at the workplace. Some do not show empathy, sympathy, care or love to their colleagues and clients. Their attitude towards clients and customers is too bad”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0022).

This view was further corroborated by another respondent who asserted that:

*“As far as spirituality is concerned, spiritual individuals portray double standards in the discharge of their duties at the workplace. In terms of*

*truthfulness and honesty, some of them manifest the contrary. They put up behaviours that you would least expect; in one moment, they are in a 'high spirit' (praying, singing praises etc.) but when it comes to the discharge of their duties, they drag their feet, tell lies and are always finding unimaginable reasons to justify their behaviours. You sometimes marvel how these people call themselves spiritual or religious persons and yet behave differently. They behave like chameleons (persons with changeable characters)" (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0011).*

The above revelations depict the fact that some employees in the public service who claimed to be spiritual are not necessarily people, who seek spirituality in its strictest sense and strive for spiritual development in their daily life, as they do not demonstrate ethical behaviour, but rather, on the face value, they appear spiritual, profess spiritual values but they however, fail to translate these spiritual values into appropriate actions in the workplace. They are mostly seen committing the most atrocious and abhorrent behaviours in the service. Probably, it is as a result of these “realities of imperfection, failure, and sin” as well as “greed, exploitation, environmental degradation, insensitiveness, lack of empathy, abuses of power, and failures of stewardship” (McGee and Delbecq 2003: 96) that has led to the upsurge of unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana instead of the tenet of spirituality at work.

Yet in a puzzling situation, one respondent revealed an attempt by an employee to use her level of religiosity (spirituality) to save a situation that rather led to a damning consequence. The respondent could not differentiate between religiosity and spirituality at work. The respondent averred:

*“On one occasion, I witnessed something on the field which was very shocking. There was this school girl who was hungry (apparently had not eaten the whole day); she fell and became unconscious as a result of the hunger. The teacher (because of her spirituality) believed that prayers could solve everything and instead of looking for practical solutions, she knelt down, started praying for the school girl. Upon our intervention, the school girl was rushed to the hospital but belatedly she did not survive. This is a negative application of spirituality” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 0034).*

This is a phenomenon that authorities of public service organizations have to constantly be on the lookout for to avert these preventable situations especially when employees, according to their religious doctrines, feel every problem could be solved through prayers (as it occurred in the Bible). It is true that there are instances that religious people have been able to perform miracles. However, it is not in all instances that they have been successful. The use of religiosity and spirituality should be threaded with caution.

## **7.4 The Link between Spirituality and Ethical Behaviour in the Public Service of Ghana**

From the behaviour of spiritual individuals in the public Service of Ghana discussed above, it could be inferred that spirituality has a direct link with ethical behaviour. In a question as to whether there is a link between spirituality and ethical behaviour in the PS of Ghana, a director with one of the organizations avers that:

*“Yes there is a direct relationship between spirituality, religion and ethical behaviour. People with very good spiritual background are very religious and they tend to also exhibit good values within the Service. They are morally upright, punctual at work, tolerant, honest, sympathetic and diligent. They are very serviceable to the organization by portraying they are responsible individuals. Besides, they give encouragement to their colleagues and clients”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 022).

This was further corroborated by another respondent who opined that;

*“My Islamic principle teaches me to adopt the ‘open-door’ policy of being tolerant to everyone regardless of their position in the organization by listening to them. I also share their joy and sympathy with them and as much as possible I am fair in the decisions I take regarding employees of my organization”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 014).

These assertions confirm earlier empirical studies that spirituality leads to ethical behaviours among employees of organizations (Grant and McGee 2012; James et al 2012; McGhee 2008; Lee et al 2003).

## **7.5 The Impact of Workplace Spirituality on the Public Service of Ghana**

Responses on whether workplace spirituality is able to reduce dysfunctional behaviours in the public service of Ghana were mixed. Some respondents were of the opinion that workplace spirituality had positive impact; others averred it had negative impact and still others were of the view that the impact was both positive and negative.

### **7.5.1 Positive Impact of Workplace Spirituality on the Public Service of Ghana**

Those who averred that workplace spirituality helps in reducing dysfunctional behaviours had this to say:

*“Spirituality has positive impacts. For instance, if religious leaders are able to touch people’s heart by indicating that human beings are just passing through*

*this world and there is another world somewhere, where people will be judged according to their deeds, then they will be scared, knowing that their deeds will be exposed as a result of the day of judgement. If we didn't know that there is a day of judgment, we would have all joined to make lots of money and cheat everybody, doing foolish things including murder but the moral values we received from Tamasco (one of the colleges in Ghana) and the Mosque have helped to shape us to be strict”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 037). Similarly, another respondent opined that: *“in the workplace, some spiritual individuals show empathy because they feel for the people and that help to improve service delivery because if you feel for the people, you will have sympathy... you will not cheat or ask for favours before working but rather let the clients feel valued”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 022).

He goes on to say that “spiritual individuals reflect genuineness in all that they do”. To further support this argument, another respondent remarked:

*“if you have a leader who has the fear of God, knowing that if he goes contrarily to the laid down rules, he would be punished. His/her conscience would tell him/her not to do it. So, you will see that what is right is followed and by so doing, it will have positive effect on work output as this will influence the working system operating within one's jurisdiction”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 011). Yet still, another respondent concurred that: *“you know a belief system or spirituality is a social control manual, if we use it well, it can achieve positive result because spirituality deals with how to live humanely with others by treating them with dignity and respect”* (Fieldwork interview Transcript 014).

These findings are consistent with other researches (Lee et al., 2003; James et al., 2011; Rao, 2012; Grant and McGhee, 2012; Weitz et al 2012) which conclude that spirituality leads to ethical behaviour in organizations. These categories of public servants are not motivated by financial incentives or trappings, but rather see their jobs or professions as a calling chosen for them by a higher power and linked to the greater good of society. They therefore feel satisfied and secured with their jobs. They are unable to delink their work from their personal lives, believing that they have been assigned by a higher power to fulfill certain tasks. Such people neither find material reward nor career enhancing advancements as incentives thereby viewing their careers as a call from powers higher than themselves. On the other hand, public servants who consider their professions as ‘jobs’ think only about material benefits as the main form of reward; a means that provides them with the resources to enjoy their lives away from work. They therefore heavily invest their time, energy and other valuable resources to obtain these material rewards.

### **7.5.2 Negative Impact of Workplace Spirituality on the Public Service of Ghana**

The respondents who felt workplace spirituality impacted the organization negatively believed that some spiritual individuals are starched to themselves, and to only members of their faith without integrating with other organizational members who do not profess their religion/faith thereby discriminating among employees. One of such respondents remarked:

*“They are selective, interact favourably with only their religious group members, they hardly interact with others who do not belong to their faith and would not even allow them to come closer to them. This behaviour is negative because we are social beings, every organization has its conduct, you come to work with others as a group for the benefit of the organization but when you behave this way, you are creating segregation or confusion in the group and this will not help in achieving organizational objectives”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 018).

Another respondent re-echoed this sentiment by observing that because Ghana is a multi-religious country, with people professing different faiths and belong to denominations, the attitude of some adherents goes contrary to acceptable practices. He cited for instance:

*“a Jehovah Witness in school (whether a teacher or a student), will not sing the national anthem and will not submit to the national flag or recite the pledge... Consider Muslims, some will not go to school on Fridays because they worship on that day... Also consider Christians who will either not come to work on certain days or close earlier than usual because they have mid-week church service”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 008).

Furthermore, another negative impact of spirituality at the workplace is the way and manner some individuals purported to have spiritual powers tend to misbehave in the public service. They either feel they are ‘untouchable’ or use ‘threats’ to get their unethical acts covered. For instance, one respondent observed the following during the course of the interviews;

*“Some spiritual individuals who think they have so much spiritual authority and powers tend to misbehave, they behave as if they are untouchable until one day they are touched. While they are behaving untouchable, many unethical things go unpunished in the organization”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 019).

These scenarios affect patriotism, unity and discipline and also raise concerns of divisiveness and diversity in the public service of Ghana. Though diversity is touted as having positive impact in organizations, these two revelations have raised serious ethical concerns in which religious discrimination could possibly lead to in-group/out-group consequences in terms of who belongs to which group and the corresponding distribution of organizational largess such as promotion, transfer, overseas training and implementing disciplinary procedures, and not ignoring issues of favouritism, intolerance and discrimination. This could have divisive and



harmful consequences in the Service if steps are not taken. This finding supports plethora of research findings on spirituality that has raised equity and human rights issues including favouritism, intolerance and discrimination (Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002; Cavanagh, 1999; Milliman et al., 2003).

Besides, the number of times Muslims go out in a day for the midday prayers (*al-zuhr*) and Friday prayers (*jum'ah*) as well as some Christians leaving the office for midweek church/prayer services, it was reported that some do not return to work afterwards. Leaving office for corporate prayer or individual prayer sessions may have spiritual benefits for both employees and organisations (Duerr, 2004; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010a). However, the time taken for such activities could raise concerns over attendance and punctuality to work and eventually turnout detrimental to the public service in terms of productivity. Thus, supporting plethora of research that workplace spirituality could potentially be abused or misused (Brown, 2003; Karakas, 2010).

## **7.6 Chapter Conclusion**

In these days of high religiosity, there has been a steady decline in the expression of spiritual values and virtues, accompanied by unprecedented unethical behaviours in our individual and family lives as well as in our organizational lives. Though Ghana is touted as a religious nation, the non-effectiveness of government laws and regulatory agencies in confronting unethical situations and the perennial reoccurrence of these practices is a clarion call to all and sundry to employ spiritual reawakening in public service organizations as a panacea to overcoming these behaviours. Employing punitive organizational measures alone is not sufficient, professional and ethical training, implementation of effective codes of conduct as well as the sensitization, reorientation and internalization of WPS through the instrumentality of spiritual books and spiritual organizations will stimulate ethical behaviour in public service organizations.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **8.0 Chapter Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss and synthesise the findings garnered from the three main research objectives of the study and provide a connection with social capital and principal agency theories as well as the extant literature. This chapter is also meant to provide a basis for synthesising the contribution to knowledge discussed in the next chapter. The chapter is divided into four main parts; the first section highlights how the application of social capital theory has contributed to unethical behaviours in the public service. The underpinning causes are explored further. The third section discusses the underpinning causes of unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana using the agency theory. The causes identified included ineffective policy implementation, passive board members, apathetic and reluctant service beneficiaries and the politicization of the public service. Further, the next section discusses the impact of religion and spirituality on unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana. The last three preceding sections draw out the linkages and build a simplified interconnectedness between the three research objectives from the theoretical perspectives of the social capital and agency theories and the final section concludes the chapter.

#### **8.1 Social Capital and Unethical Behaviour in the Public Service of Ghana**

The first objective of the thesis consequently examined deviations from the ethical standards and values of Ghana's public service. As discussed in the extended literature reviewed in chapter two, it was established that like any other public service organization worldwide, the Ghana public service has a code of conduct and other standard operating procedures (SOPs), however, the service is bedevilled with many dysfunctional behaviours. These are manifested through fraud and abuse of organizational resources, moonlighting, destroying, altering or falsification of records, gift giving, waste and misuse of official time, not duty bound to report wrong doing, sexual harassment, existence of ghost names on government payroll, cash and procurement irregularities, pilfering and indulging in both organizational and national politics. Discussing this from the lens of social capital theory, Putnam presciently observes that the tenet of social capital is a way of "rewarding friendships at work, feel a

sense of community among workers, and enjoy norms of mutual help and reciprocity on the job” (Putnam 2000: 87). “The strength and nature of social norms and informal institutions” (Acemoglu and Robinson 2016: 41) determine the differences in societies and therefore account for the level of unethical behaviours in the Ghanaian society. In this regard, the section discusses the implications of these findings within the socio-cultural norms of Ghana and the public service in particular. The extended family system, respect for the elderly, the moral tone of the nation, break-down of societal values, inadequate ethical leadership, in-group member effect and the politicization of the public service are used to explain how social capital has contributed to the unethical behaviour in the public service of Ghana.

### **8.1.1 The Extended Family System as the Base of Unethical Behaviours**

Ghana and Africa as a whole believe and thrive on the extended family system, communalism, togetherness and a semblance of Hofstede’s ‘collectivist culture’ (Hofstede 2001; Hofstede 2011) which are mostly found within the Ghanaian socio-cultural practices, songs and proverbs. As observed in **Chapter Five**, the extended family goes beyond the nucleus family of father, mother and children to include cousins, nieces, nephews, uncles, aunties, grandparents, grandchildren and at times the entire community or even people who belong to the same ethnic group. Traditionally, this served as a form of social capital where the rich, educated and more successful family members were expected to share their wealth with less fortunate family members and in return gained solidarity, security, protection and services that poor relatives could offer (a form of positive reciprocity in social capital). In contemporary times, people still rely on successful and well-endowed family members to finance their education and health bills, assist them find jobs or raise capital to start a business venture or even take care of the elderly (network of social ties). This is practised because it is believed not only one’s nucleus family members helped in the upbringing of the successful family member but the entire community, therefore despite the virtues of merit, equity, fairness, respect, neutrality, transparency and accountability amongst others enshrined in the public service codes of conduct, these are often jettisoned or relegated to the background by public servants when it comes to dealing with a family member in the public service because they feel mandated to reciprocate the kind gestures they received while growing up. They therefore indulge in all forms of unethical behaviours by breaking the rules, embezzling funds, disregarding the merit system and instead adopting nepotism and favouritism in order to satisfy the needs of the family member. As amply ruminated by Gyekye (2013:88), “the official is expected to find jobs for some members of the extended

family either in his own outfit or elsewhere”. This he/she does by deliberately creating impossible and unimaginable opportunities for family members. In other instances, employees whether in low or high positions as a result of the mutual respect and reciprocity established will always want to shield their colleagues, superiors or subordinates in the name of ‘comradeship’. Thus, making the motivating factors to engage in dysfunctional behaviours not limited solely to greed, selfishness and individual centeredness, but associated with the African’s social dynamism which is deep-rooted in the socio-cultural perceptions about power and responsibility (Yeboah-Assiamah et al., 2016; Rosen, 2002), a form of social capital. In situations where these factors pose enormous pressure on the public servant, the administrative control mechanisms are either rendered inefficient, neutralized or suspended (Yeboah-Assiamah et al., 2016; Yeboah-Assiamah and Alesu-Dordzi, 2015).

Since time immemorial, the extended family system has played a bonding role in Ghana by cementing brotherliness, togetherness, mutual help, respect and reciprocity. People are brought up to feel and believe they have the inalienable rights to depend upon family members, brothers, sisters, uncles and cousins for help. This was echoed by a respondent that:

*“As I sit here, there are huge demands from the extended family, why? Because I am the only one who went to school in that family. And all my cousins, nephews and everybody you can think about, think that I owe them a responsibility and indeed I do owe them a responsibility. Why? Because within that communal spirit of caring for everyone, when I was going to school, everybody contributed something, now that I have finished school, I can’t say it is just me, my wife and children. They have to get their pound of flesh back and that creates a lot of problems on me”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 035).

Though this principle is touted a good social policy – a form of positive social capital, it can also be a corollary for unethical behaviour. As over reliance on family members can breed parasitism within the larger extended family system and encourages indolence and total dependence on others, particularly the matrilineal inheritance among the Akans, with their over-reliance on ‘Wofa’ (uncle). For instance, the presence of ‘Wofa’ or even a god father in a public service organization will therefore pave way for employees to commit unethical acts. A society that trains people this way to assume that other people owe them a living is not likely to produce honest and self-reliant citizens, most would believe they can get all they need through the networks of relationship. Besides, those who feel they have the responsibility to take care of others are also compelled to ‘bite far more than they can chew’ by kowtowing to unethical acts.

In most public organizations, people are more interested in knowing whether one is a brother, kinsman, friend or a fellow tribesman by tracing one's genealogy before discussing business. When these thoughts are made known, the ethos of public service (selflessness, public interest, neutrality, transparency, meritocracy amongst others) are thrown over-board and corrosive and corrupting kinship solidarity becomes the order of the day as one respondent laconically remarked that:

*“the only form of loyalty that has meaning to public servants is the loyalty to personal goals, to family and to tribal/ethnic group”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 038).

Some superiors tend to surround themselves with fellow kinsmen hoping that they would cover their back. However, these same individuals through their sycophantic postures towards the superior(s), use this same opportunity to commit various unethical acts (as discussed in chapter five) by violating organizational expectations. In such instances, flattery, praising singing, gossiping, backbiting and ‘pull him down’ becomes the order of the day. Official issues are first discussed in secret by tribesmen. Contrary to administrative grotesquery, Price precisely observes that “*to violate social expectation in a society where social relations are centrally valued and in which individual existence outside of group membership is practically unthinkable*” (Price 1975:30) becomes commonplace. Thus, individuals within the public service use the extended family system and networks of relationships to indulge in unethical acts.

The strong attachment to the extended family system and ethnic ties also encourages tribalism, nepotism and favouritism. Recruitment, promotion and award of contracts are often not based on representative bureaucracy but ‘who you know’. This situation is aptly described as patrimonialism, a system where both social and political relationships are mediated and maintained by personal connections between leaders and subjects, or patrons and clients (Pitcher et al., 2009) or patron–client relations, kinship networks, and other “primary reciprocities” governing communities (Hyden, 2006: 55). Patrimonialism can be traced to traditional moral economies of patron-client relationship where individuals provided livelihoods or political protection to the less resourceful in exchange for loyalty or labour (Beekers and Gool, 2012). This relationship is used to cement social bonds through the reliance on trust, reciprocity and material exchanges in groups as a form of social capital. According to Pitcher et al., (2009), patrimonialism shares a number of core features including:

- a. *the flouting of rational-legal authority in favour of highly personalistic rule;*
- b. *a reliance on patron-client ties and networks for professional and political advancement or support;*
- c. *the use of state resources to reward supporters for their loyalty; and*
- d. *repeated appropriation of state funds by African leaders and their followers for their personal enrichment (Pitcher et al., 2009: 132).*

Thus, under patrimonialism, informal and personal rule takes precedence over formal rule (Joseph, 1987; Diamond 2008) allowing patrons and clients to seek both economic and political rewards. Patrimonialism is therefore used within the African context (including Ghana) to explain political decay, economic collapse and administrative grotesquery (Crook, 1989), patronage, clientelism, rent-seeking and corruption (Médard, 2002: 379; Dawson and Kelsall, 2011: 4; Szeftel, 2007: 427; Pitcher et al., 2009: 129) because its practice distorts power, corrupts authority, and fuels personal aggrandizement in bureaucracies (Pitcher et al., 2009:130) and the cause of other ills (Pitcher et al., 2009) in states and administrative set-ups. It also explains why successive governments, especially in Africa, are reluctant to reform the public service and raise its level of efficiency (Killick, 2010). Patrimonialism fits very well with the social capital and the principal-agency theories because of their reliance on trust, reciprocity and material exchanges in groups. These networks, instead of being used to identify and punish the ‘bad apple’, (Putnam, 1993: 178) are rather used as an incentive to encourage members/clients commits unacceptable acts without being punished. Similarly, under the principal-agency theory, a mutual relationship which is supposed to be developed between the principal and public servants; where the principal monitors the agents to do the right thing in order to inject efficiency and effectiveness but this is rather used to enhance their selfish gains leading to these dysfunctional behaviours in the Service.

### **8.1.2 Respect for the Elderly**

Closely related to the above is the respect accorded to the elderly within the socio-cultural setup of Ghana. When an elderly person does something untoward, he/she cannot be reprimanded especially by a younger superior. This is amply explained by a respondent who indicated that:

*“In many Ghanaian traditional areas, there is respect for the elderly or respect for authority and what that means is that even when a young person is assigned to a throne, or to a skin depending on where you hail from in Ghana, that person cannot be spoken to anyhow. Even if that person is supposed to have done wrong, it was difficult to speak into his face. Typically, if somebody did that, he/she was banished from town as he/she was not fit to be in the society. This has crept into*

*the public service in other manifestations to include first, respect for the aged, respect for people in authority and respect for the government and government agencies and so when an elderly person or someone in authority does something unethical, he/she cannot be spoken to anyhow...What that has turned out to do is that, once somebody appoints you, you have no right whatsoever to raise accusing finger at the appointer but on the contrary always trying to please him. Even if the appointing authority doesn't ask for a favour, you try to provide unsolicited favours because of the traditional notion that you owe your appointment to this person and therefore you are struggling to do his bidding by pleasing him. In the process many unethical practices takes place” (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 035).*

Similarly, it is also a common practice that when a child commits an offence and is being punished, the elderly around intervene on the child's behalf. This socio-cultural practice has tiptoed into the public service of Ghana and paved the way for some dysfunctional behaviour. For instance, when a public servant commits an offence and is in the process of being punished, the elderly colleagues and other “big and influential people” within the society step in to intercede on his/her behalf and it is expected that when such delegation intercede, then whoever is in-charge of the disciplinary process has to show a kind-heart by accepting the pleas for forgiveness because it is the same elderly people he would rely on if the latter also finds himself in trouble. If the plea for forgiveness is not listened to by the immediate superior, he is seen as the “devil” and strategies are mapped out to get him into trouble. Thus, respect for the elderly has opened the floodgate for the elderly in public organizations **not** to be effectively sanctioned by younger supervisors when the former commits an organizational offence. In such instances, the supervisor finds it difficult to sanction him/her because he would be deemed as floating societal norms or termed disrespectful.

### **8.1.3 The Moral Tone of the Nation**

The moral tone of the nation is also a contributing factor to the current state of affairs. There is always the feeling of moral superiority by the public when disclosures of dysfunctional behaviours of public servants come to the fore. However, the attitude of public servants in Ghana cannot be different from that of the entire nation. The public service is only a microcosm of the nation, and so if the moral standard of the country is low, it will surely reflect in the public service. Adu (1969) rightly opined that “I do not believe that the Ghana public service is essentially corrupt. What is corrupt is Ghana society itself” (47). An immoral country cannot have a moral public service. The Ghanaian society ridicules an

honest public servant who retires after 30 or 40 years without substantial property and wealth and glorifies the one who enters the public service with nothing (poor and destitute) and after few years acquires houses, cars, farms and other property and leaves the office in disreputable circumstances. Woode (2000) observes in interviews with departing expatriates from Ghana and opines “what hurts most is when he (expatriate) looks straight at you and say ‘you people are corrupt’” (38). This is necessitated by the fact that in the expatriate’s dealings with public servants, he either had been a victim of corruption or found himself in a position where he had to offer bribe. The expatriate goes further by saying Ghanaian public servants clear their conscience about corrupt behaviours by saying ‘*obira dzidzi ne edwuma ho*’ (literary meaning everybody makes a living at his workplace).

A respondent opined during the course of the interviews that:

*“You go into any public office and somebody does something for you and typically we know that, gifts are supposed to be spontaneous and not solicited, but here, people demand gifts; where is my gift after rendering the service or they even ask for the gift before they render the service”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 036).

It is therefore not surprising that public service organizations are in this poor state of affairs as a result of over-milking. This corroborates with the earlier remarks of one of the interview respondents that:

*“Now when you see people in public services, two reasons; either they can’t find jobs anywhere else or they have stacked a gold mine and they are just lying beside the mine and mining without making noise. They do this by exploiting the loopholes in the system, making as much money as they can, build estate for themselves, live a flamboyant life and keep milking the state”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript, 0035).

Thus, the moral tone of some public servants is not different from what Adu (1969) pointed out earlier.

#### **8.1.4 Break-down of Societal Values**

Closely related to the above is the break-down of societal values especially the culture of gift giving. Though gift-giving is one of our cultural values and is practised in our society as well as the public service, it has now mutated into bribery especially in the public service. Gifts are supposed to be spontaneous and unsolicited. However, many people in the public service now demand for gifts before or after rendering services. Often times you hear them say ‘*ye biribi*’ (do something), ‘*di woho ni*’ (show your worth), ‘*behu me wo fie*’ (see me at home), ‘*twi me nsa*’ (grease my palm). In some organizations, not until ‘a weight’



is placed on the table, nothing moves. This is so because there are no enough punitive sanctions meted out to individuals who flout the rules. A respondent remarks that:

*“the breakdown of our values is because people are not sanctioned enough. Psychologists tell us that people take actions that produce results. If the results are rewarding, they would repeat similar actions and if the rewards are painful, they would refrain from it. People will steal, engage in fraud or unethical behaviours if they think they can easily get away with it, especially if they see other people getting away with it. In fact, you would become a fool if you don't join them”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 0036). He goes on to say that *“the sanctions in our part of the world are not deterrent enough to deter people from committing such actions* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 036).

Another respondent also reiterated that:

*“Society has broken-down to the extent that we are not sure as individuals we are going to restrict ourselves and the state will not also restrict you because the officials are thinking of how to win votes in the next election. So, they are not bothered about sanctioning people who commit unethical acts because that would mean they would lose the next election and consequently their positions”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 035).

### **8.1.5 Inadequate Ethical Leadership in the Public Service**

Inadequate ethical leadership in the public service of Ghana has further contributed to this state of affairs. The moral tone of every organization is set by the leadership because they play key roles as authority figures and role models, and their actions or inactions consequently tend to influence the attitudes and behaviours of subordinates' (Trevino et al 2014). However, in recent times, the Chair-person of the Public Service Commission of Ghana has bemoaned this poor state of affairs by observing that “as leaders, we are failing our country in many ways” (Kastriku 2015: 4). Another respondent who corroborated this likened poor leadership to a fish; ‘when a fish is getting rotten, it starts from the head’ implying ‘leadership is the cause of unethical behaviours and all other effects are as a result of leadership’(Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 19). Most leaders are not honest, trustworthy, fair and caring and are also unable to make principled and fair decisions in their organizations especially in the distribution of organizational largesse including recruitment, promotion, transfers and the award of overseas training opportunities. Others are noted to be corrupt, and commit all the other unethical acts that are contrary to laid down rules and regulations. This cascades to lower rank officers through imitation and observational learning

(Brown, et al. 2005). Sometimes, junior officers are coerced into carrying out some unethical actions even against their wish; they cannot resist or disobey such unethical directives as they will incur the displeasure of their superiors which have damning consequences to the advancement of their careers. These dysfunctional behaviours therefore become embedded in organizational setups through institutionalization, rationalization and socialization (Ashforth and Anand 2003). This findings is in tandem with plethora of studies (Brown et al., 2005; Mayer et al., 2012; Ogunfowora, 2014; Walumbwa et al., 2012). The poor leadership problem arises as a result of inappropriate appointments coupled with nepotism and tribalism. It is also an open secret that some public service leaders are appointed or promoted based on their political party affiliations, favours and influence as opposed to the merit system. The deployment of party loyalists, favouritism and nepotism is a recipe for unethical behaviours in organizations (Ayee 2013; Dzansi and Dzansi 2010; Gyekye 2008). Attempts at instituting rigid mechanisms to draw out compliance is met with sycophantic attitudes towards authority, bureaucratic rigidity and delays as well as general indiscipline in the service including the silent attempt to appropriate organizational resources for personal gain.

#### **8.1.6 In-group Member Effect**

Another negative impact of social capital is the excessive claims made on successful members of an in-group. Using the in-group member effects (Gino et al 2009); social influences in the form of social ties, bonds, reciprocities, amongst others, have been identified as part of the causes of unethical behaviours. For instance, in an attempt to gain social identity among one's group in the public service, one is expected to abide by all the rules and regulations that enhance the group's cohesion and existence. In doing this, individuals will imitate dysfunctional behaviours and attitudes of an in-group member (Gino et al 2009), as a result of peer influence or poor leadership modelling. In-group interdependence (Gino et al 2013; Insko et al 2011) also maintains that individuals are able to rationalise their unethical behaviours especially when such behaviours create benefits for them and other members, regardless of whether they belong to the group or not. Further, empathetic emotions towards colleagues identified as party sympathisers, old school mates, members of the same church/faith, members of the same society/association or coming from the same tribe. When the former is identified, employees sympathising with the colleague will term it 'political witch-hunting' rather than looking at the enormity of the offense. In such situations, individuals are likely to judge the unethicity of others more severely than

the unethical behaviour of the victim (Gino et al 2010; Yam and Reynolds 2014; Belle and Cantarelli, 2017) and this goes a long way to increase unethical behaviours. The implications of these behaviours in the public service of Ghana is that being exposed to unethical colleagues (in the form of social identity, interdependence and empathy) has the likelihood of increasing unethical conducts because an unethical act perpetrated by an in-group member will consequently lead to another in-group member committing similar act and pressure from 'external in-group members' will lure the public servant to further commit unethical acts. This finding replicates earlier findings that peer group influence leads to unethical behaviours (Gino and Galinsky (2012). This is so because of the psychological closeness and feeling connected to being a member of the in-group. As members of the in-group accrue special benefits at the detriment of those excluded. Jobs, promotions, transfers, award of contracts and other special favours become the bona fide property of some employees by virtue of ethnic, regional, religious, political, linguistic and social affiliation to this in-group. This implies that employees who are dissatisfied cannot air their grievances leading to job dissatisfaction, high rate of employee turnover, bootlicking and the lack of trust (Putnam, 2000). The motives for employees to commit unethical acts are therefore inextricably tied to the interests of the social groups to which they belong (social capital), with their patronage running through networks grounded on, not only kinship and family ties but political, religious and in-group organizational membership ties (agency problem). This implies that social relations undermine formal bureaucratic structures and positions thereby aggravating dysfunctional behaviours in the public service. Contrary to Putnam (1993), the empirical findings reveal that social capital is not associated with the likelihood of unethical behaviour as motives of self-interest are associated with interest groups.

#### **8.1.7 National Politics and Politicization of the Public Service**

Another social influence behaviour that tends to negatively impact organizational life is organizational politics. Though designed to strategically maximize one's self-interest, it is seen as a contributing factor to unethical behaviours in the public service as some public servants deploy 'all strings' (including offering gifts, asking colleagues who are dear and near to authority/leadership to speak on their behalf and in some cases some ladies even offer sex) to have their desires met in the organization. This has further been compounded by the nature of Ghanaian politics where everything in Ghana has been given political colorization including "...natural disasters, road accidents, criminality, corruption, negligence, or human

error (Ayee, 2013: 444) and unfortunately, metamorphosed into the public service of Ghana. Politicization has been viewed as “the substitution of political criteria for merit-based criteria in the selection, retention, promotion, awards, and disciplining of members of the public service” (Peters and Pierre, 2004: 2). Besides employees engaging in organizational politics to secure individual favours, the national politics has found itself in organizational life of the public service. Individuals are recruited, promoted or dismissed based “largely on the basis of partisan political criteria rather than merit” (Gyimah-Boadi and Yakah, 2012: 3). It is further believed politicians use public organizations as a conduit to maintain their power through, ‘the discretionary allocation of rents, market privileges, patronage public employment, single-sourced procurement contracts and preferential access to natural resources’ (Levy, 2014: 40). Politicization of the service is seen as a form of patronage where appointments, promotions are based on party affiliations or sympathies on one hand and political intimidation, threats and dismissals on the other hand for belonging to the other side of the political divide (Ayee, 2013). Ayee (ibid) further observes that when there is a change in government, the MDAs experience “...the dissolution of boards, the appointment and dismissal of some public servants and asking some of them to proceed on leave, and lack of transparency with accusations of public documents being taken away by outgoing government officials” (Ayee, 2013: 444). Some politicians and public servants also sell to themselves government property (buildings, cars, motorbikes, etc.) at amounts that are ridiculously lower than the prevailing market price. Some public servants also meddle in national politics by making pronouncements on political platforms as well as presenting themselves as candidates to be elected to Parliament without resigning from the Service. This is an outright breach of the public service code of conduct.

The implications of politicizing the public service are quite obvious, Political leaders and their apparatchiks have usurped both administrative and political powers to themselves by assigning public service positions (recruitment and promotions), transfers, suspending and dismissal of employees without recourse to laid-down procedures and norms. Professionalism is nipped in the bud and instead bootlicking and political praise singing has become the order of the day. Loyalty is no longer to the service, but to the politician/cronies who either provide or with-hold the largess. Morale in the service becomes low leading to high turnover and a loss of institutional memory. There is also the growing atmosphere of insecurity (witch hunting) in the public service especially when there is a change in government as employees keep pointing accusing fingers on their colleagues. This

is counter-productive and not conducive to long-term policy formulation and implementation. These notwithstanding, public servants who are able to withstand these frustrations, employ the organizational politics tactics to their advantage. They adopt the culture of patronage by condoning and conniving with the political head of the Service to loot. Politicization has therefore undermined professionalism and the merit-based system of recruitment and career advancement. It has further weakened the trust and morale of public servants and instead generated an atmosphere of insecurity in the service leading to the loss of expertise through high turnover of employees. The implication being the inability of public servants to prosecute their core mandates as a change in government has often led to sometimes a purge in the service with some employees being asked to either proceed on leave, transferred to less desirable offices, or prematurely retired for unproven inefficiency and probity.

#### **8.1.8 Impact of Urbanization, Globalization, Science and Technology**

These days as a result of urbanization, globalization, science and technology, Ghanaians have assimilated western cultural practices at the detriment of the traditional culture. Ghanaians have and are adopting more nuclear family patterns and individualistic life-styles instead of the communal/collectivist life styles where kinship ties characterize the traditional culture. An attempt to instill the virtues and benefits of the extended family system is being met with hostility, disunity and misunderstanding especially by individuals with self-interest motives instead of the collective interest of the extended family. Nukunya (2003) has observed that urbanization has led to the tendency of people to virtually disregard their traditional reciprocal obligations, duties and responsibilities to relatives outside their nuclear families except the closest and the most immediate or in other instances, create what he termed as the “tendency of urban kinship, specifically among migrants, to be omni-directional rather than descent-oriented” (Nukunya, 2003: 46). This has contributed to the gradual breakdown of sanctions that once sustained the kinship ties. It is therefore not surprising that in recent years, there is blatant disregard for values (i.e. social solidarity, cooperation, sharing, love, generosity, hospitality, respect and the value for life) that were once held sacrosanct in Ghana and paving the way for the numerous unethical conducts in the Ghanaian public service in particular and the society at large.

Further, globalization, science and technology have made the world become a global village. Though this has positive impacts, one of the negatives is the indecent dressing that most of the youth have copied from other cultures which to the Ghanaian is abhorrent and evinced

into sexually related crimes (such as sexual harassment) in the public service (Edeh 2013). It is also believed that some of the youth replicate acts and dressing styles they have watched on TV programmes and foreign films to induce favours from their superiors in the public service. Those supervisors, who are not strong-willed to withstand these temptations, easily fall prey to their whims and caprices. When these ladies are able to get the favours desired, they then want the whole world to know they have the superior kowtowing to them by misbehaving which also has the ripple effect of allowing others in the organization to misbehave and culminating in unethical behaviours. It could be concluded that though globalization, urbanization, science and technology have had positive impact on the public service of Ghana and development in general, it has equally had far reaching consequences on our lives including culture, religion, politics and the environment (Adei 2004; Amiuwu, 2004:22; Nicolaides, 2012:118).

#### **8.1.9 The Negative Impact of Foreign Religions on Traditional Cultural Values**

Prior to the infiltration of Christianity and other religions into Ghana, the behaviour of individuals emanated from indigenous religious pronouncements and doctrines and this permeated the entire society or community. Children, for instance, were taught moral, spiritual and other societal values as they grew and were made to believe that failure to abide by these values were sanctioned by the gods with damning consequences. Thus, every member of the society was taught the virtues of hard work, honesty, courage, endurance and sociability. Traditional religious beliefs and practices therefore served as the vehicle for the inculcation of moral and spiritual values (Kasongo 2010; Sarpong 1994). Religion and spirituality were practised simultaneously. However, the proliferation of the various religions (including Christianity and Islam), though encouraged similar virtues but with different approach, might be a contributory factor to the fall in the standards of morals and virtues in Ghanaian societies and the public service in particular. The emergence of Christianity, Islam and other religions coupled with urbanization threw most of these sacrosanct traditional practices away. For instance, hitherto when somebody committed any crime, the traditional society had sanctions against not only the culprit but the entire family. This therefore served as a check on families to see to it that their family members adhered to the rules and regulations of the community. But Christianity has taught its adherents that they are 'saved by grace', and so their sins are forgiven once they confessed. This does not mean that Christianity has no rules and regulations; it has one of the oldest rules in the history of man. Thus, the incoming religions (including Christianity and Islam) sought to replace the existing

traditional Ghanaian religious and spiritual values, and this caused social frustration and generated maladjustment (Kasongo 2010) to the new converts to these faiths. Most of them downgraded the traditional beliefs and practices and were also not fully committed to the tenets of their newly found faith, thereby selecting practices they deemed fit to the personal aggrandizement.

Religion as it exists in Ghana today is 'spiritually bankrupt'; the GSS has estimated about 96% of the Ghanaian population to be religious. However, this does not reflect in the lives of most Ghanaians. Unfortunately, people equate going to church or mosque daily and praying many times makes one to become religious or spiritual. An earlier assertion of one of the respondents to the interviews, opined that:

*"I mean if you are really spiritual, I think it should reflect in your doings. Let's take Ghanaians for instance, on Fridays we are in the Mosque and on Sundays we are in church, yet when we go to the office from Mondays to Fridays, our actions portray a different thing. Am sure they just pray because the religion says they should pray. They are just being religious to fulfil the doctrines of the faith, but I think that does not translate into spirituality; it is religiosity and not spirituality, because some of them just after praying, what they do will even nullify the prayers. I don't know whether they are mocking God; if you are prayerful, you should automatically do things which are good. If you are spiritual, you are expected not to be unethical, but spirituality in Ghana's public service is just share pretence, if you are spiritual, I think it should translate in your work; you should be willing to help people and not necessarily expect returns from them. However, that is not what is happening in our public service"* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 033).

Outwardly, many Ghanaian profess religiosity or at best religious spirituality, but this lacks spirituality in its totality (recall the humanistic, nature, and cosmos spirituality proposed by Worthington and Aten (2009)) instead individuals are looking to satisfy their selfishness and greed while most religious leaders channel their sermons on 'how to get rich quick. The embedded traces of spirituality that was common with the Ghanaian and religious organizations has to large extent diminished and individuals (including public servants) assume that the more they attend religious meetings and go through the religious rituals, then they are both religious and spiritual. However, their behaviour in relationship to fellow '*homo sapiens*' and the environment is diametrically opposed to their religious doctrines and pronouncements. This does not mean that there are no individuals who are both religious and spiritual at the same time, some can be found, but are comparatively less and their numbers do not have significant impact on the larger Ghanaian society. This implies that the large

number of those who are ‘spiritually bankrupt’ are either able to influence the few or as the saying goes in Ghana ‘if you can’t beat them, you join them’, the few eventually join them. This explains the numerous unethical acts, though Ghana is touted as a religious and spiritual nation.

Thus, the traditional Ghanaian beliefs, practices, and attitudes which are opposed to Weber’s bureaucratic principles continue to show its ugly head in the public service of Ghana and thereby affecting performance (Gardiner 1996; Adusah-Karikari and Ohemeng 2014). The implications of these socio-cultural practices have led the public service in particular and Ghana as a whole to be perceived as a low trust society, in which individuals and prospective clients cannot rely on their honest and competent behaviours but rather rely on the personal networks of trust among family members, friends and ethnic community, which goes to re-enforce the existing patterns of patronage, favouritism, dependence and organizational behaviour of ‘who you know’ rather than ‘what you know’, merit, equity and fairness. Social capital proposes that individuals are connected to others based on trust and reciprocal gestures and this trust is supposed to be used to garner job satisfaction and improve productivity in the public service (Putnam 2000). However, this trust has often been exploited by individuals and public organizations for their selfish needs with the maxim ‘*you scratch my back I scratch your back*’.

## **8.2 The Agency Theory and Unethical Behaviours in the Public Service of Ghana**

The principal-agency theory centres on employer-employee relationship in organizations which is supposed to be mutual. The principal is expected to monitor the agent(s) to do the right thing leading to efficiency and effectiveness thereby increasing productivity. However, because both principals and agents are utility maximizers (Godfrey, Hodgson and Holmes, 2000) makes the agency theory to be saddled with challenges when it is being applied in organizations. These include the ‘agency problem’ and moral hazards compelling both the principal and agents to be interested in pursuing issues related to their personal and selfish desires. Further, the theory has been criticized on the grounds of having a higher propensity towards risk, accompanied by unethical and immoral behaviours (Ghoshal 2005). The public service of Ghana is a bureaucratic establishment with a typically hierarchically and vertically structured system. Its authority to make strategic, important and final decisions is centralised



at the HQ within the top echelon of the executive officers. However, the organizational structures of public organizations are flabby with too many levels which provide ample scope to dilute accountability as a result of the decentralized structures. Typically, besides the HQ, a public service organization in Ghana has ten Regional Offices and 216 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Offices making the control systems narrow-minded and inappropriate for the size of each public organization. Controls are mostly not output oriented and detailed controls tend to be non-existent. The nature of controls therefore has implications when applying the principal agency theory which centres on the relationship between two parties (the principal and the agent), where the former delegates responsibilities to the latter. However, in Ghana's public service, besides the government ('aban'), the extent of this relationship is not self-evident because principals are not clearly identifiable as there are multi-stakeholders (i.e. HQ, Regional Office and MMD office), in other words they have agents but not directly identifiable principals. Each principal within the hierarchical structure of the organization is trying to exert authority and control without necessarily following orders from above. The lack of clear cut ownership may therefore mean a diffused sense of responsibility and accountability on the part of employees. This diffused sense of responsibility has paved the way for the inefficiencies, ineffectiveness and unethical behaviours (Bhandari 2010) being witnessed in the public service of Ghana. They are deemed ineffective if they are unable to achieve their goals and also fulfill their mission. Inefficiency occurs when they have too many leakages and not enough resources to prosecute their core mandate. This situation has been aggravated by 'agents without principals' or 'agents with many principals' to include the existence of passive board/council members, indifferent and reluctant beneficiaries/clients, humanistic image as shield, weak regulatory environment (Bhandari 2010), and the politicization of Ghana's public service playing significant roles in worsening the ineffectiveness and inefficiency which eventually result in unethical activities. These factors are further discussed below.

### **8.2.1 Ineffectiveness of Policy Implementation in the Public Service of Ghana**

There has been the tendency to assume that once organizational policies/rules are enacted, their implementation by public servants will present no problems and the intended goals will be achieved in an apolitical and technically efficient manner. However, this view has been proven fallacious in Ghana. The Ghanaian Public Service is very good in carving out excellent rules and regulations as seen in chapters four and six of the thesis in the form of

properly laid down codes of conduct, constitutional provisions and other SOPs. This notwithstanding, its implementation is woefully weak and cataclysmic. This situation is aptly expressed by one of the respondents who opined that “

*“I don’t think ethics has any role or is given primacy or serious consideration among our public servants in Ghana. They may have codes of ethics, and yet in my view, the codes of ethics are honoured more in their breach than in their observance, simply because there is nobody there to enforce these codes and the codes themselves are toothless, they don’t have teeth to bite and so people flout it with impunity. With the idea that it is a government work, so it doesn’t belong to anybody; is not for my father and is not for my mother and so who am I to be the policeman to ensure that the codes are respected, everybody fraught it with impunity. There is nobody there to ensure that the codes are enforced, and so at the end of the day, I wouldn’t say that the codes do not exist, there are some blue prints that should guide and regulate the activities of public servants within the public service and yet nobody cares to implement them”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 021).

Poor implementation of organizational policies, rules and regulations as well as systemic failure may be the plausible reason for the decimal performance of the public service of Ghana in the face of unethical behaviours. Other bottlenecks identified during field research included poor record keeping, ineffective implementation of administrative rules and regulations, untimely release of funds and other resources by government for public service organizations to function and weak administrative and legal regimes. Public sector policies are therefore haphazardly implemented and no effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are put in place to gauge performance. Appau iterates this point by observing that “there are no reasonable measures to effectively implement or apply them to the letter to deter or prevent public officials from breaching them. Occasional implementation or attempts at implementation smacks off bias and caprice” (Appau 2015: 14). Where rules and regulations are applied to the letter, it affects the ‘small fishes’ because they are easily caught in the nets of ‘sanction application’ but when it involves a ‘big fish’; there is leniency in the application of sanctions (Appau 2015). Thus, the rules and regulations are conveniently selected and applied depending on the individual employee. In some instances when judgements are passed, sanctions are not adhered to religiously leading to loss of millions of dollars of state resources. This, it is believed, is as a result of our socio-cultural upbringing either you are ‘a big fish’ who is well-connected as a result of your social ties or a small fish with no safety net in society. There is therefore no deterrence in committing unethical acts in the public service of Ghana. The annual complains (**in chapter 5**) contained in the A-G’s Reports that the occurrence of these untoward behaviours has become an “annual ritual that

seems to have no effect because affected organizations are not taking any effective action to address the basic problems of lack of monitoring and supervision, and non-adherence to legislation, due to outright disregard for established order in the conduct of public financial business” (Auditor-General Report 2012: 11) succinctly explains the ineffectiveness of the rules and regulations.

In situations where some individuals take drastic measures by implementing the rules and regulations to the latter, they are met with opposition from those above with threats of administrative transfers or in other dispensations, the government stifles their effectiveness by not providing them with the necessary financial resources to meet their daily running cost. This is being elucidated by one of the respondents who happened to be the accountant of a public service organization that:

*“once you have a minister (political head of the organization) who can influence your appointment, transfer, promotion and dismissal, then your hands are sometimes tied up when it comes to implementing rules based on professionalism”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 14).

He goes on to say that “when the Minister coughs, (referring to asking for favours) you are forced to satisfy his whims and caprices whether it is right or wrong” or you are side-lined. Another respondent remarks how Internal Auditors in the various public service organizations are side-lined because they have either queried some expenditure or raised red flags (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 35).

Sanctions are seldom applied to individuals who fall foul to organizational rules and regulations as a result of two main reason; superiors are reluctant to apply the sanctions because they are equally guilty of such offences (entering into amorous relationships with subordinates, sexual harassment, condoning and conniving with accountants to syphon organizational funds or absenteeism) and the social network of relationships (including belonging to the same political party, church/faith, clan/tribe, having attended the same school etc.) that has been established as they work together in the same organization. In such instances, applying administrative sanctions become practically impossible. One respondent remarked during the interviews that:

*“we hardly apply sanctions because of the way we have been socialized. The socialization process says that one cannot look at a person’s face and criticize him or her, and this continues to be a major problem for supervisors”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 36).

Another respondent echoed:

*“People will steal if they think that they can get away with it and if they see other people getting away with it, in fact you would become a fool if you don’t join them with time, because all the people are engaging in unethical behaviours and getting away with it. Almost everybody is riding a big car or owes houses out of the money they have stolen from the Service; you remain there and say as for me, I don’t want to do any wrong (he quips)”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 035).

In addition to the above, the absence of accurate data is further seen as an obstacle to policy implementation in Ghana. There have been several instances where data has been falsified, altered, destroyed or misplaced (Chapter Five). The Judgement Debt Commission (2015) identifies improper record keeping as one of the banes of policy implementation in the public service of Ghana. To buttress this point, during the course of fieldwork, the organizations interviewed could not give any data on the number of employees who have committed a particular misbehaviour and the sanctions meted out accordingly. A respondent with the Statistics Unit of one of the organizations had this to say *“though punitive sanctions are imposed on employees who misbehave and the corresponding letters placed on their personal files, the Regional Statistics Unit cannot tell how many people have been sanctioned within the last three years as we do not keep such data”* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 007). Not all, another militating factor is the outmoded rules and regulations in the public service that needs to be repealed or made relevant to the changing needs of contemporary times.

### **8.2.2 Passive Board/Council Members**

Board or Council members of public organizations are mostly appointed by the President in consultation with his cabinet and the PSC. In some instances, these board members are nominated to serve by virtue of the fact that they are sympathisers of the ruling party, eminent citizens and successful public/business personalities without taking into account their competencies, skills, expertise and qualifications and whether they would effectively contribute to the advancement of the organization. However, these board members are often times ignorant about their expected roles and intimidated by the talents and professionalism of management (Herlinger, 1996). As intimated by one respondent;

*“As a result of politics, people who do not know what is happening in an organization (lack of expertise) are made to serve on boards; they merely sit and take sitting allowances as a form of compensation for their contributions towards the political party. So, because of politics, ‘square pegs are kept in round holes’. Yes, I met some board members from the Public Procurement Authority and was*

*surprised because they were not qualified to serve on that board; that's what happens in the public service"* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript No. 029).

They are therefore seen as 'rubber-stamps', concurring/approving management's proposals. Additionally, the board members meet irregularly and the meetings are for short time durations. Their main interests in such meetings are the per diems or honorarium that they will take afterwards and not their contribution to the course of the organization. They are therefore passive board members and this makes the public service organization, in the light of the principal agency theory, susceptible to unethical behaviours by management and employees because they are unable to foresee the consequences of their actions or inactions.

### **8.2.3 Indifferent and Reluctant Service Beneficiaries**

The posture of beneficiaries/clients or customers of public service organizations contributes largely to unethical behaviours in these organizations. The Ghanaian attitude of 'fama Nyame' (lets allow sleeping dogs lie or let's leave everything to God) has paved the way for public servants to solicit for undeserved favours before rendering services they are genuinely paid for and nobody deems it a responsibility to challenge this act. A respondent opined in an interview that:

*"We, as Ghanaians are apathetic. We have created a situation where nobody wants to even go and report any incident. We always want to sit on the fence. This I think is as a result of two things. First, it is about people not seeing results from previous encounters and second is the fear of victimization"* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 029).

This apathetic nature has made clients/customers of public service organizations to become reluctant in demanding for administrative accountability from public servants. Since clients are the same tax payers, whose tax is used to fund activities of public service organizations and also pay employees, it behoves on them to be concerned with how their money is being used by demanding accountability. Failure to demand accountability as a result of their indifference has emboldened public organizations to indulge in discreet and unethical behaviours.

### **8.2.4 Politicization of the Public Service of Ghana**

Another worrying phenomenon in the policy implementation process is the politicization of everything in Ghana. As noted in Chapter Five, bureaucrats, who are supposed to be politically neutral, have found themselves dabbling in national politics by aligning themselves to political parties. A phenomenon that is rather worrying is the political influence

on the bureaucracy, where appointments, promotions and transfers are based on political patronage and not on experience or merit. As observed by Glover-Quartey *“in Ghana, politicians have sought to directly manage resources (human, financial and material) in the Public Service... They are eager to determine who gets recruited, who gets promoted or how placements are done, and who gets trained and where”* (Glover-Quartey 2007: 22). In such circumstances, the affected bureaucrats are morally obliged to let their political affiliations super cede their professional official decisions and actions by kowtowing to the dictates of the politicians. While some threaten, intimidate and victimize colleagues because their political party is in power, others use their political influence to sell organizational resources (vehicles, houses, lands etc.) to themselves and their cronies at ridiculously lower than the prevailing market prices and some even end up not paying a dime. Those public servants in opposition also attempt to resist, thwart or sabotage the efforts of their colleagues on the other political divide by leaking sensitive information to the general public. Some public servants deliberately misplace or destroy sensitive documents to conceal their ‘shoddy deals’. The politicization of the sector probably made others to conclude that the presence of unethical behaviours is not as a result of the lack of sanctions but “the core problem is that the current organisation of state power protects political and bureaucratic elites who connive to commit financial fraud against the government” (Appiah and Abdulai, 2017: 30). Thus, political colourization of the Service has affected the neutral and a-political effective implementation of policies.

### **8.2.5 The Negative Connotation of the Public Service**

Within the Ghanaian context, as elucidated in chapter four, the term government work (*‘aban adwuma’*) has a pejorative meaning implying ‘what belongs to the government literally belongs to no one’ and so public sector employees’ main aim is to ‘grab’ as much as possible from ‘aban’ without getting into trouble. There is therefore a mutual understanding between politicians and public servants on one hand and public servants and their colleagues on the other hand to exploit the government. Employees merely identify themselves with ‘aban adwuma’ because of the perks and privileges that go along with it (getting a job as well as getting paid). Beyond this expectation employees have no commitment. Recall one of the respondents who reiterated that:

*“...the codes of ethics are honoured more in their breach than in their observant, simply because there is nobody there to enforce these codes and the*

*codes themselves are toothless, they don't have teeth to bite and so people flout it with impunity. With the idea that it is a government work, so it doesn't belong to anybody; is not for my father and is not for my mother and so who am I to be the policeman to ensure that the codes are respected, everybody fraught it with impunity"* (Fieldwork Interview Transcript 023).

The implications of this attitude is that employees indulge in all kinds of behaviours including poor attitude to work, lateness and absenteeism, fraud and abuse of organizational resources, moonlighting, destroying, altering or falsification of records, gift giving, waste and misuse of official time, not duty bound to report wrong doing, sexual harassment, existence of ghost names on government payroll, cash and procurement irregularities, pilfering and indulging in both organizational and national politics as well as bribery, corruption, conflict of interest, theft, cronyism, clientelism, perversion of justice, indiscipline and impunity, undermining the merit system of recruitment and promotion. These attitudes are diametrically opposed to the public service work ethos thereby culminating in the numerous unethical behaviours identified in literature (Trevino and Nelson, 2013; Benavides et al., 2012; Ryvkin and Serra, 2012; Goodpaster, 2007) amongst others. These unethical practices have dented the image and reputation of the public service and its officials (Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007), led to inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the organization, low levels of commitment, and consequently increased operational cost to the government as a result of unsatisfactory financial performance (Gustafson, 2013; Nasurdin et al., 2014; Orlitzky et al., 2003; Palmer, 2013))

### **8.3 Impact of Religion and Spirituality on Unethical Behaviours in the Public Service**

Ghana though a 'multi-religious' country, the sacred books and traditions of the two major religions (Christianity and Islam) have urged adherents to work conscientiously and ethically. For instance, in Christianity, Weber's '*Protestant Work Ethic*' avers that "people have a duty to work diligently" (Norris and Inglehart 2011:160) and in doing this, it should be seen as a duty or a calling. Some of the espoused virtues he admonished them to imbibe included honesty, punctuality, obedience to the law and trustworthiness (Norris and Inglehart 2011; Weber 1958). These virtues are similarly expressed in Islamic Work Ethics (Yousef 2001; Ali 1988; Warde 2000). Work takes on new meaning and significance when it is seen as a calling, a sacred duty, a service opportunity or a way to serve God, other deities, or a higher purpose (Paloutzian, Emmons and Keortge, 2003). The point of intersection between religion, spirituality and ethics stimulates kindness, humility and service not only for the self,

significant others and the organization but for the benefit of the community as a whole (Lee et al 2013). This is in tandem with the values of the Ghanaian public service. However, if majority of the employees in the public service in pursuing their daily activities fail to see the interconnection between religion, spirituality and ethics (as evidenced in the mixed results of the relationship between ethics and spirituality), then the pursuance of religious spirituality is likely to lead to gentlemanly malingering and absenteeism as observed in chapter seven. This is coupled with the postures and utterances of some religious leaders which, to some extent, are likely to lead to many unethical acts within the public service. For instance, the frequent preaching on prosperity will lead to people grabbing wealth wherever they find themselves including public service organizations. The preaching on not being equally yoked with unbelievers will lead adherents to selectively deal with colleagues and clients in the organization. These instances are in opposition to the cherished values of the Public Service and as such will not aid the Service to achieve its set goals and objectives.

#### **8.4 Linking the Concepts, Research Objectives with the Theories and Extant Literature**

This study's objectives were to examine the ethical standards, values and norms of Ghana's public service; explore whether there were deviations from the ethical standards and values of Ghana's public service, and if there are, what kind(s) of deviations they were; explore the role of workplace spirituality in the public service of Ghana; and investigate how these ethical standards, values and norms are enforced in Ghana's public service. Empirically the focus of the thesis was on public service ethics, values and spirituality. The discussion in this chapter has revealed the negative impact of social capital and agency theories as well as religion and spirituality on the Public Service of Ghana despite potential benefits associated with the theories.

It is a trite that the Public Service of Ghana has its set of ethics, values and rules that guides the conduct of employees. However, the bane is with the enforcement as several factors come into play to prevent the effective application. These factors include both internal and external actors, institutions and interests. The extended family system, respect for the elderly, the moral tone of the nation, break-down of societal values, inadequate ethical leadership and in-group member effect were identified and used to explain how social capital has contributed to unethical behaviour in the public service of Ghana. Again, the agency theory which is supposed to ensure controls, has rather aggravated unethical behaviours within the public



service as a result of diffused sense of responsibility and accountability with too many ‘agents without principals’, poor implementation of organizational policies, rules and regulations, passive board members, apathy on the part of service beneficiaries and the politicization of the service. The findings on whether workplace spirituality could be deployed as a catalyst to reduce unethical behaviours were to some extent mixed as it revealed the existence of both ethical and unethical behaviours. Further, spirituality to some extent has an impact on the enforcement of organizational rules and regulations which it is believed is compounded by the social capital and agency theories thereby having a spiral effect as postulated earlier on in figure 2.1. It could be concluded that the existence of these behaviours is characterized by institutional failures, inefficiency and nonadherence to traditional values.

## **8.5 Chapter Conclusion**

Though a trite that public service organizations play significant roles in the socio-economic development of the nation. From the perspectives of the social capital and principal-agency theories, the findings reveal the existence of dysfunctional behaviours characterized by institutional failures, inefficiency and nonadherence to traditional values and norms as a result modernity. From the lens of the social capital theory, the study identified the extended family system, respect for the elderly and authority, the moral tone of the nation, breakdown of societal values, inadequate ethical leadership, in-group member effect and urbanization, globalization and technology as factors contributing to these dysfunctional behaviours in Ghana’s public service. Also, from the viewpoints of the agency theory, the ineffectiveness of policy implementation, passive board/council members, indifferent and reluctant nature of public service beneficiaries and the politicization of the public service contributed immensely to these dysfunctional behaviours. Further, religious spirituality to some extent has negatively impacted on public service ethics and values in Ghana. These notwithstanding, ethics, spirituality and religion enjoy prominence in the life of the Ghanaian public servant and this can be harnessed to ameliorate the various dysfunctional behaviours in Ghana.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **9.0 Chapter Introduction**

This is the final chapter which presents the summary and conclusions of the study. The chapter begins by summarising the earlier chapters indicating their scope of coverage and their contribution to the attainment of the overall goal of the study. Next, this chapter presents a summary of the major research findings and proceeds to outline the contribution of the study to knowledge. The chapter also presents the policy recommendations and suggestions for future research and finally, it presents the author's reflection on the entire PhD process. The reflections highlight the educational background of the researcher, the professional development and experiences gained during the PhD study, the research outputs to be made from the PhD thesis once it is completed, the publications in peer-reviewed journals during the PhD study and the conferences attended.

#### **9.1 General Overview of the Entire Thesis**

Addressing the research objectives and questions of the thesis led to the organization of the study into nine chapters dealing with the conception, research methodology and context of the study, results, findings, analyses, conclusions and suggestions for future research. This section summarizes the nine chapters which all-together addressed the research objectives. Chapter one introduced the research by setting out the research background and outlining the research problem. The chapter further outlined the scope, aims and objectives of the study as well as framing the research questions that the study anticipated to achieve. This is followed by presenting the research context and a summary of the focus of the nine chapters within the thesis outline section.

The second chapter dealt with the theoretical overview of the research by dwelling on the relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks. Conceptually, this study falls within the NPM discourse focusing on why the NPM failed to include the ethics infrastructure leading to ethical failures. The chapter then defines the various concepts of the study including ethics, morality, values and principles, ethical and unethical behaviours linking it to the public service. The chapter intimates that, public service organizations exist to serve the interest of

the public and therefore the actions of public officials should be determined by their specific codes of conduct which includes impartiality, legality, integrity, transparency, accountability, equality, honesty, responsibility, and justice and also preventing them from doing what is abhorred in their respective organizations either as individuals or collectively as an organization. Thus, the chapter argues that whereas lots of research exists on public service ethics and values in the advanced world, not much research is undertaken in Africa despite the persistent recurring of unethical behaviours in the service. Workplace spirituality is also reviewed under the conceptual framework, to show that workplace spirituality if properly practiced will help to reduce the unethical behaviours in public service organization. The forms and factors influencing unethical behaviours were also reviewed. These therefore formed the bases of the study in the public service of Ghana. Finally, the chapter discusses social capital and the principal-agency theories as its theoretical lens to unearth the underpinning causes of unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana. The chapter therefore provided the foundation for establishing aspects of the research problem and outlining the focus of this study.

The paradigm that guided this study was the focus of chapter three by dealing with the fundamental beliefs and assumptions about how the world is perceived and how this perception served as a framework to guide this piece of research (Jonker and Pennink, 2010). The paradigm therefore influenced the researcher's orientation and determined the ontological, epistemological and methodological position of the researcher (Denzin and Lincoln 2010; Saunders et al 2012). This study was guided by a social constructivist epistemology in which the researcher valued the role of subjects and the subject-researcher relationship in knowledge creation was considered appropriate for this study (Denzin et al., 2006; Farquhar, 2012; Wahyuni, 2012) as it allowed a critical examination of assumptions that would have been glossed over by other approaches (Jacobs and Manzi, 2000). Adopting this paradigm enabled both the researcher and the participants to jointly co-construct meanings from their interactive dialogue and interpretations of ethics and spirituality in the public service of Ghana. In line with this research orientation, the study adopted a qualitative research method which utilized semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion as well as documentary reviews and observations as the key methods for data collection. The interviews and FGDs were first transcribed and categorized under themes based upon the reviewed literature. The chapter was therefore useful in providing the philosophical and methodological bases for the research. This was in tandem with the qualitative research

evaluation criteria which postulates that to ensure research quality and robustness, the choice of appropriate methodology was very vital (Tracy 2010; Tracy 2013). Further, this chapter also provided the framework for gauging the contribution of the study to knowledge.

This was followed by chapter four which presented an overview of the politico-economic and socio-cultural context of Ghana. The chapter sets the contextual tone of this research by tracing the evolution of the public service from the pre-independence era to its present state in Ghana. The chapter intimates that despite the existence of organizational systems, structures and procedures, rules and regulations including SOPs, there have been instances of unethical conducts, not only in contemporary times but traces it to the pre-independence era. Further, the chapter traces the pivotal role the public service of Ghana had played over the years and continuous to play as well as some cherished traditional Ghanaian values to mitigate unethical behaviours. However, as a result of the economic decline and the negative impact of the same values including the extended family system, the situation has not witnessed significant changes. The introduction of codes of conduct and other constitutional measures in the public service with the aim of ameliorating the situation in the 1990s was also reviewed to set the tone for this research on public service ethics values and spirituality in Ghana. In addition, the chapter also examined the role of spirituality in the public service to determine whether it can ameliorate the situation as Ghana is touted as a religious nation and many public servants profess religious spirituality. The chapter therefore set the contextual background in which the study was conducted.

The fifth chapter presented the results of the study in relation to the second research objective which sought to explore whether there were deviations from the ethical standards and values of Ghana's public service, and if there are, what kind(s) of deviations are there. This was in response to plethora of researches (Treviño et al., 2014; Christian and Ellis, 2011; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010) on unethical behaviours and this study wanted to situate the peculiar causes in the public service of Ghana. The chapter focused on the causes, forms and consequences of these unethical behaviours. The causes extracted from the fieldwork research identified low remuneration, poor leadership, extended family system, organizational culture, working environment, age, sex and gender of employees, politicization of the service and the Ghanaian attitude of get-rich-quick as being the bane of unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana. Fraud and abuse of resources, moonlighting, destroying, altering or falsification of records, waste and misuse of official

time, not obliged to report organizational wrong-doing, entering into amorous relationships, sexual harassment, payroll irregularities, cash and procurement irregularities, pilfering and other subtle abuses were also identified as the forms these deviations took. The consequences of these deviations did not only have negative impact on the individual public service organizations but the entire public service of Ghana (the Government of Ghana). The identified consequences included lateness, absenteeism and gentlemanly malingering, their negative impact on the organization's reputation, employees' unwillingness to report unethical behaviours which affects efficiency and effectiveness in sector performance leading to low levels of employee commitment, recruitment and performance and retention of competent human resources. These therefore had political, economic and social impact on Ghana as a whole. This negative impact made the former President of Ghana in delivering his State of the Nation's address to Parliament to bemoan that "Ghana is bleeding from these acts of mismanagement and malfeasance" (Republic of Ghana, 2015: 33). The overall impact is the huge cost to the nation.

Chapter six of the thesis presents the findings of the study on the enforcement of ethical standards in the public service of Ghana through semi-structured interviews and documentary reviews with some selected employees of the public service. The chapter attempts to answer the thesis' third objective which examines the ethical standards and values in the public service and how they are enforced. Codes of conducts, organizational statutes, SOP and the various Service Acts served as the lens through which the individual organizational mechanisms were examined. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana and its associated amendments served as the lens for the external examination. The findings revealed that though mechanisms are put in place to ensure that ethical rules and regulations are adhered to, the main impediment had to do with the effective implementation of the rules. In some instances, some of the external mechanisms were either financially handicapped to prosecute their mandates or were not given enough powers to sanction these behaviours. The extended family system and national politics were some of the underpinning factors that led to the implementation challenges in the Public Service.

Chapter seven presents the results of the fourth objective of the thesis which relates to the role of workplace spirituality in the Ghanaian Public Service. The chapter establishes the tenacious belief in religious spirituality in the public service of Ghana as both good and bad occurrences in private and organizational lives are attributed to spirituality. Further the findings of the behaviour of spiritual individuals in the Public Service of Ghana reveal double

standards; while some religious individuals exhibit the tenets of workplace spirituality such as love, compassion, trust, reverences, wisdom, faith, sense of oneness, willingness to help others, forgiveness and creativity (Ajala, 2013), others only paid lip-service to them. This shows that though spirituality has a positive link with ethical behaviour, it is only applicable, to some extent, in Ghana as some individuals purported to be spiritual and used it for their selfish desires. Next, in terms of the impact of workplace spirituality on the Public Service of Ghana, the findings revealed a mixed impact; implying workplace spirituality has both positive and negative impacts. On one side of the coin, the pursuit of spirituality at work leads to absenteeism and ‘gentlemanly malingering’ in public service organizations as most public servants instead of working are pursuing religious rituals and programmes. On the other hand, spiritual individuals portray ethical behaviours which could be harnessed by organizational members to reduce the unethical behaviours. The chapter therefore sends a clarion call for the reawakening of spirituality in the public service through the sensitization, reorientation and internalization of WPS which is anticipated to stimulate ethical behaviour in public service organizations.

Chapter eight then presents the discussions by synthesising the findings garnered from the three main research objectives of the study and connecting these with social capital and agency theories as well as the extant literature. Thus, unveiling how these two theories have further contributed to unethical behaviours in the public service of Ghana. Religion and spirituality though ethical building blocks have both positively and negatively impacted on the public service of Ghana. The chapter further builds a linkage between the three main objectives of the study and simplified the interconnectedness from the theoretical perspectives of social capital and agency theories. Reflections on the implications of the study were also explored.

The last chapter summarises the entire study, provides a summary of the major findings, the contribution of the study to knowledge as well as the policy implication and limitations of the study.

## **9.2 Summary of Key Findings**

A summary of the major research findings are presented in table 9.1 below;

**Table 9. 1: Summary of Major Findings**

Research Questions	Main Findings
<p>RQ1. What ethical standards and values (rules) have been set for public service employees in Ghana?</p>	<p><b>Existence of Ethical Standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Orders (GOs) embodied rules and regulations</li> <li>• Criminal Code of 1960 spelt out prohibited activities</li> <li>• The 1992 Constitution has provisions for ethical conduct</li> <li>• CMAs tasked to provide ethical guidelines for all public service agencies</li> <li>• Civil Service Code of Conduct (1999)</li> <li>• Each Public Service Organization has its own code of conduct</li> </ul>
<p>RQ2. Are there deviations from these ethical standards and values, and if there are, what kind(s) of deviations are these?</p>	<p><b>Existence of Unethical behaviours in the following forms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fraud and Abuse of Organizational Resources</li> <li>• Destroying, Altering or Falsification of Records</li> <li>• Gift Giving</li> <li>• Waste and Misuse of Official Time</li> <li>• Not Duty Bound to Report Wrong Doing</li> <li>• Entering into Amorous Relationship</li> <li>• Sexual Harassment</li> <li>• Existence of Ghost Names on Payroll</li> <li>• Cash Irregularities</li> <li>• Procurement Irregularities</li> <li>• Pilfering</li> <li>• Rent Irregularities and Outstanding Loans Recovery</li> <li>• Indulging in Politics</li> </ul> <p><b>Causes of Unethical behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor Remuneration</li> <li>• Poor leadership</li> <li>• Extended family System</li> <li>• Working Environment</li> <li>• Age, Sex and Gender of Employees</li> <li>• Get-rich-quick attitude of Ghanaians</li> </ul> <p><b>Effects of Unethical Behaviours in the Public Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lateness, Absenteeism and Presenteeism</li> <li>• Dents Organizational Image</li> <li>• Affects Efficiency and Effectiveness</li> <li>• Unwillingness to Report Unethical Behaviours</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low Level of Organizational Commitment</li> <li>• Effects on Organizational Performance</li> <li>• Cost to the Organization and Government</li> </ul>
<p><b>RQ3. How are these ethical standards and values enforced in the public service of Ghana?</b></p>	<p><b>Enforced Through Internal and External Mechanisms (Codes of Conduct, GOs, SOPs and Constitutional and other mechanisms).</b> Both Internal and External Mechanisms have challenges;</p> <p><b>Internal Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ineffective Implementation of Rules</li> <li>• Untimely Release of Resource to Function</li> <li>• Weak Administrative and Legal Regimes</li> <li>• Poor Record Keeping</li> <li>• Extend family System</li> <li>• Favouritism and Nepotism</li> </ul> <p><b>External Measures</b> (Each has its unique challenges)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)</li> <li>• Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest</li> <li>• Asset Declaration</li> <li>• Parliament</li> <li>• Auditor-General’s Office (A-Gs Office)</li> <li>• Setting up Commissions/Committees of Inquiry</li> <li>• Internal Audit Agency (IAA)</li> <li>• Serious Fraud Office (SFO)/Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO)</li> <li>• Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663)</li> <li>• Public Disclosure Act/ Whistle-blower Act (2006), Act 720</li> <li>• Financial Administration Act, Act 654 (2003)</li> <li>• Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2007 (Act 749)</li> <li>• Media and Civil Society</li> </ul>
<p><b>RQ4. What role does workplace spirituality play in the public service of Ghana?</b></p>	<p><b>Workplace Spirituality in the Public Service of Ghana</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a Relationship between Spirituality and Religion in Ghana</li> <li>• There is a link between Spirituality and Ethical Behaviour in Ghana’s Public Service</li> <li>• The Impact of Workplace Spirituality on the Public Service of Ghana can be viewed from three perspectives; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Positive Impact</li> <li>2. Negative Impact</li> <li>3. Mixed Impact</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Influence of foreign Religions, westernization and globalization</li> </ul>

Source: Authors Construct, 2017



### **9.3 Theoretical and Policy Implications of the Findings**

The findings show that unethical behaviours and spirituality or religion in public service organizations have more importance for policy makers, public service organizations and religious leaders. The implications of the study are subsequently viewed from these three angles.

#### **9.3.1 Implications of the Study for Policy Makers**

The policy implications regarding spirituality are more straightforward. First, it is not administrative and politically inappropriate, immoral, or illegal to screen for potential public sector employees on the basis of their ethicality, spirituality or spiritual expression, as those terms have been defined in this dissertation. Second, ethics and spirituality could be incorporated into many human resource practices, such as the recruitment, applicant screening, interview, and hiring procedures for all government agencies as well as during orientations and in-service training. Third, ethics and spirituality can be specifically targeted for personal improvement and education, and implementing a program of staff development in this direction would be an appropriate human resource objective in the public service, so long as these efforts do not cross into areas of religion. Imbibing ethics and organizational spirituality can go a long way in radically transforming “the dysfunctional precepts and actualities of modern, bureaucratic organizations” (Steingard, 2005: 235).

#### **9.3.2 Implications of the Study for Public Service Organizations**

Unethical behaviours have become symptomatic to public service organizations especially in Africa and it is seen as a survival strategy. This has undermined the judicious use of national resources for development and also eroded the effective application of management principles. The implications are quite obvious. In the first instance, unethical behaviours affect employee relations in many ways (Kaptein, 2011; Treviño et al., 2006; Singh and Twalo 2015). Ethical subordinates will not want to respect their unethical superiors and would therefore not take administrative instructions from them. Again, seeing colleagues use unethical means to gain favours from superiors will result in resentment and tension among employees, resulting in the lack of trust (Kaptein, 2011). Further, unethical behaviours affect employee performance, as employees feel they can resort to other means to gain their career advancement, promotion and fixed tenure-ship in the organization instead of working hard. Moreover, illegal and unethical activities have the tendency of resulting into numerous legal battles leading to the payment of fines, penalties or judgement debts. The overall cost that the

organization and government incurs is unimaginable. The image, credibility and eventual continuity of the organization are jeopardized leading to moral torpidity (Grant and Visconti, 2006; Singh and Twalo 2015). It therefore behoves on management to salvage these negative images of the public service by taking into account the potential biases that can blind them when taking ethical decisions as well as bearing in mind the implications that could arise from such decisions. For policy makers therefore, understanding the causes, forms and effects of unethical behaviours is an important step towards ameliorating or eliminating this cancer in public organizations. Not having the required ethics, values and attitudes could be on account of not having learnt them or their erosion due to various circumstances. Awareness of injustice, inconvenience and unfairness caused at the workplace could contribute towards the erosion of these components of broad skills or failure to apply them even if they are not eroded. When employees have inadequate resources to meet organizational goals, they would rationalize their behaviour by not heeding to ethical standards but rather adopting unethical practices to execute their organizational responsibilities (Kaptein, 2011; Singh and Twalo 2015).

Public service organizations in Ghana therefore need to be proactive in the formulation and implementation of rules/regulation and policies. The public service organisations in Ghana in general are noted for being good at policy formulation, but the challenge is at the implementation stage. Strategies should be adopted to make policy implementation proactive to meet the needs of the changing times as well as letting employees feel they have been treated fairly and equitably when it comes to the enforcement of policies. This will induce a sense of fulfilment and ownership of whatever they do in the organization thereby reducing unethical behaviours to the barest minimum. Besides, adequate motivation for employees will boost up morale and commitment and reduce dysfunctional behaviours.

### **9.3.3 Implications of the Study for Religious Leaders**

Just as there is an atmosphere of high religiosity in Ghana, so also is there high unethical behaviour. There is corruption, moonlighting, conflict of interest and nepotistic tendencies in the public service, some as a result of pursuing religious or spiritual fulfilment. This leads to absenteeism and gentlemanly malingering in the public service. There is also the danger of imposing religious/spiritual values on public service employees as well as tying workplace spirituality to the construction of competence and performance in public service

organizations (Kamoche and Pinnington 2012). Religious leaders should be concerned with this state of affairs for three main reasons. First, the evidence suggests that spirituality/religion is not playing a positive role in public life in Ghana, as it relates to unethical behaviour. Some individuals who claim to be religious/spiritual are only conforming to outward rituals and resisting the potential influence of religion/spirituality in transforming their lives. Religious leaders should also not be concerned with preaching only the prosperity gospel and giving positions to individuals who contribute to their activities without actually finding out their source of income. But rather, they should be concerned with their followers' behaviours, especially those who are constantly exposed to their religious teachings and yet indulge in unethical behaviours. They therefore need to preach the unadulterated word of their respective faith. Finally, religious leaders should recognize their inability to influence their followers in behaving ethically, but also the tremendous potential that exists in what they can offer individuals and their nation.

## **9.4 Policy Recommendations**

### **9.4.1 Internal/Organizational Mechanisms to Promote Ethics**

A set of activities, policies and procedures must be put in place to support employees to understand and comply with the ethical standards and policies of the organization. This could include;

- i. Development of a code of ethics/conduct which is effectively communicated to all employees including relevant others in the organization;
- ii. Existence of an ethics officer who will advise employees on ethical issues as well as investigate allegations;
- iii. Developing coaching and ethics training programmes to help employees understand the organization's ethical goals and values;
- iv. Providing an ethics audit system;
- v. Providing a dedicated ethics telephone hotlines to allay the fears of retaliation/intimidation;
- vi. Strict and fair disciplinary procedures should be meted out to employees who violate ethical standards to serve as deterrent;
- vii. Evaluation of employees' ethical performance to encourage ethical behaviour through incentivization;

- viii. A career system based on the principle of merit, which fairly and impartially recruits, rewards and promotes public servants. This should also outline the legal rights and responsibilities of all public servants;
- ix. Well-articulated and fair human resource policies on improved and adequate remuneration, training, disciplinary procedures, ensuring ethical standards amongst others are adequately enforced;
- x. Better equipment and resources should be made readily available;
- xi. Adequate and proper record keeping or transparency measures should be ensured;
- xii. Strict enforcement of all public service rules and regulations. In this regard, measures on preventing, detecting, reporting, investigating, prosecuting and enforcing all laws on unethical conduct should be put in place;
- xiii. A culture of professionalism and pride should be nurtured through the recognition of hard and dedicated service as well as the correction of poor performance;
- xiv. Recognition and awards scheme could be introduced to reward ethical behaviours;
- xv. Inculcate the culture of Ubuntu and workplace spirituality among public servants

#### **9.4.2 Management's Role in Promoting Ethical Conduct in the Public Service**

Similarly, the Boards of the various public service organizations including the Public Service Commission and the Office of the Head of Civil Service could help in the promotion of ethics in the public service as a whole through:

- i.* Strengthening ethics or anti-corruption legislations in the organization;
- ii.* Implementing effective and 'living' codes of conduct;
- iii.* Granting continuous training on administrative procedures and ethical norms;
- iv.* Verifying and making public disclosures of conflicts of interest;
- v.* Demonstrating their political support for ethical conduct; and
- vi.* Effectively coordinating activities of public service organizations to ensure they are ethically compliant.

#### **9.4.3 External Mechanisms to Promote Ethics and Control Conduct of Public Servants**

Equally, the external mechanisms could be strengthened in order to control the conduct of public servants and consequently promote ethics in the public service. These mechanisms could include;

- i. Improving the complaints procedures in Ghana and not necessarily categorizing them;
- ii. Encouraging, protecting and actually rewarding whistle-blowers and not only mentioning these in the Whistle-blowing Act;
- iii. Granting more resources, independence and distinct but specific powers to the various investigating agencies;
- iv. Strengthening the oversight roles of parliament;
- v. Improving law enforcement;
- vi. Training more public prosecutors and ensuring they are adequately motivated to prosecute unethical acts; and
- vii. Strengthening the Judiciary as well as granting them more independence to operate without political interference.

#### **9.4.4 Other Mechanisms to Promote Ethics**

Further, this research recommends the inculcation of ethics and morality in Ghana. This could start from primary schools where moral training is part and parcel of the educational curriculum through to university education. This could be supported by religious leaders who would question the sudden source of wealth of people and not offering them prominent positions in church and special events as well as going back to the fundamentals of their respective religion/faith which encompasses ethics. Religion could thus be used as a catalyst to improve upon spirituality both at home and in the public service. Further, the poor conditions of service in the public service coupled with the excruciating economic conditions should be improved. Additionally, professionalism needs to be taught in its principles, practices and conduct in the public service. This will enhance the competence of public servants which will be manifested through the exhibition of improved character, attitude, conduct and excellence at work. In the execution of their duties therefore, they would be fair, neutral and impartial as well as serving in the interest of the general public. Besides, there should be supportive organizational arrangements such as organizational structure, systems, laws, rules and regulations as well as codes of conduct. These should not be merely on paper but effectively implemented. Not all, a mechanism should be put in place to ensure that public servants serve the government of the day independently, devoid of politics and not seen as political attachés. Public servants should be allowed to perform their duties without fear or favour.

## **9.5 Contributions of the Research to Knowledge**

Extant literature has shown that there is no empirical study that has combined ethics, values and spirituality together. Most studies conducted worldwide have either concentrated on public service ethics, public values or workplace spirituality separately. For instance, studies on public sector values (Jørgensen and Vrangbæk, 2011; Omurgonulsen and Oktem, 2009; Vrangbæk, 2009; van der Wal et al., 2008b; Jørgensen, 2007), studies on public service ethics (Bowman and West, 2014; Van Der Wal, 2011; Kaptein, 2008b; Kaptein, 2008a) and researches within the domain of workplace spirituality (Petchsawanga and Duchon, 2012; Dhiman and Marques, 2011; Fry et al., 2011; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2010b; Moore and Casper, 2006). The above situation is also not different in Ghana; few notable studies on Public Service ethics are: Asibuo (2003), Ayee (1997), Kumasey (2008), Kumasey et al., (2017), Sakyi and Bawole (2009) and Woode (2000). However, these studies are limited in their respective scopes as they have mostly concentrated on aspects of ethics or values in the Public Service of Ghana and no empirical study on spirituality in the Public Service were undertaken. The present study is an improvement by blending public service ethics, values and spirituality together and not limiting it to only one aspect. Ethics, values and spirituality still remains a grey area for research in the Ghanaian public sector. Despite this, the present study is unique in several ways. This is one of the foremost studies on public service ethics, values and spirituality in Ghana, attempting to understand how public service organizations respond to unethical behaviours and the policy implications of such behaviours in the MDAs and MMDAs. This study therefore provides empirical evidence on these aspects within the Ghanaian situation.

Additionally, this study has contributed theoretically in broadening the methodological dimensions of this field. It is argued most studies on ethics, values and spirituality are quantitative studies (Park and Blenkinsopp, 2013; Moore et al., 2012; James et al., 2011; MacDonald, 2011; Meynhardt and Bartholomes, 2011; Rayner et al., 2011; Vandenberghe, 2011; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; van Thiel and van der Wal, 2010; Gino et al., 2009; Ambrose et al., 2008; Van der Wal et al., 2006; Jurkiewicz and Giacalone, 2004). However, the present study is purely a qualitative study, which has provided a rich insight into the Ghanaian context by allowing public servants to tell their own stories unencumbered (Creswell 2014) and therefore a complete departure from what is predominant in the literature. This therefore provides a deeper understanding to the phenomenon, thus, this

research has broadened existing literature on public service ethics, values and spirituality by contributing to the understanding of the Ghanaian perspective.

Another significant contribution of this thesis is the relevance of the subject matter in the educational system of Ghana and the public service as students will complete and take up public service roles. While plethora of reports and empirical researches exist in Ghana on corruption and other unethical behaviours, this study sheds light on the contemporary state of affairs and idiosyncrasies of the need for ethics, values and spirituality not only in Ghanaian public service but the African public service as a whole. This study proposes the inculcation of ethics, values and spirituality in all public service organizations commencing from our basic schools up to the tertiary sector of education. In addition, this thesis contributes significantly to existing literature on public administration in Ghana. Even though research on centralized and decentralized administration abounds in Ghana, there are scarce studies focusing on ethics, values and spirituality at both national and sub-national levels as this field is seen as an emerging one. This study brings on-board important insights to public administration in the Ghana.

## **9.6 Limitations of the Research**

Methodologically, the field work for this study was fraught with some unavoidable limitations. One of the constraints was the limited scope of the study. Ethical and spiritual issues in the public service are numerous and varied with new dimensions frequently being added on. This research, however, discussed only the pertinent ones, including unethical behaviours and how spirituality impacted on these behaviours and leaving other equally important ethical and spiritual issues in the public service. In addition to the above, the busy work schedules of both senior and junior officials of the public service organizations also posed a challenge to this research as some directors were often times either engaged in meetings or had travelled on official assignment. Interview schedules had to be postponed several times and in some instances, never honoured. The other officials who were often around were also too busy and overburdened to take part in the FGDs. This eventually affected the total number of respondents interviewed. Another constraint was the unwillingness of some employees to participate in the research because of the sensitive nature of ethical issues and its reprisal effects when their superiors find out what they said. Others were of the opinion that in spite of the relevance of the topic in contemporary times, they could not participate because they would be seen as ‘washing their dirty linen in public’. Despite, consistent assurance of confidentiality and anonymity, they still declined to be

interviewed. Closely related to the ethical issues are the expressions of religious and spiritual issues at the workplace. Some employees considered spiritual conversations as ‘too personal’ and therefore invaded their privacy if they took part. Finally, time and financial constraints was also another limiting factor to this research. In other to measure change or stability in any research, a considerable timeframe is needed. However, this research was time-bound with fieldwork duration of six months and submitting the entire research in three years. Serious financial constraints’ could not also be overruled due to the vast dispersion of the study area across the geo-political regions coupled with heavy traffic commuting to the sites. These activities have financial obligation which served as hindrance to the research.

## **9.7 Reflections on the Journey to the PhD**

### **9.7.1 Professional Development and Experience**

Pursuing a PhD in the University of Manchester has contributed enormously to my professional development and experience. I have been exposed to several research platforms and in the process interacted with many distinguished scholars. I have also had the opportunity to teach on the MSc programme and interacted with students across the globe. Further, I have reviewed manuscripts for publications in international journals including the International Journal of Public Policy and the International Journal of Public Administration. Additionally, the PhD process has contributed significantly in submerging me into the theoretical jungle where I have been exposed to several theories and philosophical perspectives in organizational studies, public administration and development studies. Other aspects of professional achievement during this accounting period are outlined below.

### **9.7.2 Peer-Review Publications**

Since embarking on the PhD journey in the University of Manchester, my writing skills have sharpened and subsequently improved my visibility in academia in terms of the number of publications in peer-reviewed journals and book chapters. My PhD output has also potentially generated a number of manuscripts to be completed in the next couple of months. These manuscripts will target top-tier journals in public administration, organisational studies and development studies in the following thematic areas:

- Examining Dysfunctional Behaviours in the Ghanaian Public Service: Can Spirituality and Ethics offer Solutions?



- Daring to Explain the Inexplicable Causes of Unethical Behaviours in the Public Service of Ghana: From the lens of Social Capital and Principal Agency Theories
- Marriage of the unwilling: Religion and Unethical Behaviour in the Public Service of Ghana
- Friends or Foes: Workplace Ethics and Spirituality in Ghanaian Public Service (using quantitative studies)
- Comparative study of Unethical Behaviour and Spirituality in the Public Service of Transitional Economies

Since commencing the PhD programme in 2014, I have utilised the skills acquired to publish three articles in peer-reviewed journals and two edited book chapters. I also three articles under review. These publications will enhance my profile within my University in Ghana and also contribute to my promotion from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer upon return. *Please see appendix 1* for the full list of articles. I have also attended three conferences and participated in a number of skills training programmes both within the University of Manchester and outside. *Please see appendix 2 and 3 respectively* for the list of conferences and training attended.

## **9.8 Final Conclusion**

This chapter recapitulates the vital components of the thesis by providing an overview of each chapter. The chapter also summarizes the research findings and outlines the contribution of the thesis to knowledge. Further the implications of the study for research, policy and practice are presented as well as some recommendations for policy implementation to enhance ethics and reduce unethical behaviours are provided.

Though a trite that public service organization play significant roles in the socio-economic development of a nation, unethical behaviours in the public service have eroded most of the gains especially in developing countries. This study, therefore, sought to examine the ethical standards of Ghana's public service and determine the role of workplace spirituality in ameliorating the situation. Extant literature has shown that the so much cherished public service ethics and values are being confronted by some dysfunctional practices including bribery and corruption, absconding with public funds, fraud, conflict of interest, moonlighting, blatant waste and falsification of records amongst others and warm-heartedly designated the '*the disease of government*' calling for the rejuvenation of ethics in the public

service. One way of doing this is the introduction of workplace spirituality which expresses employees' search for simplicity, meaning, self-expression and interconnectedness to something higher and has the inclination of reducing dysfunctional behaviours. The study explored further, whether workplace spirituality could reduce unethical behaviour within the Ghanaian public service. The findings revealed the existence of dysfunctional behaviours characterized by institutional failures, inefficiency and nonadherence to traditional values and norms which were largely as a result of the extended family system and politicization of the public service. The findings on the behaviour of spiritual individuals in the Public Service of Ghana also revealed double standards; while some spiritual individuals demonstrated the tenets of workplace spirituality such as love, compassion and willingness to help others, others only paid lip-service to them. To some extent, ethics, spirituality and religion enjoy prominence in the life of the Ghanaian public servant, and this can be channelled to ameliorate the various dysfunctional behaviours in Ghana. The study therefore recommends the inculcation of ethics and morality in Ghana. This could start from primary schools where moral training is part and parcel of the educational curriculum through to the University. This could be reinforced by religious leaders who would question the sudden source of wealth of people and not offer them prominent positions in church and special events as well as going back to the fundamentals of their respective religion/faith which encompasses ethics. Religion could thus be used as a catalyst to improve upon spirituality both at home and in the public service. Further, the poor conditions of service in the public service coupled with the excruciating economic conditions should be improved. Additionally, professionalism needs to be taught in its principles, practices, and conduct in the public service. This will enhance the competence of public servants which will be manifested through the exhibition of improved character, attitude, conduct and excellence at work. In the execution of their duties therefore, they would be fair, neutral, and impartial as well as serving in the interest of the general public. Besides, there should be supportive organizational arrangements such as organizational structure, systems, laws, rules and regulations as well as codes of conduct that are not merely on paper to gather dust but effectively implemented.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Articles and Book Chapters Published since Enrolling into the PhD

#### a. Peer Reviewed Journal Publications

1. Hossain, F., **Kumasey, A.S.**, Eldridge, D., Kravariti, F., & Bawole, J.N., (2017). Paradox of Public Sector Capacity Building: Lessons from Matt2 UK-Bangladesh Cooperation. *Development Policy Review*.
2. Ibrahim, M., Bawole, J.N., Obuobisa-Darko, T., Abubakar, A., & **Kumasey, A. S.** (2017). The Legal Regime and the Compliance Façade in Public Procurement in Ghana. Special Issue on Public Procurement of the *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 30 (4), 370-390
3. **Kumasey, A.S.**, Bawole, J.N., and Hossain, F., (2017). Organizational Commitment of Public Service Employees in Ghana: Does Code of Ethics Matter?" *International Review of Administrative Sciences* 83(1\_suppl), 59-77.

#### b. Articles Under Review

1. Delle, E., Abdul-Nasiru, I., & **Kumasey, A. S.**, (2017, Submitted). Innovative Work Behaviour: Does Organizational Culture and Proactive Personality Matter? *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, [Under Review].
2. **Kumasey, A. S.**, Delle, E & Hossain, M., (2017, Submitted). The Influence of Organizational Justice on Organizational Commitment and Employee Work Engagement in Public Service of Ghana. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour* [Under Review]
3. Hossain, F., Sinani, S.S., Kravariti, F, **Kumasey, A.S** & Almutlaq, T., (2017, Submitted). International Research Collaboration: Trends and Trajectories from GCC Countries. *Studies in Higher Education* [Under Review]

#### c. Chapters in Edited Books

1. Hossain, F., **Kumasey, A.S.**, Rohitarachoon, P., Eldridge D., & Azizuddin, M., (2017, **Forthcoming Book Chapter**). Relevance of Integrated Public Governance in Public Service Capacity Development: Perspectives from Bangladesh. Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), Bangladesh.
2. **Kumasey, A.S.**, Bawole, J.N., Hossain, F., and Ibrahim, M (2017), Ethics, Values and Development Management in Bawole *et al.* (eds.). *Development Management: Theory and Practice*, Routledge Publications, United Kingdom.

## **Appendix 2: Conferences Attended since Enrolling into the PhD**

- 1. Kumasey, A. S.,** Hossain, F., Mamman, A., & Alsinani, S. S. (2017). Examining Dysfunctional Behaviours in the Ghanaian Public Service: Can Spirituality and Ethics offer Solutions? Paper presented at ASPA Conference 2017 on “Recognizing the Role of the Public Service and Re-building Its Image”, Held in Atlanta, Georgia between 17- 21 March, 2017.
- 2. Hossain, F., Kumasey, A.S.,** Kravariti, F. & Bawole, J.N. (2016). Paradox of Public Sector Capacity Building: Lessons from the Matt2 UK-Bangladesh Cooperation. Presented at the International Conference on “Inclusive and Accountable Governance in South Asia”, held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 20-21 July 2016 and sponsored by the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC).
- 3. Kumasey, A.S.,** (2015). Public Service Ethics, Values and Spirituality in Ghana: Prospects and Challenges (**Poster Presentation**). School of Environment, Education and Development (University of Manchester) Annual PGR Conference on the theme: “*Making Social Impact*” from 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2015 at the University of Manchester, United Kingdom.



### Appendix 3: Skills Training Attended

Unit	Title	Event Date	Venue
HUMNS8830	Thesis Submission Briefing	03/05/2017	Uni Place 4.205
HUMNS8460	Editing and Proofreading Your Thesis	22/11/2016	Simon 4.04
TBF22	Data Protection	30/09/2016	online
HUMNS9764	Humanities TA training (New to teaching session)	24/09/2015	STDU, 5th Floor Roscoe Building
HUMNS8880	Preparing for Your Review Panel	21/04/2015	Roscoe 1.009
HUMNS8461	Preparing for Fieldwork	17/03/2015	University Place 4.206
HUMNS8800	Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Training	27/02/2015	STDU, Humanities Bridgeford Street (2nd Floor)
HUMNS8232	Designing an Academic Poster	03/02/2015	University Place 2.218
JRULS0504	Improving your literature review: organising your search	13/11/2014	Learning Commons Training Room--AGLC, Learning Commons
HUMNS8070	Academic Writing 4 - Introductions and Discussion Sections	11/11/2014	Mansfield Cooper G22
HUMNS8450	Literature Review	05/11/2014	University Place 5.210
HUMNS8060	Academic Writing 3 - Citations and the Literature Review	04/11/2014	Mansfield Cooper G22
HUMNS8050	Academic Writing 2 - Writing from a Reader's perspective	28/10/2014	Mansfield Cooper G22
JRULS0338	Referencing and Endnote Web	23/10/2014	Blue 4 Teaching Suite, Main Library
HUMNS8390	Developing speed reading skills	22/10/2014	Ellen Wilkinson A2.16
PGR-IND001	PGR Student Health and Safety Induction Mandatory Module 1	08/09/2014	Online